

Mose's Last Birthday

No. 209

Introduction.

I. One of the great men in the Old Testament was Moses.

A. At the age of 80 God called him to lead the Israelites out of Egyptian bondage. Through the power of God this man of faith sent 10 plagues on Egypt and led the Israelites out of Egypt and through the divided Red Sea.

B. He then led them to Mount Sinai where God gave him the Ten Commandments.

C. There the Almighty God declared.

EXO 20:2 "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

EXO 20:3 "You shall have no other gods before Me.

EXO 20:4 "You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth.

EXO 20:5 "You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me,

EXO 20:6 but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

EXO 20:7 "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.

EXO 20:8 "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

EXO 20:9 "Six days you shall labor and do all your work,

EXO 20:10 but the seventh day is a sabbath of the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you.

EXO 20:11 "For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.

EXO 20:12 "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the Lord your God gives you.

EXO 20:13 "You shall not murder.

EXO 20:14 "You shall not commit adultery.

EXO 20:15 "You shall not steal.

EXO 20:16 "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

EXO 20:17 "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

II. Moses then led the Israelites to the land of Canaan.

A. **Moses sent 12 spies into Canaan.** (Num. 13:1, 2, 18, 25,27, 31-33; 14:29, 30).

1. Most of the Israelites were not permitted to enter Canaan. None who were 20 years of age or above, except for Joshua and Caleb, would be permitted to enter Canaan.

2. Because of their disbelief the Israelites were compelled to wander in the wilderness for 40 years and suffered great hardships.

B. While in the wilderness we read the Israelites complain about their food and lack of water. (Num. 20:1-13). Moses did not lose his soul, but he would not be permitted to enter the promised land.

C. **This man of faith did not become bitter or give**, but he continued to trust God and lead the Israelites in the wilderness.

1. Near the end of the 40 years of wandering Moses made this statement. (Deut. 31:2).
2. Observe made this statement on his birthday.

III. On the basis of this statement, I have entitled this lesson “**Moses’ Last Birthday.**”

- A. On his last birthday he gave a farewell address to the Israelites.
- B. Let us consider some of the important truths and lesson presented in this farewell message.

I. “**I Am No Longer Able To Come And Go**” - Moses said, “I Am No Longer Able To Come And Go”

A. **This statement is not a reference to his age and feebleness.** Even at the time of his death the Bible says his eyes were not dim nor his vigor abated. (Deut. 34:7).

B. This statement has reference to his death which he sensed was near.

1. This statement also refers back to his penalty for disobeying God.
2. **Moses would no longer be with the people.** He would not be allowed to cross the Jordan. He would not be allowed to enter the promise land of Canaan and lead his people.
3. What great blessings he missed because of his disobedience!
4. What great blessings all of us miss because of disobedience. Disobedience robs us of many of life’s blessings. If we continue in it, it will rob us of eternal life.
 - a. We need to heed the admonition of Solomon. (Eccles. 12:13).
 - b. Jesus said. (Matt. 7:21).

II. **New Leadership** - Moses informs the people there would be new leadership.

A. There would be a change of leadership from Moses to Joshua.

B. **Though there would be a change of leadership, God was still in charge.** He was over all. His every commandment was to be obeyed.

C. There is **an important principle and truth taught here.**

1. A new and young generation had now arisen in Israel. They would now even have a new leader. But Joshua was not to change God’s law. He was to faithfully follow it and teach the Israelites to do the same.
2. **Sometimes today we hear people say there is a new generation in the church** and that we need to change God’s law to make it more acceptable to people today.
3. But old or new leaders must not change God’s law.
 - a. It is the responsibility of leadership to faithfully uphold God’s law by word and example.

- b. No leader has the right to change the truths that God has given His people to follow in all generations. (Deut. 4:2; Matt. 15:9; 1 Cor. 4:6; Gal. 1:8).

III. **Promise To Israel** - Moses gave the Israelites this promise.

DEU 31:3 "It is the Lord your God who will cross ahead of you; He will destroy these nations before you, and you shall dispossess them. Joshua is the one who will cross ahead of you, just as the Lord has spoken. 4 "And the Lord will do to them just as He did to Sihon and Og, the kings of the Amorites, and to their land, when He destroyed them. 5 "And the Lord will deliver them up before you, and you shall do to them according to all the commandments which I have commanded you. 6 "Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or tremble at them, for the Lord your God is the one who goes with you. He will not fail you or forsake you."

- A. Moses assured the Israelites God would bless and protect them. He assured them that God would never fail nor forsake them.
- B. Throughout the Old Testament we learn that God would be present with His people and bless them. (Psa. 46:1, 10, 121:1, 2).
- C. **The New Testament teaches that God will be with Christians - spiritual Israel.**
1. Just as God was with His people (fleshly Israel), God is always with His people (spiritual Israel).
 2. We do not need to fear the present or the future because the Almighty God of heaven is always with us. (Matt. 28:20; Heb.13:5, 6).

IV. **Instructions To Joshua** - Moses next gave instructions to Joshua, the soon to be leader of Israel.

DEU 31:7 Then Moses called to Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, "Be strong and courageous, for you shall go with this people into the land which the Lord has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall give it to them as an inheritance. 8 "And the Lord is the one who goes ahead of you; He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear, or be dismayed."

- A. **Joshua had an awesome task to perform.** He was to conquer the land of Canaan. He might have been fearful or dismayed, but Joshua was assured that God would be with him.
- B. He did not need to fear because the Almighty God would bless him and help him lead the Israelites into the promised land. God would enable Israel to conquer Canaan.
- C. Joshua was a great man of God, and he believed the promise of Moses and became a great leader of Israel.

