

Place: Lurgan Baptist 8:11:2005

Readings: Exodus 8:25-32 10:1-11 24-26

FROM EGYPT TO CANAAN

3. THE FOUR COMPROMISES !

A New York family bought a ranch out West where they intended to raise cattle. Friends visited their ranch once they got settled, and asked if the ranch had a name. "Well," said the would-be cattleman, "I wanted to name it the Bar-J. My wife favoured Suzy-Q, one son liked the Flying -W, and the other wanted the Lazy-Y." The friends asked, "Well, what did you end up naming it." The rancher said, "Well, I compromised with them and we are calling it the Bar-J-Suzy-Q-Flying-W-Lazy-Y." "But where are your cattle,"? the friends asked. The rancher said, "None survived the branding." When it comes to compromising, there are some areas in which compromise can never be an option. For example, the Bible says "Neither gave place to the devil." (Eph 4:27) My you gave the devil an inch and he will take a mile. You let him in the front door and he will take over the house. I heard the story about a certain hunter. Winter was coming and he went out into the forest to shoot a bear out of which he planned to make fur coat. By and by he saw a bear coming toward him and he raised his gun and took aim. "Wait," said the bear, "why do you want to shoot me?" "Because I am cold," said the hunter. "But I am hungry," the bear replied, "so maybe we can reach an agreement." In the end the bear waddled off with a smile on his face. He had a full stomach and the hunter had his warm coat of fur, if you know what I mean. When it comes to dealing with the devil there is no agreement to reach. **Compromise is not an option.** However, the devil is always trying to get us to make compromises. When he sees that open hostility is useless he changes tactic's and suggests compromise. He therefore hopes to achieve by guile what he fails to do by violence. Is this not how the enemy works ? In the New Testament he is revealed in two characters. Firstly as a roaring lion he seeks to terrorise (1 Pet 5:8) second, as an angel of light he seeks to deceive (2 Cor 11:4)

Here in the Book of Exodus he is vividly portrayed in the person of Pharaoh (2 Tim 2:26) who under pressure of these plagues suggests four compromises to the people of God. Now let me try and set these four compromises in their historical setting. Do you recall the Lord's purpose for His people ? (3:7-10) You see, God purposed to do three things for Israel.

* “ *To deliver them,* ” ***That was Emancipation:***

“ *And I am come down to deliver them,* ” (3:8) this meant the emancipation of those who all their lifetime were subject to bondage.

* “ *To bring them up out,* ” ***That was Separation:***

Out of the land of Pharaoh as well as out of the hand of Pharaoh, is the word. (3:8) Anything short of that would be practically worthless.

* “ *To bring them up unto,* ” ***That was Possession:***

From the house of bondage to the land of fruitfulness. So God’s purpose was specified (3:8) God’s man was identified (3:10) and God’s name was glorified through it all. (15:1) Now can you see Moses and Aaron going into the presence of Pharaoh to ask for the release of the Hebrews ? Can you see,

1. The DECLARATION of God’s Servants:

Look at (5:1) Courage is hardly what we have come to expect from Moses. We have seen cover up a murder in the desert sand (2:12) run away from the Egyptian police (2:15) and refuse to deliver God’s message for fear that no-one would listen. (4:1, 10, 13) Yet this time he walked up to the most powerful man in the world and demanded the release of his slaves. He spoke with the divine authority of a prophet. “ *Thus saith the Lord God of Israel* ” (5:1) What made the difference for Moses ? What changed his life ? What transformed him from a frightened fugitive to a bold spiritual leader ? Did you notice the answer in (5:3) Here is his personal testimony. The God of the Hebrews is on our side ! Moses had seen God’s glory in the burning bush. He had heard the Great I Am announce the message of deliverance. Moses had met with God. Is that not what happened the disciples of the Lord Jesus ? What was it that transformed them from cowardly disciples into death-defying apostles ? This was the difference ! They had been with Jesus ! (Acts 4:13) My is this not the secret of holy boldness ? We believe God’s promises and start to act upon them. We start to speak to our neighbours openly and naturally about spiritual things. We refuse to compromise our Christian convictions in the workplace ! And when people wonder what has happened to us, there is but one explanation. We have been with the God of Moses and with His Son Jesus Christ ! Now its interesting to notice the terms of God’s demand on Pharaoh.

