

THE PULPIT.

Moses Invitation to Hobab.

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And Moses said unto Hobab, the son of Raguel the Midianite, Moses father in law. We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good: for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel. And he said unto him, I will not go; but I will depart to mine own land, and to my kindred.—Numbers 10:29,30.

There is some difference of opinion among learned men as to who Hobab was. Some think that it was Jethro Moses father-in-law, but the most probable opinion is that he was the son of Jethro, and Moses brother-in-law. When Moses reached Sinai his father-in-law came to see him, and after remaining some time returned to his own land. It is probable that he left his son Hobab with Moses where he remained as long as the Hebrews were at Sinai, but now they were to march on towards Canaan; and Moses wanted him to go with him. This would take him away from his father and his home, and he was not willing to do this.

This invitation of Moses to his brother-in-law shows the deep interest that he felt in him, and the desire that he had to have him share in all the blessings God had promised to Israel. This is the feeling of the Christian towards all his friends. He is on a journey to heaven, and he wants them to go with him.

I. The analogy between the deliverance of the Hebrews from their bondage in Egypt and their journey to the promised land, and the deliverance of the Christian from the slavery of sin and his journey to heaven.

1. The Hebrews were delivered from cruel bondage in Egypt. Their condition was a hard one. They had to make bricks without straw, and were at the mercy of their masters.

The Christian was in the slavery of sin, and had a hard master. (John 8:34; Rom. 6:16-18; Prov. 5:22; 2 Peter 2:19; Rom. 7:17-22)

Moses was sent to deliver the Hebrews from slavery and set them free. In this he was a type of Christ who came to redeem man from the slavery of sin. (Isa. 49:9; 61; 3.)

2. The Hebrews commenced their journey to the promised land where they were delivered from their bondage in Egypt. Then they started for Canaan. The Christian commences his journey for heaven when he is converted. Before this he is traveling away from heaven, but at his conversion turns around and starts for it. Then, like Lot he turns his back on the city of destruction. (2

Peter 1:5-11.) This was the commencement of a new life with the Hebrews, and they were animated with new loves, new desires, and new hopes. Thus it is with the Christian. (2 Cor. 5:17.)

3. The Lord provided a guide to direct them in their journey to the promised land. This was a pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night. (Exod. 15:21-22.) God has given us a divine guide in the Bible. (2 Tim. 3:16-17.) He has given us his spirit to bring the instructions of his word to remembrance, and to help us understand it. (John 14:26; 16:17.) The pillar of cloud never led them astray, and thus it is with the Bible. Every man is conscious that if he follows it he will do right.

4. God sent his angel before the Hebrews to keep and protect them. (Exod. 27:20-23.) This angel was Christ. (Isa. 79:9.) Christ is our leader. (Isa. 55:4.) God employs his angels to protect his people. (Heb. 1:14; Psal. 34:7. We cannot see them now, nor understand how they do their work; but we will. The ceiling in one of the old cathedrals of Europe when a man first looks up at it seems to be a confused mass of clouds, but after looking for a time its beauty comes out and it is seen to be a multitude of angels.)

5. God supplied all the wants of the people in their journey, gave them manna from heaven, food from the desert, and water from the solid rock. The clothing that they had on when they left Egypt lasted them to the end of their journey. God supplies the wants of his people now. (2 Peter 1:2-4; Psal. 84:11.) He has given us his Word, Spirit, Grace, and hope of heaven.

6. The Lord enabled them to triumph over all their enemies. He rolled back the waves of the Red Sea, gave them the victory over Pharaoh's mighty host, and the army of the Amalekites. Thus God enables the Christian to conquer all his enemies. (Eph. 6:11-17.) The captain of our salvation is always present with us, and this ensures victory. The city of—, with a garrison of 40,000, surrendered to Napoleon without firing a gun. Such was the terror inspired by his name and presence. On the same day his navy was entirely destroyed in the battle of Trafalgar. When he heard this he said, "I cannot be present every where at once." Our leader can.

7. Their journey ended when they arrived at the promised land. The long weary march was at an end, and they rested. The Christian's journey ends at death. (Rev. 2:10; 14:13; 2 Tim. 4:6-8.) To enjoy the blessings of Canaan the Hebrews had to keep on until they reached it. Thus it is with the Chris-

tian. (Rev. 2:10.)

