

Why is Hobab Important for Us Today?

How many of us have heard of Hobab?

2 Timothy 3:16-17 [NIV] *“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”*

This is an overall principle, every inspired Word of God in every part of The Bible is of value to us.

Moses was human and as with all humans he made mistakes

The agreement that Moses made with Hobab was one of his major mistakes.

Numbers 10:29-32 [NIV] *“Now Moses said to Hobab son of Reuel the Midianite, Moses’ father-in-law, “We are setting out for the place about which the LORD said, ‘I will give it to you.’ Come with us and we will treat you well, for the LORD has promised good things to Israel.” He answered, “No, I will not go; I am going back to my own land and my own people.” But Moses said, “Please do not leave us. You know where we should camp in the desert, and you can be our eyes. If you come with us, we will share with you whatever good things the LORD gives us.”*

When we read this in context with what God had promised He would do for Moses it is hard to understand why Moses would hire Hobab to be his guide.

Exodus 23:20-23 [NIV] *“See, I am sending an angel ahead of you to guard you along the way and to bring you to the place I have prepared. Pay attention to him and listen to what he says. Do not rebel against him; he will not forgive your rebellion, since my Name is in him. If you listen carefully to what he says and do all that I say, I will be an enemy to your enemies and will oppose those who oppose you. My angel will go ahead of you and bring you into the land of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hivites and Jebusites, and I will wipe them out.”*

A powerful and very clear promise from God who had shown that He had the power to fulfil His promises in bringing the whole nation out of Egypt.

Why did Moses look to the gentile to be his guide when God was performing as He had promised?

Numbers 10:33-34 [NIV] *“So they set out from the mountain of the LORD and travelled for three days. The ark of the covenant of the LORD went before them during those three days to find them a place to rest. The cloud of the LORD was over them by day when they set out from the camp.”*

Through a divinely appointed angel, the ark and a cloudy pillar God Himself was guiding Israel through the wilderness.

What need was there for Hobab’s eyes?

Hobab was not to blame, he had been put under pressure to go with Moses, he wanted to go home.

There is reason to believe that Hobab may have been there as a “*spiritual stumbling block*” to both Moses and the nation of Israel.

The more they trusted in Hobab the less they would be trusting in God, and that proved to be “*bad news*” for both Moses and Israel.

The Church Universal and each of us individually have an appointed guide to lead us in our earthly journey to the Promised Land.

John 14:26 [NIV] *“But the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”*

Romans 8:14 [NIV] *“...because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.”*

These and many more scriptures assure us that we are all under the direct care of the Holy Spirit.

Safety from evil and the evil one [Satan] and a fruitful life are the promised result of accepting the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

Such blessing come directly from our submission to and obedience to the Holy Spirit [God].

What need then do we have of Hobab’s eyes to guide us in our journey through life?

Yet inspite of these sound, faithful promises from God the Church as a whole and we as individuals eagerly look to an army of Hobabs for guidance and leadership.

Hobab is anything that is introduced into the Holy work of God which does not have biblical authority for its existence.

Hobab is **not** an individual!

Hobab takes different forms for different people.

Hobab is whatever takes our attention away from the modern day cloud and fire of Moses’ day.

Whatever diverts our attention from the leading of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Hobab is whatever causes us to trust in other people, including ourselves rather than total trust in our Saviour and His representative here on earth at this time, the Holy Spirit.

David experienced making a Hobab mistake in his life.

David in his desire and enthusiasm to worship God took the initiative and did it in his own way instead of obeying the clear instructions given by Holy Spirit.

1 Chronicles 13:3-4 [NIV] *“Let us bring the ark of our God back to us, for we did not enquire of it during the reign of Saul.” The whole assembly agreed to do this, because it seemed right to all the people.”*

David did what seemed to be right and all the people followed his lead instead of that of the Holy Spirit.

Each of us must look out for and reject the Hobab in our own life and in the life of our own church congregation.

When we discover our personal Hobab we need to get rid of him right away and follow only the lead of the Holy Spirit who brings to our remembrance God’s Word.

1 Chronicles 13:7-12 [NIV] *“They moved the ark of God from Abinadab’s house on a new cart, with Uzzah and Ahio guiding it. David and all the Israelites were celebrating with all their might before God, with songs and with harps, lyres, tambourines, cymbals and trumpets. When they came to the threshing-floor of Kidon, Uzzah reached out his hand to steady the ark, because the oxen stumbled. The LORD’s anger burned against Uzzah, and he struck him down because he had put his hand on the ark. So he died there before God. Then David was angry because the LORD’s wrath had broken out against Uzzah, and to this day that place is called Perez Uzzah. David was afraid of God that day and asked, “How can I ever bring the ark of God to me?”*

This presumptuous act of David and the way the people made David “*a Hobab*” ended in devastating results.

1 Chronicles 15:1-2 [NIV] *“After David had constructed buildings for himself in the City of David, he prepared a place for the ark of God and pitched a tent for it. Then David said, “No-one but the Levites may carry the ark of God, because the LORD chose them to carry the ark of the LORD and to minister before him for ever.”*”

After David’s anger at the results of his presumptuous act died down he checked out how this work of God should have been done.

1 Chronicles 15:13-15 [NIV] *“It was because you, the Levites, did not bring it up the first time that the LORD our God broke out in anger against us. We did not enquire of him about how to do it in the prescribed way.” So the priests and Levites consecrated themselves in order to bring up the ark of the LORD, the God of Israel. And the Levites carried the ark of God with the poles on their shoulders, as Moses had commanded in accordance with the word of the LORD.”*

Too often some “*new way*” of doing God’s work seems so logical and looks like an improvement over the biblical pattern, that it “*catches on*” in the church and quickly spreads.

We Christians are very soon “*following the leader*” docilely following this new “*Hobab*” and justifying his leading presence by appealing to his popularity.

“*Anyone as popular as the Hobab cannot be wrong*” we say, no matter how far he may be from the Word of God.

David repented of the presumptuous “*Hobab*” sin.

Psalms 19:13-14 [King James] *“Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.”*

We all also need to repent of our presumptuous sins, trying to do God’s Work in our own way or taking the initiative ourselves instead of being led by the Holy Spirit.