



The Lord is My Strength

Moses the Advocate

Exodus 32

- Last week we talked about how Moses was wise enough to receive advice from others
- Moses receives some good advice from his Father-in-Law
- What advice can we take from this counsel?
 1. Delegation is a good thing
 2. Burn-Out is to be avoided
 3. Focus on the important things - Teaching the people the way they must walk -
Don't get so bogged down in the daily details that you lose the big picture
 4. Don't delegate everything - Still have the great matters brought to you
- A truly wise person listens to advice - regardless of the source
- A truly humble person is able to admit that the way they are doing things is not the best way, and that the suggestion of others might be better
- The Ten Declarations of God begin with...
- I AM THE LORD THY GOD
- I think that it's helpful to think of them in this way
- Before you can even begin to obey 2 through 10, it's best to properly understand # 1
- This establishes the authority of the Lord, and explains the basis of why you should listen to what comes next

- Now we see Moses in a different role...

- Exodus 32:1-11 KJV

- 1) And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for *as for* this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.
 - 2) And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden earrings, which *are* in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring *them* unto me.
 - 3) And all the people brake off the golden earrings which *were* in their ears, and brought *them* unto Aaron.
 - 4) And he received *them* at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These *be* thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.
 - 5) And when Aaron saw *it*, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, To morrow *is* a feast to the LORD.
 - 6) And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.
 - 7) And the LORD said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted *themselves*:
 - 8) They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These *be* thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.
 - 9) And the LORD said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it *is* a stiffnecked people:
 - 10) Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation.
 - 11) And Moses besought the LORD his God, and said, LORD, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand?
- Another aspect of the life of this man of God, this man whom God was able to so greatly use, was the fact that he was willing to pray for others
 - He was Moses the advocate.
 - This rebellion against God would have resulted in another judgment had God not repented
 - We want to think about the way God repented in answer to the prayer of Moses
 - Israel had been developed to be God's own unique people

- Early in the book of Genesis, God called a man by the name of *Abram* and He said, "I am going to make of you a great nation"
- Step-by-step through various events, God had developed the nation of Israel
- Most recently we find that God had allowed this group of people who were not yet a nation to be in captivity, to be in slavery in Egypt for four hundred years.
- Even in times of testing, there are purposes
- It is one of the basic lessons of Scripture that we need to learn if we don't already know it
- Hopefully by now you are aware of the fact that testing and trials always have a purpose
- They always accomplish something good
- One of several things that was accomplished by that four hundred years of slavery, even though it was a cruel slavery and it was a difficult time, was that this group of people that God had called to be His nation had the opportunity to flourish and grow numerically during that four hundred years while someone else took care of them
- Israel never had to fight a battle
- Israel never had to elect a government
- During those four hundred years, Israel never had to worry about a crop failure
- All of that was taken care of by Egypt
- Egypt was the one whom God used to protect His nation, even though it was in the form of slavery, while that nation was developing and coming to strength
- But when the time came that God's people had reached the number that He had in mind, then He brought them out of slavery
- We now find Moses on the mountain getting the commandments from God
- The people have been wandering in the wilderness for years
- They are ready to go into the promised land
- As it turns out, they are going to have to wander a lot longer because they refused to trust God and believe Him

- It was while Moses was away from the people that this incident of rebellion against God on the part of His own people whom He had miraculously delivered took place
- Israel's behavior at this point in their history is impossible to understand, isn't it?
- These people had miraculously been delivered by God and had seen Pharaoh's armies dead on the seashore
- They had gone across the Red Sea on dry land - a miraculous delivery, no way could they explain it but the work of God
- They had sung a beautiful hymn of praise to God, praising Him for all of His greatness
- God had provided daily bread, meat and water for them in the wilderness
- It is hard to understand, unless we think about our own hearts and minds
- It's amazing how these hearts of ours can think thoughts of sublime and sincere praise to God
- We can be almost overcome with emotion from time-to-time when we come to grips with what God has really done for us
- Yet these same hearts and these same lips can speak words of cursing and discouragement to those around us if we are provoked properly
- That is because we are still human beings
- We are only sinners saved by grace
- When we accept the fact that Jesus Christ died for our sins, we don't immediately become perfect
- We don't immediately lose all of our tendency to sin
- We are still only sinners saved by grace, and Israel is a perfect picture of that
- If you have been baptized for more than twenty-four hours, I am sure you are aware of this fact
- The more we walk with the Lord and as we feed on His Word, we become more like Jesus Christ
- But our human faults and tendencies are there with us, and it is only by God's power that those things can be removed

