

Deuteronomy

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Preacher: Collier, Gilbert (1900-1984)

- [0 : 0 0] The text this morning is found in the book of Deuteronomy, the 33rd chapter, and the verses are the 18th and the 19th.
- The 33rd of Deuteronomy, the 18th and the 19th verses, and of Zebulun, he said, Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out, and Issachar in thy tent.
- They shall call the people unto the mountain, there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness, for they shall suffer the abundance of the seas, and of the treasures hid in the sand.
- We have here two characters, and as we come down to the book of Deuteronomy, as Moses, the writer of this book, by inspiration, we have them as tribes, two tribes of the children of Israel.
- They may well be overlooked. There are outstanding characters among the children of Israel, the tribes of the Israelites, that stand out far more prominently and significantly than these two tribes, Zebulun and Issachar.
- [2 : 1 4] There is something about these two tribes that seems to appeal to my mind and thought this morning, and they suggest all their conditions and what God did to them and spoke to them and commanded them, seems to my mind to suggest a great deal that is in close accord with the conditions and experiences of the children of God, of their experience in various scenes, activities, and pursuits in the path of life and truth.
- Now, they were, of course, the two sons that Leah bore to Jacob. And no doubt they were very close to Leah, their mother, because they were given to her under a time of considerable trial, painful experience.
- As you know, in looking into the book of Genesis, she was to a degree neglected. Her sister Rachel had taken the heart of her husband and Leah felt herself to be sidetracked, so to speak, and forgotten.
- And then the Lord, in his great mercy and goodness, gave her these two sons in rapid succession. And they, both of them, seemed to be all involved in the mind and experience of Leah as some particular favor of the Lord in her own pathway and experience.
- It's into her, no doubt, that here was the Lord's answer to her travail and her painful circumstances. Here was something that indicated that she was not forgotten by the Lord, even if she was forgotten to some degree by her husband.
- [5 : 1 1] And so these two boys, they came and they doubtless were a very choice treasure in the eyes of their mother.
- and you will notice things that are very closely associated with them.
- And as we look into the Word, we shall see this morning things that are very different, decidedly different.
- And we shall try to discover what this difference means. For instance, you see, God said by Moses, his servant, he says, let Zebulun rejoice in his going out.
- And he says the same to Issachar, let Issachar rejoice in his tent. Now, there's a very big difference between going out.

[6 : 21] You could say, well, I can understand people being able to rejoice in going out. There was something to experience, something to get hold upon, so to speak, something to attract the mind and to enhance the thought.

Oh, yes, there's always some excitement in going out. But to remain at home, remain by the tents, what can be exciting about that?

that must be the lesser portion, surely, that was consigned to these two characters.

The one to go out to experience, to discover, and the other to remain past by their tents.

But you'll notice this, though the difference of God's commandment and his appointment, it was God's appointment for these two characters, and we must never forget that.

[7 : 49] I want us to lay this very much in our hearts this morning. But there was one command that was the same in both cases, and that command was for them both, to rejoice.

let Zebulun rejoice in his going out, and let not Isaac fail to rejoice in his staying at home.

Now you see, there we have the secret. It's what the Lord commands. This is the all-important thing.

A person may say, well, look at another person, they may look at another person. They may say, well, that person seems to be engaged so fully, so much more than I am.

They have far more opportunities than I do. I envy their lot. God. I wish I could exchange with them.

[8 : 57] But it may well be that that person that is thus speaking has the same command from the same God to remain quiet, patient, waiting upon God, and remain in a very smaller sphere and compass, but know them nonetheless less useful.

That's the great point. It's God that decides the usefulness of our calling and our experience. It's not what we judge it to be.

We may think that we are very, very insignificant, that we are not really doing anything at all in the advancing of the Lord's cause, but it's God that judges what we do and how much we do, and if we do the right thing, and therefore let us take a great deal of notice of this incident in the Word of God and try to draw the teaching from it.

that is to be drawn, that God says to his people, he said to these two characters and these two trials, Zebulun rejoiced in thy going out, and to Issachar rejoiced in thy tent.

That is to say, in what may appear to be a far lesser role or function, but nonetheless vital and important.

[10 : 51] Now, I read this morning, as you will remember, what the Apostle Paul says about this. He says, let every man prove his own work, then shall he have rejoicing in himself and not in a lover.