The Lord said that His people must go a three day's journey into the wilderness that they might " *sacrifice to the Lord their God.*" (3:18) Then the Lord added, " *that he His firstborn may serve Me.*" (4:23) Now here when Moses and Aaron stood before the King we find them saying, " *Thus The wilderness.*" (5:1) Now the order of these statements is very significant.

(a) The Thought of Sacrifice:

This is required to avert God's judgement. And its only as we place blood between ourselves and a thrice holy God that we can stand in His presence. For " *without shedding of blood is no remission.*" (Heb 9:22)

(b) The Thought of Service:

For we cannot serve the Lord acceptably until we are reconciled to Him, through the sacrifice of the cross.

" *Whose I am and whom I serve,*" (Acts 27:23) is the Divine order.

(c) The Thought of Satisfaction:

For the " *feast,*" speaks of fellowship and gladness. So here is God's order. Sacrifice, as we are reconciled to the Lord through the blood of the cross, service as we serve the Lord Christ, and satisfaction that comes through service. (1)

2. The DEFAMATION of God's Character:

For did you notice Pharaoh's response ? (5:2) Now its not hard to understand why Pharaoh turned a deaf ear to God's demand. Just put yourself on his throne for a moment. You are the most powerful man in the world. Two foreign slaves come up one of them a renegade and a murderer and demand the release of your entire workforce. The very idea was so audacious, so preposterous, that Pharaoh must have laughed out loud when he heard it. Defying the threat of Divine Judgement he said, " *Who is the Lord that I should obey His voice to let Israel go ?*" **Now with these words Pharaoh posed the central question of the exodus.** Who is the Lord ? Who is the one true God ? Who is the supreme Deity who alone has the right to demand praise from every creature ? Well, God had revealed the correct answer to Pharaoh's question back at the burning bush. Who is the Lord ? He is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He is Jehovah, the great I Am, the eternal, sovereign Lord. He is the God of Israel who knows and cares about the

suffering of his dear children. As events continue to unfold, He will reveal Himself as God of salvation. He will bring judgement on Pharaoh, while leading His own people through the sea on dry land.

By the time Pharaoh's army is swept away by God's infinite power, even Pharaoh will know who the Lord is.

So we see here, (1) (2)

(3) The DEMONSTRATION of God's Power:

That afflicted Egypt ! Blood (7:17) Frogs (8:2) Lice
(8:16) Flies (8:21) Cattle (9:6) Boils (9:9) Hail
(9:22) Locusts (10:5) Darkness (10:21) Death
(12:1) Do you see what God was doing ? He was giving Pharaoh His answer that He was Lord of Lords.

But its not so much the (1) (2) (3) that we are thinking about this rather it is,

(4) The DECEPTION of God's Enemy:

That we want to consider this ! You see, while being under pressure from these plagues, Pharaoh suggests four compromises to the people of God.

(1) " STAY IN," IN THE LAND

Look if you will at (8:25) Can you see,

(a) The SUBTLETY of this Suggestion:

For this was calculated to deceive anyone who was not acquainted with the character of God. At first sight it seems very reasonable and gracious, but if you look closer at these words, you will notice that they are different from God's demand. God's command was couched in no uncertain terms. It called for a complete separation of His people unto Himself. (5:1) The Lord spoke about a " *three days journey into the desert,*" (5:3) Pharaoh said, " *don't be so extreme, sacrifice to God in the land. Surely you can carry on your religion here as well as other people. There is room for all. Why this demand for separation ? Why not take common ground with your neighbours ? There is no need, surely for such extreme narrowness.*" Now if Pharaoh is a type of the devil, then the land, that is, Egypt represents the world. And is this not what the devil whispers in our ears ? " *Sacrifice to God in the land.*" That is, in the

world. Now the Greek word translated “*world*,” means “*a human society apart from God.*” It refers to the invisible spiritual system of evil. The whole system of things in this society of ours is Anti-Christ and Anti-God. So its very easy for us as believers to become like the people of this world. People who in their thinking, their speaking, their attitudes, their standards, their scheming, their selfish ambition reveal their affection for the world and their likeness to the world. You say, “*what is worldliness ?*” John Wesley says, “*anything that cools my love for Christ is the world.*” You see, Satan is the Prince of this world (Jn 14:30) the lost are the children of this world (Lk 16:8) the Christian has been delivered from this evil world (Gal 1:4) and as children of God we are in the world physically, but not of the world spiritually. (Jn 17:11-16)

Indeed, we are sent into the world to win others to Christ (Jn 17:18) but its only as we maintain our separation from this world that we can serve others. Now the world system is committed to at least four major objectives.

1. Fortune:

Money, the world system is driven by money, it thrives on materialism.

2. Fame:

Another word for popularity. Fame is the longing to be known to be somebody in someone else’s eyes.

3. Power:

That is, having influence, maintaining control over individuals, groups, companies, whatever.

4. Pleasure:

At its basic level, pleasure has to do with fulfilling one’s sensual desires. it’s the same mindset that’s behind the slogan, “*if it feels good do it.*” My do you see that worldliness is a tremendous danger to us all ? Do you see that Pharaoh, the devil hates out and out separation to God. He whispers “*stay in.*” But look at,

(b) The LOYALTY of this Servant:

For Moses was uncompromising in his stand. He says,

1. It is not PROPER to stay in:

Look at (8:26) Its not proper to worship the Lord in the midst of His enemies. God's desire has ever been that His people be holy and separate. (2 Cor 6:14-18) That opening phrase has an allusion to being yoked with an animal of another kind. The Law of Moses forbid the uniting of animals of different kinds in the same yoke.

(Deut 22:10) It's the union of incongruous elements and persons that is forbidden. Now Paul enforces that exhortation by asking five questions and in so doing he enunciates five principles.

1. No Fellowship with Unholy Practices:

“ What fellowship unrighteousness, ” (6:14)

2. No Fellowship with Unholy Pleasures:

“ What communion hath light darkness, ” if you cannot enjoy the pleasures around you to day in the light of God's Word, they are unclean, shun them.

3. No Fellowship with Unholy Prophets:

“ Belial, ” represents false prophets. My false prophets are still with us today. They teach in our Bible colleges, they mount our pulpits, they propagate their damnable heresies on radio and T.V. What's to be our response to them ? *“ Have no fellowship, ”*
(Eph 4:11)

4. No Fellowship with Unholy People:

“ What part hath he that believeth, ”

5. No Fellowship with Unholy Places:

“ And what agreement, ” So in any context of 1,2,3,4,5, God says, “ come out, ” 1.

2. It is not WISE to stay in:

Look at (8:26) You see, what was obligatory for the Israelites was objectionable to the Egyptians. The animals they intended to sacrifice such as bulls and rams were sacred in Egypt. What Moses was saying to Pharaoh was, “ *your compromise would be a political disaster.* ” (Gen 46:34) To present a lamb in sacrifice to God would be offensive to the Egyptians ! My have things changed from then to now ? Preach the cross of Christ, proclaim the blood of Christ, and the enmity of the world is at once aroused. They say, “ *don't gave us the slaughter house religion.* ” (1 Cor 1:23) 1,2,