- Don't expect to automatically become a fine, upstanding person just because you have been baptized
- That only comes through knowing the Lord more and more and walking in obedience to His Word, making His Word not just some kind of book that we read and think about from time to time, but making it a book to which our lives conform
- Israel was like you and me
- They were a rebellious people
- Remember, Moses had been up on Mt. Sinai with God getting the law for some six weeks, but with Moses gone only six weeks, the people grew restless and turned away from God, even though they had the pillar of fire to guide them by night and the cloud to guide them by day, obvious personal manifestations of God present with them
- Exodus 32:1 KJV
 - 1) And when the people **saw** that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for *as for* this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.
- Notice that the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain
- They had their eyes, you see, on a man
- They had the miraculous provision of God all around them, but their eyes weren't on God; their eyes were on a man
- Here was God, literally providing their food on a day by day basis, and they got worried when Moses wasn't there
- So, in their fear they turned to another man...
- They come to Aaron and they explain their situation. ``Moses is gone and we don't know what has happened to him"
- The implication is ``We don't think that he is coming back. Aaron, we want you to take over. Do something for us. Do something that we can see. We are concerned and we need something that we can put our eyes on."
- Again, here is the failure of their faith
- Faith is ``the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen"

- This is another characteristic of Israel
- Not only did they have their eyes on a man, but if they could not have their eyes on that man, then they had to have their eyes on something
- One of the things which we need to be cautiously alert in our own lives is being able to see something, being able to put our hands on something spiritually
- There is a real tendency to demand that God give us a sign
- Remember, Faith is the evidence of things not seen
- You do not have to see something physically happen in your life in order to say that you have a real experience with God
- You don't have to be able to say, "I know it because I have seen it"
- It is actually quite the opposite, and these people began to rebel against God when their demand was for something that they could see and something that they could feel and something that they could touch
- It is a warning sign when our own hearts begin to desire something that we can feel and touch and see
- If God provides an obvious visible sign, as often He does, that is fine
- There is nothing wrong in being able to say, "I know God did this for me because I saw it very clearly," but what I am talking about is the demand that Israel made
- Aaron failed the test
- Aaron was able to stand in front of people and lead a crowd, but Aaron failed the test of leadership because he gave the people what they wanted when it was clear that what they wanted was the wrong thing

What was so wrong with making an image to the true God?

- * Moses was still up on the mountain receiving the Ten Commandments, and hadn't given them to the people yet
- It wasn't a false god, it was YAHWEH in Verse 5
- Why was God so displeased with that?
- God was displeased with that because God is not interested in the letter of the law only
- God is interested in our intentions

- God is interested in the spirit of the law
- It does no good, and this is one of the many illustrations of it in the Scripture, to have a feast to Jehovah if you are going to be worshipping a golden calf
- It does no good to be giving lip-service to Jesus Christ if you are not living in obedience to Him
- It is a waste of time to claim to be one of Christ's people if your life has nothing to show for it
- Now Moses gets one of the greatest temptations he will ever receive
- Exodus 32:10 KJV

10) Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation.

- It is an interesting thing to notice, and it is a very obvious thing to notice that here we have in the Hebrew and the English the very wording and the very form of the wording that God had originally said to Abraham when his name was Abram: "I will make of thee a great nation"
- God says, "Stand back. Moses, I am going to do away with this nation, this continually rebellious people, and I am going to make of thee a great nation. I am not going to abandon My plan. I am going to redeem the human race. I am going to bring the Redeemer through a holy line, but Moses, I am through with Abraham's seed. I am going to make of thee a great nation."
- Here was Moses' greatest test because Moses had the opportunity now to become the center of human history
- One of the greatest tests a man can face is the test of success
- One of the greatest tests that a believer can face is the test of being useful to God, and there are not very many men who can stand the test
- Again and again, we find men who begin to be used by God and they begin to consider that they are above the laws of God, and they begin to believe that they can tell a lie and get away with it
- They begin to believe that they can take this liberty in the area of morality and get away with it, in the area of sexual things or perhaps in the area of financial things
- They feel that they are so indispensable to God that surely God will overlook this sin
- The greatest tests in the Christian life are the tests that come with usefulness to God

- How does Moses react to this temptation?
- No ordinary man could withstand that kind of test, and as I have just been saying, there are lesser ones of us who can't stand even a much smaller test than that, so how does Moses react to that?
- Here we have a reference to the relentless intercession of Moses
- Moses the Advocate
- Exodus 32:11 KJV
 - 11) And Moses besought the LORD his God, and said, LORD, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand?
- Did Moses smile to himself and say, ``Well, I have always felt that these descendants of Abraham were not what they ought to be, and I have always wondered maybe privately if God couldn't do a little better by making a nation out of me"
- What did he do?
- He turned to God, and we have in the remainder of this chapter relentless intercession
- Moses goes to God and he goes to the people and he doesn't give up
- He reminds God of His testimony before the Egyptians
- He reminds God of his promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob
- And look what happens...
- Exodus 32:14 KJV
 - 14) And the LORD repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people.
- Moses the Advocate saves the lives of the rebellious sinners in Israel...