V. **The Law** - Our text now gives these words about the law.

DEU 31:9 So Moses wrote this law and gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and to all the elders of Israel. 10 Then Moses commanded them, saying, "At the end of every seven years, at the time of the year of remission of debts, at the Feast of Booths, 11 when all Israel comes to appear before the Lord your God at the place which He will choose, you shall read this law in front of all Israel in their hearing. 12 "Assemble the people, the men and the women and children and the alien who is in your town, in order that they may hear and learn and fear the Lord your God, and be careful to observe all the words

of this law. 13 "And their children, who have not known, will hear and learn to fear the Lord your God, as long as you live on the land which you are about to cross the Jordan to possess."

- A. There have always been those who have de-emphasized the importance of the law.
- B. **God's law is, however, of utmost importance.** Moses insisted that God's law be read before all the people, and the people should "be careful to observe all the words of this law."
 - 1. Ignorance of the law would lead to apostasy.
 - 2. Knowledge and respect of the law would lead the Israelites to faithfulness and great material and spiritual blessings.
- C. Today it would be **impossible for me to overemphasize the importance of reading God's sacred word.**
 - 1. We should read the word of God at home, in the Bible classes, the assembly and everywhere.
 - 2. We will be faithful if we treasure God's word in our hearts.
 - 3. We will fail if we allow ourselves to be ignorant of God's word and neglect to teach our children and grandchildren God's holy will.

VI. **New Song** - God then commanded Moses to write "this song" and teach it to all Israel.

DEU 31:19 "Now therefore, write this song for yourselves, and teach it to the sons of Israel; put it on their lips, in order that this song may be a witness for Me against the sons of Israel. 20 "For when I bring them into the land flowing with milk and honey, which I swore to their fathers, and they have eaten and are satisfied and become prosperous, then they will turn to other gods and serve them, and spurn Me and break My covenant.

A. This new song is found in Deuteronomy 32.

B. I will not read all of it, but I would like to share with you a few of its many verses.

DEU 32:1 "Give ear, O heavens, and let me speak; And let the earth hear the words of my mouth. 2 "Let my teaching drop as the rain, My speech distill as the dew, As the droplets on the fresh grass And as the showers on the herb. 3 "For I proclaim the name of the Lord; Ascribe greatness to our God! 4 "The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He. 5 "They have acted corruptly toward Him, They are not His children, because of their defect; But are a perverse and crooked generation. 6 "Do you thus repay the Lord, O foolish and unwise people? Is not He your Father who has bought you? He has made you and established you. 7 "Remember the days of old, Consider the years of all generations. Ask your father, and he will inform you, Your elders, and they will tell you."

- C. The Bible says in verse 44 that Moses, along with Joshua came and spoke all the words of this song in the hearing of the people.
 - 1. This was a song intended to teach the greatness and goodness of God, teach gratitude and obedience and warn against apostasy.
 - 2. Col. 3:16 - Comment about the purpose of our singing.

VII. **Moses' Death** - We next read of Moses' death. God then instructed Moses to go to Mount Nebo in the land of Canaan.

A. Once again he was told because of his disobedience that he would not be permitted to enter Canaan. He would die on the mountain, but would be permitted to "see the land at a distance." (Deut. 32:48-52).

B. **Later Moses died on the mountain being permitted to see the promise land from afar.**

1. He had, however, given Joshua and the Israelites the courage and inspiration to cross the Jordan and conquer Canaan.

2. Moses was really a great man. **Review his greatness** starting with his standing before Pharaoh.

3. An **unknown author** places these words of praise for Moses at the end of Deuteronomy.

DEU 34:1 Now Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is opposite Jericho. And the Lord showed him all the land, Gilead as far as Dan, 2 and all Naphtali and the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah as far as the western sea, 3 and the Negev and the plain in the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, as far as Zoar. 4 Then the Lord said to him, "This is the land which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, 'I will give it to your descendants'; I have let you see it with your eyes, but you shall not go over there." 5 So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. 6 And He buried him in the valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth-peor; but no man knows his burial place to this day. 7 Although Moses was one hundred and twenty years old when he died, his eye was not dim, nor his vigor abated. 8 So the sons of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days; then the days of weeping and mourning for Moses came to an end. 9 ¶ Now Joshua the son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him; and the sons of Israel listened to him and did as the Lord had commanded Moses. 10 Since then no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face, 11 for all the signs and wonders which the Lord sent him to perform in the land of Egypt against Pharaoh, all his servants, and all his land, 12 and for all the mighty power and for all the great terror which Moses performed in the sight of all Israel.

Conclusion.

I. **The last birthday of Moses was a great event** in the history of God's people. Israel was blessed because of his faith in the Almighty and because He faithfully taught them God's word and because he inspired others to obey and treasure God's word.

A. It was a great blessing to Israel.

B. **May each us also be blessed by his last birthday.** May each of us love God with all our hearts and treasure His law in our hearts.

III. **Once a man, named Charles,** told how his dad would come to watch and cheer when he played baseball as a boy. When he got a good hit and was running the bases, as he would round third base, his dad would shout, "Come home, Charles, come all the way home!"

A. This is what continually summons each of us to do. He shouts to each of us, "Come home, come all the way home!"

B. Come home to God through Jesus is beloved Son. Jesus will save those who believe in Him and are baptized for the forgiveness of sins. Come now as we stand and sing.

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