My dear friends, I want you and me to try to prove our own work, not to judge whether we are successful or whether we are doing as much as our neighbor, but whether we are doing what God would have us to do.

Let us prove that we are in line with God and his holy will and his holy word.

Then, and not till then, shall we have rejoicing in ourselves before God. Then again, look at James, the Apostle, what he says.

He says, let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted, but the rich, the rich in that he is brought low.

[12 : 22] So, you see, God has both these functions for his church and his people. We are not all called to go out, to go forth into great experiences.

It's a wonderful privilege if we are. If we are among the zebulums in the Lord's service, it's a great high honor in deed.

But let us remember this, God has equally a place and a portion and a path for his people to take a lesser, quieter place and pathway in his service.

Nonetheless significant, nonetheless important. God says to them, God says to them, he gives them the appointment, and he says to both these characters, rejoice.

There's only one thing that they can rejoice in, and that is the Lord, the Lord's own command to them, the Lord's own promise of support for them, the Lord's purposes and his glory, in these things we may rejoice, not in ourselves, but in the Lord.

[14 : 01] Then again, in our second verse, we see that they are with one mind and with one purpose of heart.

though there's a very great difference between these two characters, Zebulun and Issachar, they both had one aid and one object, and that was to call the people unto the mountain.

Now I can see in this a very important thing. While they were vastly different in their experience and scope and privileges, perhaps, there was one great purpose in their heart, in both of them, and that was to call people to the mountain, to the gospel, that's what it means.

Not only their own people, but their neighbors. Zebulun was a neighbor to Phoenicia, and also a little distance, further distance, but they were neighbors to the Zidonians.

And no doubt, the word of God would call, embrace those people in the call to the gospel.

[15 : 24] My dear friends, you know, the great purpose of the ministry and the ministers of the gospel, if they are true, the great purpose for their lives and all that they do is to call people to the gospel.

They cannot give to the people, to their hearts, the power of the gospel, but they must call people to the gospel. Now, you know, there's a great lack today in this respect.

You will hear from pulpits all kinds of subjects, every kind of subject, social, political, and every other kind of subject almost, but you will hardly ever, in many places, you will hardly ever hear a call to the gospel, call to the need of the gospel, call to the great significance and vast importance of the gospel.

they shall call the people to the mountain. This was one great aim that both of these tribes had, and indeed all the tribes of God.

They have one great purpose, and that is to call. Now, this is an individual thing. Every believer should be an advocate among his fellow men for the cause of God.

[16 : 59] every child of God that has tasted the life of God in their own souls, should have this as a great desire and purpose in their lives, to call men to the gospel.

Now, I know some have taken this to an extremity. God has to have not only called people to the gospel, they have offered the gospel.

Now, there's a very great difference here, my friends. You cannot offer the gospel, because if you offered the gospel, people could reject it.

God will see that every one of his own receives the gospel. He has the power, not us.

But nevertheless, in no way whatever, does it exonerate a person or a minister of the gospel from failing to call people to the gospel.

[18 : 08] people need to call poor sinners, because they're in deep, dire need of God's mercy that is displayed in the gospel.

We need to call men to attention. They're not aware, they're not concerned. We need to awaken, seek to awaken their concern, and call them to the mountain of the gospel.

gospel. Now this is the great aim of both these tribes, Zebulun and Issachar.

One as was going out, one who found his function and vocation in going out, far reaching, extension, beyond his own immediate circle, father.

The other had to remain quiet. As Milton says in one of his great poems, they also serve who only stand and wait.

[19 : 21] now let me say this, we need not try to emulate Issachar if we are simply desiring to find ease and lack of responsibility for ourselves.

to be to be there. There's something needing a great deal of strength and help and courage to be quiet and to wait and to be patient and let patience have her perfect work.

there's something mighty in that, far more than we perhaps realize. To be waiting when we feel everything within us urging us to go on and to make a move and to put our own hands to whatever it may be involved, we may be involved with.

but in those circumstances to be quiet and to wait for the Lord is something that needs the mighty courage and strength that God gives to his people by faith.

And therefore both these functions of these people, they need faith, they need strength. courage to accomplish what God designs for them to fulfill.

[21 : 13] Now, if we turn to Jacob's last words and message, we find that Jacob says about these two characters, his two sons, he says about Zebulun, Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea.

