

Come With Us and We Will Do You Good

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[0 : 00] Let's turn again to the chapter we read in Numbers, and we'll read in chapter 10.

And it's one of these, I suppose we could say, well-known invitations. It's in verse 29, the conversation that we have between Moses and Hobob.

Numbers 10, verse 29, And Moses said to Hobob, the son of Reuel the Midianite, Moses' father-in-law, We are setting out for the place of which the Lord said, I will give it to you.

Come with us, and we will do good to you, for the Lord has promised good to Israel. But he said to him, I will not go. I will depart to my own land and to my own kindred.

And Moses said, Please do not leave us, for you know where we should camp in the wilderness, and you will serve as eyes for us. But if you do go with us, whatever good the Lord will do to us, the same will he do to you.

[1 : 14] Now, this is a very significant chapter in Israel's journey through the wilderness into the land of promise.

We were reading there of how Israel were led by the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, the Shekinah glory. And during their stop or their stay there, there were many significant things that happened.

The tabernacle had been constructed and dedicated. The priests and the Levites, they had been consecrated. The soldiers had been counted and the tribes had all been organized.

And so it had come to this point where Israel had been staying there for quite a long time, probably about a while over a year, coming up probably nearer two years.

And so the time was ready for them to move. And, of course, this was a massive undertaking, but you weren't just shifting a few families. It was the whole nation were going to be on the move.

[2 : 22] And Moses, as we know, was the one who was at the head of everything. He was the one who was the organizer and he was God's spokesman.

He was God's leader amongst the people. But as they were preparing to move, just getting ready to move, we find this very, very interesting conversation taking place between Moses and his brother-in-law, this man Hobob.

Now, you'll remember how Moses had to run away from Egypt way, way back. He had grown up, remember, in the palace. And although he had grown up as an adopted Egyptian, he was an Israelite.

And he knew he was an Israelite. And his heart was to and for the Israelites. And when push came to shove, you remember how he identified himself with the Israelites, how he killed the Egyptian. And because he had killed this Egyptian, he had to run away. And he ran away out of Egypt into the land of Midian. Now, the Midianites actually were related to the Israelites because when Abraham's wife, you remember how Abraham's wife, Sarah, died.

[3 : 37] Abraham took another wife called Keturah after Sarah had died. And a son that he had to Keturah was Midian. So the Midianites were very closely related.

They could claim to have the same father as the Israelites. So it was into this land that Moses hid. And he went to live. And he was there for many, many years, for around about 40 years. And he ended up marrying a woman there called Zipporah. And Zipporah's father was this man, Reuel, or Jethro.

He was known by both names, who was a God-fearing man. He was a priest in Midian, and he worshipped the true and living God. So that's kind of the background. So this man, Hobob, who is Moses' brother-in-law, has been with, and we're not sure at what point, but he has been journeying with Israel.

He's here with them in the wilderness. And they're coming to this particular point where they're moving. And it's one of these crossroad points in a person's life.

[4 : 57] And our lives are full of these crossroads. Sometimes when a person is young, they come to a point of crossroads. For instance, when they're in school, they're having to already start trying to make little decisions as to what, say, for instance, what subjects do I take?

And they're already having to think, what am I going to do when I leave school? All these kind of thoughts are going through their head. Then come time when you have to leave school. And, of course, that's what you have.

And other crossroads. And often when people are young, they think there's only going to be two or three major crossroad points in their lives. But our lives are full of these points, these moments, where great decisions have to be made.

And here was one of these great moments in the life of this man, Hobob. Because he had to make a decision. His own natural inclination, and you can understand it, was to go back home.

He wanted to go back with his own people, to his own country, to his own land, to those he was familiar with. And we can understand why that would be.

[6 : 04] But as he's preparing to go back the way, and Israel, with Moses, are preparing to go on the way, Moses comes to his brother-in-law with this great invitation.

And he's saying to him, come on, really, he's saying, we're setting out for the place of which the Lord said, I will give it to you. You, please, come with us.

And there's no doubt, whatever, that Moses and Hobob were very friendly. And you can catch this in this particular conversation. If we can think of Hobob for a second, here's a man who had a lot of privileges, who had a lot of good influences in his life.

His father, as we said, was a priest, a priest of the true God. And his sister, Zipporah, we believe, was a good woman. And he had spent years and years and years in the company of Moses.

And the Bible tells us that after the death of Moses, there rose not a prophet like him. He was a unique man. A man who spoke with God face to face in the most amazing way, although he didn't see God's face.

[7 : 20] But this is the way it is revealed. The intimacy, the insight, the closeness, the fellowship that Moses enjoyed with God really set him apart.

You remember when Moses came down from the mountain. In fact, the Israelites couldn't look on him. Moses didn't realize it, but his face was shining through the glory of being in the presence of God.

