

ON WHOSE SIDE ARE YOU?

"Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord's side? let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him." Exodus 32:26.

This chapter contains the account of the idolatry of the Israelites and of the reaction of God to it.

Moses went up into the mountain to hold communion with God. While he was gone the Israelites began to murmur and to complain. They wanted gods of their own. Aaron, the brother of Moses, was their priest. He yielded to the demands of the people, and when they brought their gold ear rings to him, he made a golden calf out of them for them to worship.

For forty days, Moses remained in the quiet of the mountains, communing with God and seeking His guidance for the people. Meanwhile, the ones for whom Moses was praying, and to whose highest welfare he was devoting his life, had drifted back into idolatry, and had made them a calf of gold, and were proposing to worship that. When Moses came down from the mountain he found the people deep in their idolatry. It looked as if the whole nation was in danger of being swept away from the faith by a popular flood of idolatry.

Moses was indignant because of what he saw. His forty days of communion with God made him courageous, dauntless, and brave. Standing there in the midst of the multitude that was intoxicated with their lustful pleasures and their fanatical worship, Moses was equal to the emergency. Entirely thoughtless as to his personal safety, Moses tore down their idol, burned it in the fire and ground it into powder, and scattered it upon the water from which the children of Israel would drink. Then, he upbraided them to their faces. One admires his courage, wonders at his remarkable power, and delights to learn the secret of such strength.

From whence did he derive his power? He had been alone with God for forty days. Heavenly communion made him strong, and it makes anybody strong. Having talked with God in the secret place, it is no wonder that he was fearless in the presence of man. Familiar with the sublime, he did not fear those who dared to liken the glory of God to the image of an ox that eateth grass. Being a man of prayer, he had stayed the hand of the Almighty on the mountain's brow till even God Himself had said, "Let Me alone." You may be sure of this, that the man who has power with God will have power with men. If we have power with God for men, we shall have power with men for God.

Immediately after Moses had descended the mountain, and discovered that multitudes of the children of Israel had worshipped the golden calf which Aaron had set up, he put this question to them, "Who is on the Lord's side?" No question could have been more arousing. It must have sent dismay and trepidation into the bosom of the whole host of idolaters, while at the same time it so filled with courage the hearts of God's true worshippers that three thousand men immediately stepped forth, sword in hand, ready to avenge the quarrel of his covenant.

I. A Conflict.

There are two sides--the Lord's and Satan's. There is a conflict between them. There is a constant warfare between good and evil. In this warfare there is a need for taking sides. Everyone is taking sides. One cannot be neutral. "He that is not with me is against me." Not to be on the Lord's side is to be on the side of His enemies. On whose side are you?

Our scripture implies that there are but two sides which can possibly be taken, that everyone may ascertain on which of these sides he is, and that all ought to be on the Lord's side.

Being on the Lord's side implies a forsaking of Satan's side, an acceptance of Christ as personal Saviour, a public enlistment on His side, a military disposition, a readiness to obey the new Commander, and a full dedication of our powers to Him for use in His service.

II. A Choice.

There are only two sides with respect to Christ. Each of us takes one side or the other. Each accepts Him or rejects Him. Every man, young or old, high or low, rich or poor, learned or ignorant, bond or free, has his place in God's constant view, either as a believer or an unbeliever, a saint or a sinner, a friend or an enemy. It is so now, and it will be true forever. One cannot be neutral. Pilate tried to be neutral, but he failed utterly. All possible courses with respect to Christ are inevitably reduced to two -- for Christ or against Him. Not to take sides with Him is to be against Him.

This matter of making the choice calls for resolute decision. God has endowed us with the privilege of choice, and we say "yes" or "no" to His call. We must make a choice, one way or the other, concerning Christ. This is a choice of eternal moment. If the wrong choice is made, the outcome will be fatal. If the right choice is made, the result will be glorious.

III. A Challenge.

"Who is on the Lord's side? let him come unto me." In this avowal there is, first of all, a coming out. They were to come out from among the idolaters. This avowal was not a mere coming out only. They were to come to the Leader.

Our test constitutes a call to a most important decision. It is one which influences all other decisions in life whether personal, domestic, business or professional. It affects character, conduct and destiny.

1. Why should you get on the Lord's side?

(1) He wants you to.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16.

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." II Peter 3:9.

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." John 6:37.

(2) He has a right to ask it of you.

This right is based on creation, preservation, providential care and redemption.

(3) You need to be on His side.

- a. It is the side of light.
- b. It is the side of life.
- c. It is the side of love.
- d. It is the side of liberty.
- e. It is the side of purity.
- f. It is the side of honor.
- g. It is the right side.
- h. It is the strongest side.
- i. It is the safe side.
- j. It is the happy side.
- k. It is the useful side.
- l. It is the victorious side.

2. How can you get on the Lord's side?

- (1) Realize that you are not on it.
- (2) Realize that it is possible for you to get on it.
- (3) Desire to get on it.
- (4) Decide to get on it.
- (5) Forsake Satan's side.
- (6) Repent of your sins.
- (7) Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. When should you get on the Lord's side?

- (1) While you are young.

It is easier to decide then than at any other time in life. "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." Ecclesiastes 12:1.

- (2) Now.

- a. To be prepared to live as you ought.

If you expect to live the highest and best life, you must be a Christian. Christ wants to save your life -- energies, influence, and example, as well as your soul.

- b. To be prepared to die.

Wisdom demands that the inevitable shall be prepared for. Satan's masterpiece of strategy is to get you to keep on delaying your acceptance of Christ.

- c. To be prepared for what comes after death.

There is every good reason why you should become a Christian and enlist on the Lord's side now. There is not a single reason why you should delay this all-important matter. Ultimately you will wish that you had come out on the Lord's side much earlier. So, come and enlist on the Lord's side now.