

15 JULY

BIBLE LESSON
Acts 7:26-27

LESSON
Who made thee
a ruler?

VERSE 27
*But he that did his neighbour
wrong thrust him away,
saying, Who made thee a ruler
and a judge over us?*

God had sent Moses to deliver the Jews from their Egyptian masters. Defiantly, they turned around and questioned his leadership. It must have been very discouraging for Moses. Moses became the proverbial “punching bag” even as he led the Jews to the Promised Land. The Jews accused Moses of bringing them into the desert to die. They complained about every little discomfort. They challenged his authority to lead. They complained about the food and longed to be back in Egypt eating the leeks and fish there. Jesus faced the same from the high priest, scribes and Pharisees when they asked Him. “Tell us, by what authority doest Thou these things? or who is he that gave Thee this authority?” [Luke 20:2]. But before we condemn the Jews, let us reflect on our own actions. The truth is that we are no better.

When we accept Jesus as our Saviour, we surrender our will to Him. This means living a life pleasing to Him. Our life’s testimony should glorify our Lord. And the real test comes when we are under stress and face difficulties. Do we trust God in faith or do we question Him? To question is tantamount to asking as the Jews did – “Who made Thee a ruler?”

Being human, Moses often despaired but he persevered by God’s grace. This is the example of our service for God. Even when the sun is not shining and things are not going our way, God is there with us.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JEREMIAH 36
GALATIANS 1

THOUGHT

Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.
– 2 Corinthians 4:9-10

16 JULY

BIBLE LESSON
Acts 7:28-29

LESSON
The kings
of the earth

VERSE 29

*Then fled Moses at this
saying, and was a stranger
in the land of Midian,
where he begat two sons.*

Although Moses was brought up as an Egyptian prince, he had empathy for the Hebrews whose sufferings he identified with. One day, he was so angered seeing an Egyptian taskmaster striking a Jew that he slew the Egyptian. Moses then fled for his life, away from the court, from the royal lifestyle he was familiar with, to dwell in the land of Midian, as a nobody. But Moses believed and looked forward to a day when Jehovah would deliver the Hebrews, God's chosen people, from the bondage of Egypt and bring them to the land promised to Abraham their forefather.

Moses' faith is best described in Hebrews 11:24-26. He "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter". He refused the wealth, honour, power and status that was his to have. He chose "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season". He chose hardship over comfort, shame and reproach over fame and honour, the wilderness over the court, and "esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt". "By faith Moses ... refused ... chose ... esteemed".

Moses, with his feelings for his people and great faith in God, was used by God to be their deliverer. Dear reader, do you have compassion for those who are lost, enslaved by sin, and headed for eternal hellfire? Are you willing to forgo position, power, wealth and pleasure and have the faith of Moses, willing to submit to God and be used by Him to save souls?

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JEREMIAH 37
GALATIANS 2

THOUGHT

Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.
– Hebrews 12:2

17 JULY

BIBLE LESSON
Acts 7:30
Exodus 2:15-22

LESSON
Forty years
in the wilderness

VERSE 30

*And when forty years were
expired, there appeared to him
in the wilderness of mount
Sina an angel of the Lord in
a flame of fire in a bush.*

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JEREMIAH 38
GALATIANS 3

THOUGHT

Moses took matters into his own hands and impulsively slew an Egyptian. He then fled into exile to the desert of Midian. Moses must have thought that all had come to naught, that the Jews did not care for what he did, and his good intentions towards them completely unappreciated and rebuffed.

Moses had fallen from a high position, potentially being king, to the lowliest place of a shepherd among the poorest of people. However, unknown to Moses, this was all within God's plan of preparing and using him to deliver the Israelites at the right moment in time.

The first phase of Moses' preparation was his forty years in the palace where "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds" [Acts 7:22]. The second was the next forty years in the desert of Midian with God. The training here was valuable and necessary for Moses to carry out the work God had in store for him. Moses needed spiritual preparation to do the spiritual task. During this time of close communion, God spoke in person with Moses - "face to face" and "mouth to mouth" [Numbers 12:6-8]. God requires us to spend exclusive time with Him so that we can know Him and His will better.

Moses learnt humility and reliance on God rather than self. Our endeavours and aspirations must be all of God and none of self. May God's lesson for Moses be ours too as we seek to do His will.