And he had to wear a veil. His face was shining so brightly. So this man, Hobib, had many, many influences for good in his life.

And so there came this point in his life where he had to make a decision. He was at a crossroads. Was he going to go with the people of God to the promised land, or was he going to go back?

Back into Midian. He had to make a decision. And you know, and it's one of the wonderful things, when we look back over our lives, we see that there have been many positive influences for good.

[8 : 27] You look back over your life. If you're here tonight, and you know yourself where you stand before God. You know whether you are united by faith, whether you're trusting your life to Jesus or not.

But as you look back into your life and over your life, there have been many influences for good.

Many people have touched your lives. And it might be from your mother and father, maybe your grandfather, grandmother, uncles, aunties, might be husband, wife, might be brother, sister.

Within the family circle, you look back, and there are influences for good. People who have had an impact for good upon your life. One day, you have to make a decision with what you are doing with your life.

And I would love to think that the decision that you will make will be one where this invitation is given. Come with us, and we will do you good.

Come with the people of God, following the Lord to where the Lord has promised. The land of promise, what the Lord has set out before.

[9 : 39] So anyway, here is Hobob, and he has come to this point and to this decision that he has to make. And as we see, this was a very powerful moment.

And there are many of these moments. We find them in the Bible, I suppose. Another of these classic moments was when Naomi was heading back to Bethlehem.

And after a very tragic life in Moab, where her husband and her two sons had died. And she was traveling back with her daughters-in-law, with Ruth and with Orpah.

And he came to the borders of the land, and Naomi is saying to her daughters-in-law, who were so good to her, Just go back home. There's nothing for you here.

If you come with me into Israel, you will have no privileges. You will have no rights. You are strangers. And you will have no defense.

[10:42] I can't look after you. I can't protect you. You're better just going back. And they were there. It tells us of how they were crying. And they would be hugging each other, because they had been through so much together.

And their hearts were knit together, and their hearts were sore and bleeding. And then we find that Orpah makes a decision. And she decides to go back.

And as Orpah walks away, she walks away almost, we could say, off the pages of Scripture, because we don't hear about her again. But it tells us that Ruth clung on. Ruth wouldn't let Orpah go.

Wouldn't let Naomi go. And she makes that classic statement. Or she says, you know, your people are my people. Your God is my God. And I am throwing my lot in with you, come what may.

But I want to follow you, because I want to follow your God. Your God is my God. It was an amazingly brave decision. But you know, we're never the loser when we follow the Lord.

[11:48] And although Ruth went back into very difficult circumstances, God was watching over her. And God provided for her. And God blessed her. And God gave her a husband, Boaz, there.

And Ruth, in fact, became the great grandmother of King David. They had, Ruth and Boaz had a son, Obed.

Obed's son was Jesse. And Jesse's son was David. So this woman, casting in her all with the people of God to follow the Lord.

And this is what the Lord does. Blesses her. And puts her, as it were, into the line, into the link. Part of the human family tree, that you could say.

In the line of where Jesus comes. And it's an amazing story. And so, in a sense, we have something similar here.

[12:47] There's this particular point. And Moses is saying to Hobab, you come with us. In fact, he's setting out before him a double good. First of all, we will do you good.

And secondly, the Lord has promised good to Israel. It's a two-fold good. We'll do you good. And God is going to do you good. Because God has promised good to Israel.

May I say to anybody in here tonight without Jesus. That is the invitation we give you as well. Come with us. And we will do you good.

And we're not talking theories. You know, some people might talk theoretically in life and say, Well, this is how I think it is.

The Christian doesn't talk like that. The Christian doesn't say, I think this is how it is. The Christian is able to talk from their own personal experience. And those who have found Jesus Christ, those tonight who are following Jesus Christ, will never say, you know, the big mistake I made in my life was starting to follow the Lord.

[13:55] Wish I had never done that. You won't find any of the Lord's people saying that. Or there might be times the Lord's people struggle.

There might be dips and there might be stumbles along the way. But they're following. And they'll never turn around and say, I wish I had never given my life to the Lord Jesus Christ.

I wish Christ had never laid hold upon me. You won't find that. If you hear anybody say that, I'll tell you there's one thing you can say is that they have never really known saving grace.

If you find anybody saying, I wish that the Lord Jesus Christ had never saved me. You have to say to yourself, Well, that is not the voice of somebody who has discovered the freedom and the liberty that is in Jesus Christ.

And so the believer is able to say to the unbeliever, You come with us and we will do you good.

[15:00] You see, the land of promise was held out before Israel. It was going to be the place of rest. They were in the wilderness. And the wilderness was a place of fear, of anxiety, the place of frustration, the place of dangers, all these things.

But Canaan was held out before them as a place of rest. But of course, it was going to be in stages because the rest that they enjoyed wasn't the complete rest that one day they would enjoy.

