

I. Verses 18-20

- A. Moses has received his "commission," and now goes and takes leave of Jethro.
- B. Why doesn't Moses fully explain why he is going back?
- C. Jethro sends Moses away with his blessing.
- D. God is prompting him as to exact timing.
- E. Now he will stand before Pharaoh as the representative of God and of Israel.
- F. At least on the first part of this journey, Moses brings his immediate family with him.
- G. Moses brings the staff that God instructed him to use in working miracles.

II. Verse 21-23

- A. We're already clear on the first part: go to Pharaoh and do miracles.
- B. But the next part is harder to take: "But I will harden his heart."
- C. The Bible teaches that:
 - i. God is totally in control.
 - ii. Human beings make genuinely free choices.
- D. But the main purpose of this statement is to warn Moses: Pharaoh will not be happy.
- E. Do you hear what God says? His people are "his firstborn son."
- F. How far would you go to get your child back from a kidnapper?

III. God's love for his children is a *jealous* love. Verses 24-26

- A. Why on earth is this story in the Bible?
- B. What happens here above all shows us God's jealous love for his children.
- C. God's people's children belonged to God – especially their firstborn sons.
- D. Abraham and circumcision (Genesis 15:7-21; 17:9-14)
- E. So what does it mean that Moses has failed to circumcise his son??
- F. God goes after Moses, *because Moses had on a small scale become like Pharaoh, holding back one of God's beloved children.*
- G. God's will not allow anyone or anything to hold his children back from him.

IV. Apart from Christ, every savior is too small.

- A. When we read this, Moses does not come out looking great.
- B. Every savior turns out to be too small; every savior is flawed, needs redemption, needs help.
- C. Over and over they *point to* the way: Jesus says "I am the way."

V. The cost of forgiveness is blood.

- A. Zipporah circumcises her son and smears the bloody piece of skin on Moses.
- B. The blood of a lamb would be smeared on the doorposts of the Israelites, and save them
- C. The price of forgiveness is high; it costs blood; it costs death.
- D. The only question, at the end of the day, is whose blood will be shed.
- E. A day would come when the blood of a son would cover the sins of many. (1 Corinthians 5:7)