Well, that means a harbor. Now, you know, dear old Jacob, he had a wonderful faith, he had a wonderful foresight. He could see what God would design for his sons, what portion he would concede for them, each one of them, and he could see, he could visualize this son of his Zebulun as dwelling by the haven of the sea at a harbor, a place where a journey begins, where ships go forth and ships return, very important place indeed in the geography of the world is a harbor.

And let us take that and look at it spiritually. Zebulun, Jacob says, he will dwell at a harbor. he will be deeply concerned with the traffic and the going forth out of the harbor and also the return.

This will be his life, this will be his commerce. He will dwell at the haven of the sea. Now let us think of that.

You think of a harbor this morning in the spiritual sense of the word. What does it suggest to your mind and to mine? It suggests a voyage, a voyage of discovery.

[23 : 28] You know, every child of God, not only Zebulun, but every child of God has to go forth on a voyage of discovery. And what a wonderful voyage it is to discover Christ and to discover the wonderful things of God.

To go far out into that realm and that ocean of divine love. You can never discover the whole length and breadth and widths and depths of that love.

but as Paul says to the Ephesians that we may know the love of Christ that passes knowledge. Oh, what a wonderful discovery it is to find Christ and to discover him and his ways.

dear Jacob knew something wonderful about this Zebulun of his and we can see in this illustration that God's word provides for us, we can see a great deal that suggests to our mind of the reality and the possibility of spiritual life and experience going forth from the harbour in the discovery, the voyage of discovery of God and Christ and the things of God.

The many people never seem to set forth at all their content with the harbour and they never venture forth into the oceans.

[25 : 24] Then again there's the voyage of provision. One great thing a harbour is noted and renowned for is the fact that it provides.

It's a place where provisions enter. All needful provisions are brought from far afield. She's speaking in the book of Proverbs about the woman whose merchant ships go afar bringing in wonderful provisions.

the word voyage is an interesting word. It comes from the Latin. It's via via vititum is the Latin title for it and it means this.

It means a voyage of provision and especially the provision for magistrates in their office.

That's where the word comes from. But I do feel this. It's a wonderful thing to be on a voyage for provision.

[26 : 49] In other words to be one that can convey the precious things of Christ to others.

It's a very terrible thing to be a cumber of the ground, to be a useless, empty creature with no service for our fellow men and nothing to give whatsoever.

What a life that must be. If they go on with wrapped up in self, the only center that they have is self, they never know what it is to be break out of that narrow confine and they never know what it is to go forth on a voyage of provision, of being of any value or of any support or of any help to anyone else than themselves.

Now that is an appalling picture of self-centeredness where is the total absence of real spiritual life and power.

Rejoice Zebulun in thy going out. Then again, there's voyages of relief going to the assistance of others that may be in difficulty or in danger.

[28 : 35] When I was a lad, I was greatly interested in the account I read all happened in my own lifetime when I was a young lad, when Sir Ernest Shackleton was stranded on Eleford Dyle with I think it was about 300 of his companions with only two little boats and many hundreds of miles from the nearest habitation which was on South Georgia and it was a desperate situation, no means of communication with the outside world.

somebody had to do a very desperate thing if these men were to be relieved and not to starve eventually to death.

So Shackleton and three of his companions, two of his companions went forth in one of these little boats which they fitted out very carefully and made it more or less proof against wind and wave.

They made this hazardous journey across the southern ocean which is the wildest in all the world to try and find South Georgia and they landed on the opposite side of South Georgia from the whaling station which was on the far side and they had to cross this land uninhabited never crossed before by human feet quite unknown uncharted and Shackleton says in his book he had a feeling that while there were three going on this hazarded journey there seemed always to be a force an unknown force and there's no doubt about it when you come to reread the account of that journey that they were very clearly under the hand of

God who guided them and preserved them and eventually brought them to South Georgia whaling station where they were able to find relief to go forth back again to Elephant Island and bring off their companions now that was a voyage of outstanding merit and courage and endurance Zebulun rejoiced in my going out it's a wonderful thing to be occupied and to be enabled to do something in a way of relief for others I may be saying things this morning that seem almost on a different line but they're very important and they are part of the great truth of God they're not to be neglected or ignored they're to be taken to heart and if we are truly seekers after the