3. It is not BIBLICAL to stay in:

Look at (8:27) Was this not the real point of the enemy's attack ? He was seeking to neutralise the Word of God. The Lord had said “ *in the wilderness.* ” To have worshipped God in the land would have been total disobedience. God had spoken, the matter was settled ! What is the significance of the three days journey ? Well, from Genesis (Ch 1) onwards the third day speaks of resurrection. You see, our place is in resurrection with our Lord. (Rom 6:11 Col 3:1)

My take that journey and the world will call you a fanatic, stay where you are and it will call you a hypocrite. (1)

(2) “ STAY NEAR,” NOT FAR AWAY

Did you notice Pharaoh's response in (8:28) ? If he could not keep them in the land, he would keep them near it. You see, he knew that the music and siren voices of Egypt would soon woo them back to the place which they had left. “ *Don't go very far away,* ” is one of the devils favourite and most successful temptations.

Avoid extremes, do not be fanatical, be sane and sensible in your spiritual life. If you really must be a Christian, don't let it spoil your life. Is this not exactly how the devil tempts us ? “ *Sure you can be a Christian believer but don't deny yourself the odd drink, or dance or disco.* ”

There are many Christians who do that and see no harm it, don't be so peculiar. ” “ *Don't go too far away.* ” Have you ever thought about,

(a) THE TROUBLE THIS BRINGS:

For “ *not very far away,* ” is a dangerous place in which to live. In the time of the old border wars between England and Scotland, the people living in the border counties had a terrible time of it. First, the Scotch came pouring down devastating the northern counties of England, then the English would invade the southern

counties of Scotland, and those who lived in between, on the border lands they were scarcely free from trouble. My it will be the same with you if you heed the devil's advice and "*not go very far away.*" I read about a little child who fell out of bed one night. When her mother asked why, she replied, "*I went to sleep to close to where I got in.*" Is that not the sad condition of many professing Christians today ? Although the whole New Testament can be read aloud in less than twenty four hours, there are many who have claim membership in a local church for decades who have never read it through once. Do you know something ? They have gone to sleep to close to where they got in. Is that you ? Are you a borderland Christian ? Then beware of,

(b) THE TESTIMONY THIS RUINS:

An old English proverb says, "*You can't have both the penny and the bun.*" Lot wanted both. That's why "*he pitched his tent toward Sodom.*" (Gen 13:12) "*Dwelt in Sodom,*" and "*sat in the gate of Sodom.*" (Gen 14:12 19:1) He probably became an Alderman, he was a V.I.P in Sodom. He was President of the Whatsits and Secretary of the Whoozits and he may have said, "*If old Abraham wants to live in tents, let him do it, I've got it made in Sodom.*" My he so identified himself with the ways of Sodom that whenever he eventually tried to speak about the things of the Lord to his family, he seemed as one that mocked. Sure, he was a big person socially, but he lost his testimony and family in the process. Do you know what Paul said about Demas ? "*Demas hath forsaken me having loved this present world.*" (2 Tim 4:10) He had no intention in ceasing to be a Christian, all he wanted was that he should be no longer an out and out Christian. What was it that enticed Demas back into the world ? Was it love of possessions ? Pleasure ? Pride ? Popularity ? My What has enticed you back into the world ? Materialism ? Sensual pleasure ! Fear of losing friends ! What is it ? What is it that has cooled your love for the Master ? Has the devil just whispered, "**Stay near.**" (1) (2)

(3) "STAY PART," WHO ARE THEY ?

