

New Hebron Missionary Baptist Church

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Pastor Rodney E. Smith, Sr. Bible Study

"...from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation..."

(2 Tim. 3:15)

Spiritual Leadership

{Exodus 33:1-11}

When trouble comes into our lives it is the wise leader that quickly runs to God in prayer. Prayer is not a one way street. It's not a monologue but it's a dialogue. We speak to God in prayer and we let Him speak to us through His word. Moses in this chapter of Exodus deals with the sin of the Israelites and in doing so he shows us the level of spiritual maturity required in handling the internal failures of God's people.

v.1,2) "go up hence...unto the land which I sware unto Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob...and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite"

- As God is directing Moses to leave Mt. Sinai, He is indicating that He will still give them the land of Canaan and that He would remove the sinful inhabitants of the land out of their way.
- This is good news because God is keeping the promise that He made to their father Abraham. And He's keeping it in spite of their sin of idolatry regarding the golden calf. {Ex. 32:1-4}
- This indicates that God is faithful to us when we are not faithful in return and that He is gracious. {Num. 23:19; 2 Cor. 9:8}

v.3,4) "for I will not go up in the midst of thee; for thou art a stiffnecked people: lest I consume thee in the way...And when the people heard these evil tidings, they mourned"

- The bad news to Israel was that God would no longer be in their "midst" because of their sin.
- Sin separates us from God and positions us to be punished by Him. {Gen. 3:8}
- Moses also shows his faithfulness to God by telling Israel the good and the bad news. A mature leader must be faithful in declaring the love of God and also the judgement of God as well.

- The Israelites will inherit a fertile land, they would be victorious over the inhabitants if the land, but all these things were no substitute for God's presence. {Mk. 8:36}
- v.7) "And Moses took the tabernacle, and pitched it without the camp, afar off from the camp"
 - The tabernacle being positioned outside of the camp was a symbolic reminder that God had judged the Israelites. It further emphasized to them that the Lord's presence was no longer with them.
 - It takes maturity in leadership to remain faithful to God when the direction He gives you is difficult and unpopular. {Dan. 4:19}
- **v.11)** "And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend...but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle"
 - In order to stay devoted and obedient to the Lord every Christian, and especially every Christian leader, must stay in constant communication with Him. {1 Thess. 5:17; 2 Cor. 10:4}
 - We also learn about Joshua in this verse. Long before he succeeded Moses as leader of the Israelites he was a man of devotion to prayer and trusting God.
 - Leaders are not manufactured overnight. But God fashions them over time and prepares them for lifelong service to Him.
 - God often has to work on us in private before we are ready for public debut. {Matt. 6:6}

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