II. The land to which they were journeying. "We are journeying unto the place which the Lord said, I will give it you."

1. It was the land of promise. (Gen. 12:7; Heb. 4:9.) Heaven is the Christians promised home (Isa 33:16-17; 75:10; John 14:10; Luke 12:32; Psal. 16:11.) Canaan was promised only to the Hebrews; Heaven is promised only the Christian.

3. It was a land of rest. There they rested from their journey and the sufferings of the way. Heaven is a land of rest. (Rev. 14:17; Heb. 4:9) This does not mean that the Christian will have no employment in heaven, for the Bible teaches us that its inhabitants are now actively employed. It will be activity without weariness.

3. It was a rich and beautiful land. Dent. 8:7-10.) Heaven is a beautiful country. There is the tree of life, the water of life; and the great white throne. The most beautiful and sublime scenes in nature are used in the Bible to set forth the loveliness and grandure of heaven. It is rich in all that is good and glorious.

Canaan was filled with and surrounded by enemies. It is not so with heaven. (Rev. 21:23-27.) We know more about what is not in heaven than about what is. There is no night, no sickness, no sorrow, no tears, no sin, no death.

III. The Christian desires to have, and has good reasons to offer why all his friends should go with him to heaven.

Christianity inspires the heart of the Christian with a love for his fellow men, and it is the highest pleasure of his life to do them good. He wants them all saved. In business men are sometimes envious, and try to monopolize every thing in their branch of business; but it is not so in Christianity.

Moses was anxious to have Hobab go with him for the following reasons:

1. They could do him good. "We will do thee good." Hobab could do them good. They needed him. He could be as eyes to them. What need, you ask, had they for him when they had the pillar of cloud and of fire to guide them? This led the way in all their travels, but not in special excursions. Parties took several journeys while the army lay still. (See chapter 17,20,31,32.) Hobab was well acquainted all through that country, and could lead these parties. Thus men of business capacity who are now living only for the world are needed in the church. Their ability and the influence it gives them is needed in the camp of the Lord's people.

Every man needs the church as

much as the church needs him. He needs it to help him live right. Union with the church brings man under influences, and into associations that give him moral strength and builds him up in his faith and hope. It is inspiring to be associated with pure and good men. Lord Peterborough lodged for a season with Fenelon, Arch Bishop of Canbray, and was so delighted with his piety and virtue, that he exclaimed at parting, "If I stay here any longer, I shall become a Christian in spite of myself." How much greater the help when a man gives himself up to such influences by uniting with the people of God.

There is a wonderful power in association. This is illustrated in the tree toad. This changes to the color of whatever it is on. If the bark of the tree is brown, black, red, or green it changes to the same color.

Thus men are changed in spirit and character by their associations. Evil companions help to drag a man down to moral ruin, but the companionship of the pure and good help him into a better life.

2. The Lord's promise to Israel. "The Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel." He had promised them a divine guide, food, clothing, protection, and a home at the end of the journey. He has promised the Christian wisdom, grace, strength, protection, peace, joy, and heaven in the end. (Isa. 45:1-2; Psal. 16:11; Luke 12:32; John 12:26; 17:24.)

3. Moses knew where he was going. "We are journeying unto the land of which the Lord said, I will give it you." They were not deluded but knew what was before them. There was a definite object before their minds, and thus it is with the Christian now. We know where we are going. (Heb. 11:8-10; 13; 14; 2 Cor 4:16-18; 5:1.)

Heaven becomes more and more of a reality to the Christian as he advances in life. Our friends go there, and we feel that there is some one there that we know. This brings us near to it. It does not seem like a strange distant land, but the home of our parents, children, and friends. Mother, since your child went there heaven has been more real than ever before.

It is a grand and inspiring thought that we know what is before us, and are not left to uncertainty. One of the miseries of heathenism and infidelity is that they cannot tell us any thing certain about the great future.

It is all conjecture to them, and in this uncertainty there is nothing to sustain the soul in view of death and the future. Mr. Owen visited A. Campell, at Bthany, and they went to the family grave yard. Mr. Owen, said to Mr. Campell there is one ad-