[32 : 16] Lord if we are among those who desire to know the Lord and would count ourselves as among those who fear the Lord then let us take note of what God appoints for his people it may not be for all of them but he does for some of them Zebulun rejoice in thy going out well then we come to Issachar Issachar in thy tent what a different appointment this is why should poor Issachar be confined to that narrow limitation of his own tents seeing the same scene day by day and week by week and year by year isn't there anything for

Issachar God says rejoice Issachar in thy tent there's something all important wherever God may place us whatever limitations it may appear to us to hold for there's something great all important in it don't let us calculate our usefulness by our limitations let us think of this if we are here for whatever purpose then let seek every possible opportunity of magnifying our office and fulfilling our task and our undertaking rejoice Issachar in thy tent I've already said this morning it needs a mighty deal of courage and strength to be patient when we feel we ought to be on the move to wait when we think we must take steps to change our lot or our portion we need a great deal of courage and faith also to wait for the

Lord when the enemy comes around us like he did with Hezekiah and the people of Jerusalem there they were gathering nearer and nearer every moment they knew that almost at any time they would launch forth their furious attack upon Jerusalem what does Hezekiah say be still more are they that are for us than they that are against us trust in the Lord be quiet oh people say what advice that is indeed how impossible it is and yet this is God's advice to His people such as

Issachah Issachah rejoices in thy tents do you feel that there's so little for you to do there may be the all important thing for you I was thinking only this week there was one man in the early twenties or in the twenties that was elected to parliament he never figured in any debate I think hardly ever took any part in any debate he was just a common member of parliament but in 1928 there came a bill before parliament which was of great importance for the nation it respected the change in the worship of the national church and if that bill had gone through and passed into law there would have been a terrible change in our national life and our national church that man had never spoken in parliament before he rose on his feet and he spoke and there was no doubt that he spoke the word of truth and of

God in the great assembly and he was taken so much notice on that the measure was thrown out that was being introduced into parliament and the day was saved and the nation's church was spared a terrible infringement by its alterations now there was one man so you might have said well whatever good is he in parliament he just has got elected he draws the remuneration and that's all he said but you see there was one and when he had done this when he had made this great contribution he faded out of the notice of man and I know not how long if how long afterwards did he remain member of parliament you see my friend there may be just one thing whilst you are remaining in your tents there may be just one thing and that will be the all important thing in god's purpose and his plans and you can say this and all god will say this ishaka rejoice in thy tent yes it's a great wonder that god's providence god's glorious plan of providence and the provision he makes for his people for their service and their way of life and their function is all in the mighty hands of god we think we can appoint this and that and the other and manipulate and contrive and we think we'll go out and do great things when many people have gone out in that spirit they've ended up in absolute disgrace or disaster but rejoice zebulun in thy going out young man young woman you that are on the threshold of life take heed of this there's a going out it may be for you and it is a word for all of us because there's a tendency for us all to remain to take the easiest course to take the line of least resistance you know what that means don't you there's one great thing that is over us and has to be removed from us and that is spare thyself oh eliminate that spirit from your life my friend eliminate it by god's grace and cease to spare yourself go out zebulun go out says the lord and you'll find this it's a hard way yes there's many a danger yes there's many a likelihood of coming back very much different yes but rejoice rejoice rejoice in the lord paul says rejoice in the lord and again again after all the possibilities difficulties confrontations again i say rejoice yes

[41 : 28] well then another thing and this is final there's something about these tents that i want to tell you this morning you know a tent is a very sacred thing it was in the eyes of the old testament people have you ever seen what god said to david through nathan the prophet he woke nathan up at night one night and he said go and tell david he said tell him this hast thou wilt thou build me a house i have not walked in a house but in a tent since i brought the children of israel out of israel i walked in a tent now that means to say that when god says to issaakah issaakah rejoice in thy tent it's rejoicing in where god walks where god is it means worship that's what it means it's not just doing standing stationary and doing nothing and waiting and watching it's worship rejoice issaakah in thy tent in the worship of god and worship needs everything else excluded real worship we need to have everything taken away from our minds we need to be alone with god we need a tent so to speak where we can enjoy god alone this is what i understand this word to issaakah to mean god walked in a tent and that is where we shall walk with him in the tent of worship rejoice semulim in thy going out and issaakah in thy tents amen dan to classroom aid a time to and to own vanity and nothing and here to

Cord as knew that are essential of sp you can breathe as Move you to see