When they went into the land of Canaan, there were to be struggles and there were to be conquests made. It was bit by bit, stage by stage by stage, until they experienced full peace within the land.

And in a sense, that's how it is with us. When we come to faith in Jesus Christ, one of the things that we discover is, well, there are many things we discover, but one of the things we discover is rest.

Rest for our soul. And until a person comes to faith in Jesus Christ, they don't realize how exhausting and tiring and what a hard taskmaster sin is.

[16 : 23] People think that by giving reign to sin in every shape and form that they're experiencing freedom. But that isn't true. There is an incredible deception in sin so that there is actually slavery and bondage in it.

And it's not until a person is set free in Christ that you're able to say, I didn't realize how bound I actually was. I didn't realize it.

And so there is this, as we say, this freedom and this rest. But it develops and it grows.

Of course, because we're sinners, that sin remains and there will be constant struggles and so on.

But you know, the time is going to come when the Lord will eventually take all his people home.

And that will be the place of complete rest. It will be the place where the troubles and the trials are gone forever. Come with us and we will do you good.

[17 : 27] And the Lord has promised good to Israel. Now, you see, when God promises good, he brings good. God is always true to his word. He is faithful to his promise.

And the amazing thing for Israel was that in that journey through the wilderness, God provided for them at every turn. Sometimes it was water out of a rock, miraculously.

Other times, they just came to wells. But he provided miraculously the manna bred from heaven so that every day they had a supply.

But God said to them, you know, this is only for a wee while. I will protect you from every enemy.

And you know, the greatest enemy that Israel had in the wilderness was themselves.

They themselves proved the greatest enemy that they had. And there's a warning there for us.

Because there are many enemies around and about, but the biggest enemy we'll confront, I believe, is our own heart.

[18 : 26] It is deceit for above all things and desperately wicked. And we've always got to be on guard against it. Well, when we read the history of Israel, we find that they themselves caused themselves more problems than any enemy from outside.

But God, this is a wonderful thing, God said to them, you know, I'm going to take you to our land.

And everything you need is going to be there. Let me read a little from Deuteronomy to indicate what God was going to give them.

They were going to arrive there and they weren't going to have to build houses. And everything was going to be provided. The Lord will bring you into a land and he's going to give you great and good cities that you didn't build and houses full of good things that you did not fill and cisterns that you did not dig and vineyards and olive trees that you did not plant.

They're going to come in and they're going to get all this. A land of brooks of water of fountains and springs flowing out in valleys and hills. A land of wheat and barley and vines and fig trees and pomegranates.

A land of olive trees and honey a land where you will eat bread without scarcity in which you will lack nothing. A land where the stones are iron and out of whose hills you will dig copper.

[19 : 57] You shall eat and be fooled. Now that's the kind of God we serve. And that's why Moses was saying to Hobob, you'd be mad.

You'd be mad to go back into the wilderness of Midian. Look at what God is going to give. Cities already for us because we are going to inhabit all that's there.

We don't need to do anything because God is preparing everything for us. And my dear friends, that is what the Lord has promised us as well spiritually. He has promised to satisfy us with everything that we need.

And if we don't have that, then we have to ask ourselves, why not? And you know, in light of the Lord's table, that's one of the things that the Lord has done for us. He's provided a table for us.

A table in the wilderness as we journey to the land of promise. A table of refreshing. A table to be strengthened. And may I say to anybody in here tonight who has put their trust in the Lord, and yet

they're not able somehow to take that step, we're saying tonight, come with us, and we will do you good.

[21 : 20] Come with the Lord's people. Come and enjoy the blessing that the Lord has for you. The table is a means of grace. The Lord's table isn't there for super Christians.

Or people who have lived a life of exemplary faith. People who have, you would say, climbed the ladder and gone all the way up and you look at them and they say, oh, these are remarkable Christians.

You know, the Lord's table is a means of grace that is there to strengthen existing faith. The Lord's table is not there to give us faith in the sense that we don't go to the Lord's table in the way that we would come to try and find the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is called the Lord's table because it is for those who trust the Lord. But if you've come to place your trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, then, as we said this morning, two things are required.

A, that we believe in our heart and that we confess with our mouth. These two things are asked. We believe in our heart and we confess with our mouth that Jesus Christ is Lord, that he is your Lord, that you're persuaded of his saving work within your own heart.

[22 : 39] Come thou with us and we will do you good, as was said to Hobob. But you know, when we read this and Moses gives out this really strong appeal, we find in verse 30, Hobob says, I will not go.

I will depart to my own land and to my own kindred. You know, in a sense, when you read that, there's a huge disappointment. But at one level, you can almost understand it because although Hobob has journeyed with, and he's very fond of Moses, and his own sister is there as well, but the appeal of his own land and his own ways seems to be stronger.