Not by might, nor by power, but by My spirit, saith the LORD of hosts. – Zechariah 4:6b

18 JULY

BIBLE LESSON
Acts 7:30b-31
Exodus 3: 1-5

LESSON
The Lord
in the flame of the bush

VERSE 31
*When Moses saw it,
he wondered at the sight:
and as he drew near to behold
it, the voice of the Lord
came unto him.*

After forty years of personal tutelage by the Divine Tutor in the wilderness, Moses was ready for God's use to fulfil His promise to Abraham – that after four hundred years of captivity in a foreign land [Genesis 15:13-14], the Jews would be returned. The burning bush encounter was Moses' commissioning service and God would take the man, presently an obscure shepherd, and make him the greatest and best known leader of Israel until the advent of Jesus Christ Himself. The bush was ordinary but the fire that burned was a supernatural phenomenon as it was inextinguishable and the shrub was not consumed.

Throughout the Old Testament, fire is a symbol of divine revelation viz. "lamp" [Genesis 15:17] and "fire" [Exodus 24:17; Isaiah 10:17]. This bush stood out among others because the divine presence was manifested by the fire burning on it. Similarly, Moses' face shone after meeting God and he would stand out from the people because God's glory was reflected in his life through his close and enduring relationship with the Almighty. Dear reader, do we have such a relationship with God that His glory reflects off us?

Jesus promised His disciples, "ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me ..." [Acts 1:8]. When the Holy Spirit did come upon them as cloven tongues of fire, they became powerful witnesses for Jesus Christ.

May it be our earnest prayer that God will help us walk closely with Him and cause our hearts to burn with Holy Spirit desire to obey Him and be faithful witnesses for Him.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JEREMIAH 39
GALATIANS 4

THOUGHT

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. – John 1:14

19 JULY

BIBLE LESSON
Acts 7:32
Exodus 3: 5-6

LESSON
I am the God
of thy fathers

VERSE 32
*Saying, I am the God
of thy fathers,
the God of Abraham,
and the God of Isaac,
and the God of Jacob.
Then Moses trembled,
and durst not behold.*

The Angel of the Lord, the pre-incarnate appearance of the second Person of the Godhead, declared to Moses, “I am the God of thy fathers ...” so that a feeble man would be in no doubt that God was speaking and calling for his attention, reverence, faith and obedience. His self-reference as the “I AM” embodies the name used by Jehovah, God Almighty Himself, before.

Stating that Moses’ forefathers though physically dead were still having a relationship with their heavenly Father, declares that their souls continue to live on, as Jesus similarly declared in Luke 20:37-38 “Moses shewed at the bush ... For He is not a God of the dead, but of the living ...”.

God reminds Moses that He is the covenant-keeping God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses himself. This was the promise and reassurance that God would be to Moses whatever he needed, even as He commissioned Moses to lead His people out of Egypt. Moses was simply required to show faith – “But without faith it is impossible to please Him” [Hebrews 11:6a]. If we wish to serve God acceptably, we too need first to behold the glory and holiness of God, have faith and submit ourselves totally to Him.

Just as God had revealed to Moses that He was the great “I AM THAT I AM” [Exodus 3:14], Jesus told the Jews, “Before Abraham was, I am.” [John 8:58]. God is the unchanging, eternal Father in heaven, all sovereign, and upon His promises, we can trust that He will provide for and guide us every step of our way.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JEREMIAH 40
GALATIANS 5

THOUGHT

How wonderful it is to know that the Lord Jesus Christ is our great I AM.

20 JULY

BIBLE LESSON
Acts 7:33
Exodus 3:5-6

LESSON
Holy Ground

VERSE 33

*Then said the Lord to him,
Put off thy shoes from thy
feet: for the place where thou
standest is holy ground.*

As Moses drew near the burning bush to investigate the fire, God stopped him and commanded that he take off his shoes. God did not want Moses' carnal curiosity to become casual familiarity. God's presence sanctified the ground and made it holy. Moses was not allowed to desecrate that place of God's presence with his soiled sandals. Just as Moses was forbidden to seek God out of mere curiosity, we are also forbidden to approach God with a spirit of chummy casualness.

