

Tuesday 3rd November Numbers 10: 11-13, 29-36

Key verse - 10: 29-31

29 Now Moses said to Hobab son of Reuel the Midianite, Moses' father-in-law, "We are setting out for the place about which the Lord said, 'I will give it to you.' Come with us and we will treat you well, for the Lord has promised good things to Israel."

30 He answered, "No, I will not go; I am going back to my own land and my own people."

31 But Moses said, "Please do not leave us. You know where we should camp in the wilderness, and you can be our eyes."

We pick up the story a year after the Israelites had left Egypt. They had witnessed the plague miracles, the Passover, the parting of the Red Sea and the covenant made by God with them on Mt Sinai.

Despite their impatience and fickleness (Moses was only on Sinai for 40 days before they turned to idols), God was still merciful to them and waited for them to build a portable tabernacle before they set off on the journey he had for them.

Clearly it is important to God that our walk through this life involves his presence with us. The tabernacle taught respect for God's holiness, much effort in maintaining his presence

(it must have been a right pain to carry!) and the centrality of God's word (the Ark of the covenant contained the stone tablets). How important it still is for us to follow these same principles and how blessed we are to have the Holy Spirit as God's constant presence with us.

In this reading we have Moses asking for Hobab's help as they set out into the desert. Hobab is family (Moses married his sister Zipporah) and welcomed Moses as a resident of Sinai when he first arrived. He clearly knew the desert well. Initially he refused to go with Moses but later references in Judges 1 and 4 suggest he eventually agreed!

How often we come across someone who is initially reluctant to walk with God and enjoy 'the good things he has promised', (v29). So familiar are his reasons for not going! 'I prefer to stay in my normal comfortable ways' is a paraphrase of v30. The world and its ways have such gravity when it comes to those we love who we'd like to join with us on the journey. Are you like Hobab? Unsure about leaving your comfort zone to go with God?

Moses compliments Hobab on his personal skills in v31. Moses has God's authority, his presence and his guidance yet he asks for Hobab's eyes!!

Here we see the wisdom of Moses. He is the leader and he looks to God for direction but also realises that he needs human expertise and wisdom.

I'm sure I speak also for David and Ian when I stress our appreciation of the skills of individuals who make up the body of Christ in Measham.

We, especially us blokes, are not good at asking for help or having the humility to accept we can't manage things on our own.

Let's take example from Moses. Let's give people the value they deserve and encourage them as they use their God given abilities to serve him however humble they may be.

Jesus could have got his own water at the well but he asked for help. The result? Many became believers. (see John 4 esp. v 41)