And you know, maybe tonight, that's how it is for somebody in here. You're challenged by the gospel. You hear the invitation. But your own way, your own particular lifestyle, the way that life is turning out for you just now, your plans, your aims, your ambitions, all these things are so strong that they're stronger tonight than this invitation.

And you, like Hobob, are saying, I will not go. I will depart. I will stay following my own way.

I hope nobody is saying that tonight. Because you see, life is about choices. We are always making choices. And there's a choice here because, notice the wording very clearly.

[24 : 19] Moses is saying to Hobob, we are setting out for the place which the Lord said, I will give it to you. Right? If Israel had stayed where they were, or if they had decided and said, oh, you know, I think we'll go with you, Hobob, they wouldn't have got the place that God said, I will give it to you.

And it's the same for you and for me tonight. The Lord is saying, here is a place. Jesus Christ is saying, I have, I have gone to Calvary's cross.

I have done everything the Father asked me to do. And there's an invitation to you tonight to come and to receive me.

what are you going to do? Because, you know, at the end of the day, God will give us our choice forever. Forever and ever and ever and ever God will fulfill the choice we make.

Because if we follow the Lord, if we say, yes, I will follow the Lord, the Lord will take us on with himself and he will take us to glory to be with himself forever.

[25 : 38] This is what he has set out for us. This is what he has promised. But on the other hand, if we reject the Lord and we say, no, I will not go, I will not follow.

The Lord says, well, I'll give you that as well. I will give you what you've chosen. And if you choose that you don't want me, then that's what you'll get.

Because at the end of the day, I will say to you, just as you said to me all throughout life, depart from me, the Lord will say to you at the end, depart from me.

You know, sometimes people say, oh, it's not fair. the Lord is giving exactly what people have chosen. So you see what a solemn thing it is to reject the offer of salvation.

You are choosing to reject Christ now and as it stands forever. So that's why the Lord appeals to us in his word.

[26 : 48] And I cannot think of anything more awful than to go out from under the sound of the gospel and the appeal of the gospel into a lost eternity.

It must be the most awful thing when you think of the opportunities. A foot nearly in the kingdom and yet say no. Well, this seems to be what this man says.

however, just before us we come to conclude, some people have thought it kind of strange, although initially he said, I will not go, I will depart to my own land and to my own kindred. And then Moses, he becomes even more argumentative, I shouldn't say more argumentative, he's pressing the argument even more, really trying to get into the heart of Hobab. But he said to him, please do not leave us, for you know where we should camp in the wilderness, you will serve as eyes for us. Now, some people are saying that's a strange thing coming from Moses when the Shekinah glory is leading, when the ark is going to be there.

[27 : 54] Why is he saying this to this man? Well, there was nobody who trusted in the Lord more than Moses. He trusted in the Lord all the time. And he looked to the Lord all the time.

And we're to trust in the Lord with all our heart, and lean not to our own understanding. However, the Lord does expect us to exercise common sense as well.

We use our heart, we trust with our heart, but we've got to use our head as well. There's no question whatever. And we will find that often as we journey through life, looking to the Lord. The Lord has promised to lead us, and he will. But he also, along the way, there are times we have to use the discernment and the wisdom that is given.

So what did Hobab do? Well, it doesn't tell us. But I think he went. And the reason why I think he went is that when we go into the book of Judges, it tells us, it's giving a list there, it says, the descendants of Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, went up with the people of Judah and settled with the people.

[29 : 13] So this is way on, we find that these very people are living, they're with the tribe of Judah.

Where did they come from? Well, I think they came. I think Hobab went, because these are his descendants. It doesn't tell us here that he did, but when we move on a wee bit into the book of Judges, we find his descendants having a part with the people of God.

Moses had said, you come with us, and you'll get whatever good God is going to give. And that's exactly what they got. They got a portion of that land, that great land that was held out before them. And my friends, that's what God does for us. trust your heart to the Lord. Throw in your lot with him. We disappoint one another.

Everybody within, everybody has a potential of letting one another down. We don't deliberately do it, but we do it.

[30 : 24] The Lord will never let you down. Whoever else will or won't, let you down. This is what Moses is saying. He's saying to us this invitation, we are setting out for the place of which the Lord said, I will give it to you.

Come with us, and we will do good to you. I hope tonight that nobody in here is going to say no to that invitation.

Let's pray. Lord, our God, we give thanks for the great invitation that is found in the gospel. We give thanks, Lord, for the fact that Jesus Christ rules and reigns.

Lord, we give thanks for the patience that is shown to us. How often that we have had opportunities, and even as we look back over our life, we see the patient hand of God, dealing with us.

Help us all, Lord, to come with us, childlike trust and dependence, so that we might cast our all upon the Lord. May we know that good, God's goodness, in our heart and life.

[31 : 42] Bless us, and we pray, take away from us all our sin. In Jesus' name we ask it. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.