We are to approach God reverentially, with holy awe and humility, a broken spirit and a contrite heart [Psalm 51:17] acknowledging our unworthiness and thankful for His everlasting love, grace and mercy upon us. And God is omnipresent, He is always before us and with us. So as His children, "called ... unto holiness" [1 Thessalonians 4:7], we are perpetually "on holy ground" – standing in His presence.

Our Lord Jesus instructed that God must be worshipped "in spirit and in truth". True worship comes about when we comprehend the awesomeness of God in all His glory and attributes. We will then worship with reverence, with right attitudes and sincere hearts, putting away the shoes of sin, worldly cares and distractions. We will come to Him with anticipation, ready to praise Him and receive His Word. In reverence to God and the sanctity of His worship, let us therefore guard against habitual tardiness, a casual attitude or inappropriate attire, inattentiveness and even unnecessary movement during our worship service. Then will our worship be well-pleasing to God to the glory of His name.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JEREMIAH 41
GALATIANS 6

THOUGHT

O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness:
fear before Him, all the earth. – Psalm 96:9

21 JULY

BIBLE LESSON
Acts 7:34
Exodus 3:7-10

LESSON
I have seen ...
I have heard ...
I will deliver

VERSE 34

*I have seen, I have seen
the affliction of my people
which is in Egypt, and
I have heard their groaning,
and am come down
to deliver them.
And now come,
I will send thee into Egypt.*

Stephen's recounting of the Israelites' exodus history was a pointed reminder to his accusers, the religious leaders, that God Whom they so hypocritically professed great zeal for, was a seeing, hearing and delivering God as evidenced by what He had done for the Israelites in Egyptian captivity through His messenger Moses. Israel's oppression was heavy, their taskmasters harsh but God saw His people's treatment in Egypt. Their cries were heard by the God unseen to them. God knew their sufferings and He would act. In accordance with His covenantal promises and divine plan, God had prepared a mediator and deliverer in the land of Midian.

For disbelievers, false professors, self-righteous, self-sufficient and wilful rejecters of God's pardoning grace, know that God hears and knows every idle word uttered, every sinful thought conjured in the heart. The time of God's longsuffering and patience toward such will sadly end, as it did for Pharaoh, and then will be the judgement. [Hebrews 9:27]

For a child of God, it is a comforting reminder that God Himself is very present in His children's circumstances, whatever these may be. For the Israelites of old, God saw and did not overlook them in their plight. For Stephen in his present hour of crisis, standing as a faithful witness for Christ, God was there with him.

For each of us in our own particular predicament, God sees our sorrows, hears our prayers and He will deliver according to His perfect timing and sovereign will. God sees and His deliverance is assured.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JEREMIAH 42
EPHESIANS 1

THOUGHT

We are never alone; God is with us. Read Psalm 139.

22 JULY

BIBLE LESSON
Acts 7:35
Exodus 3:11-15

LESSON
Rejected by man,
sent by God

VERSE 35
*This Moses whom they refused,
saying, Who made thee a ruler
and a judge? the same did
God send to be a ruler and a
deliverer by the hand of the
angel which appeared to him
in the bush.*

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JEREMIAH 43
EPHESIANS 2

THOUGHT

Having reminded the synagogue leaders what God had done for their forefathers, Stephen now reminds them how they had requited God then. They had rejected Moses the first time he presented himself [Exodus 2:13-14], but God's sovereign purpose is never thwarted and Moses would return to be their deliverer, albeit forty years later.

In rehearsing the past to the Jews that day, Stephen was charging that they were in danger of committing the same error by rejecting Christ and the New Covenant Gospel, which his messengers were proclaiming. Jesus, the greater Moses, was sent by God to be their Deliverer but had been despised and rejected by them. They had crucified the Shepherd and were now scattering the sheep [Zechariah 13:7].

Like Moses, Christ will appear a second time when this age of grace is over and He will lead His people into the eternal promised land. However, unlike diffident Moses, who was apprehensive of the Hebrews' objections [Exodus 3:13], Christ will return as King of kings, resplendent in glory, surrounded by the heavenly host, heralded by celestial trumpets. Then, there will be no question Who He is, because God has "given Him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

For those who have not put their faith in Christ, it will be a terrifying day too late for regret. For true believers, it will be a day of jubilation because their Lord has returned. Which are you?

While there is yet time, invite Jesus into your life as your personal Lord and Saviour. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." There may not be a tomorrow.