Look at (10:8-11) Do you see what's happening ? He will now let them go the three days journey, but he wants the little ones left behind. You see, old Pharaoh knew that if the little ones were left behind, the parents would soon return. Now how would you, as a parent responded to this proposal ? Would you not have been indignant and angry ? "*What,*" you say "*consent to leave my family in the land of Egypt, while I myself escape, never.*" Yet there is not a sense in which we have all

yielded to this Satanic suggestion ? You see, we have left Egypt by the blood of the Lamb, and the hand of the Lord, but how much effort have we made to bring our children out with us ? “ *be a Christian,*” says Satan “ *but force it down your children’s throat, time enough for these serious things when they grow up.* ” Is that not how the Devil tempts us ? “ *If you press the claims of Christ upon you’ll drive them away, you’ll turn them off for life.* ” Is that not how the Devils argues ? And how of us listen to him ? The result ? Family discipline is relaxed, the Scriptures are not given their proper place in the home, the children are allowed to do what they like, when they like, with whom they like ! Yet when we turn to the Scriptures we see that

(a) RESPONSIBILITY CANNOT BE EVADED:

Paul writing not to Sunday School teachers, not to Good News Club leaders, not to C.E.F. workers but to Christian fathers says, “ *And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.* ” (Eph 6:4) Do you know something ? As a Christian parent, you are to be the primary instrument through which your children know the Word and Will of God ! How are you getting on ? Are you shirking your responsibility ? (a) and,

(b) RESTRAINT CANNOT BE LIFTED:

Did you ever read the book of Proverbs in relation to training children ? Do you know what it says ? “ *Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.* ” (22:6) In the very same chapter it says, “ *Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.* ” (22:15) Does that mean using discipline when necessary ? (23:13-14) Does that mean being influential in the choice of their company ? Does that mean seeking to conform then to the ways of God ? Did you ever think of the contrast that is brought before us between Abraham and Eli ? Of Abraham the Lord said, “ *I know Abraham that he will command his children and they shall keep the way of the Lord.* ” (Gen 18:19) But of Eli we read that he and his home experienced the judgement of God. Why ? “ *because his sons made themselves vile and he restrained them not.* ” (1 Sam 3:13) Now tell me, which are you like ? Abraham or Eli ? As parents are you doing your utmost to bring your children out of Egypt ? (1) (2) (3)

(4) “ STAY SOME,” YOUR FLOCKS STAYED

Look at the final compromise in (10:24) He first sought to keep them in the land, then to keep them near the land, next, to keep part of themselves in the land, and finally when he could not succeed in any of these, Pharaoh sought to send them forth without any ability to serve the Lord. You see,

(a) PARTIAL Consecration is Suggested:

Will you underscore the word “only,” in (10:24) Do you see what Pharaoh and the Devil suggest ? The distraction of a divided heart, the attempt to make the best of both worlds, that’s what he is suggesting. The flocks and heads of this pastoral people constituted the principle part of what they owned down here. They speak of our earthly possessions. Is it not right here that many of us fail ? “ *Gave yourselves to God,*” if you must says the Devil, “ *but do not consecrate your possessions to His service.*” Tell me, are you heeding him ? Are you using your wealth to gratify yourself or do you see it as a sacred trust for Christ ? Do you recall what God charged His people with in the days of Malachi ? He charged them with robbery ! My are you robbing God ? (Mal 3:8) Are you refusing to give Him even a tenth of your income ? We sing so easily,

***“ Take my silver and my gold,
Not a mite would I withhold.”***

Rubbish ! For some of you are only tipping the Lord. Do you not realise that its not yours in the first place ? Its all His. And,

(b) TOTAL Consecration is Required:

Look at the response of Moses ! (10:25-26) In other words, all that we are and have is going to be given over to the Lord.

***“ All that I am and have
Thy gifts so free
In joy, in grief, through life
O, Lord for Thee.”***

Pharaoh came to Moses and Satan will come to you and whisper in your ear, “ **Stay in, Stay near, Stay part, Stay some.**” My resist the devil and he will flee from you. Be like Moses who would not lower the claims of Jehovah, be like Daniel who rather enter the lions den than disobey his God, be like the three Hebrew children who went into the fiery furnace rather than bow down to idols.

They lost nothing by their faithfulness and neither will you for God's unchanging principle is,

“ them that honour Me I will honour.” (1 Sam 2:30)