



STORY

8/23/06

The Last Days of Moses – Numbers 20:1-13, 27:12-23; Deuteronomy 6-8, 18:15-18, 31-34

TEACHER PRAYER

Thank You Lord for giving me the privilege of sharing Your Word with the children entrusted into my care in this class. I pray that You will give me Your Spirit and that Your loving will for us all will be clearly presented. I pray that through Your Word You will enter the hearts of these Your children by Your Spirit. Pour Your grace upon them that their relationship with You will grow ever stronger. Through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior I pray. Amen.

VOCABULARY

Mount Abarim (Numbers 27:12) - "A mountain east of Jordan. Nebo, Peor, and Pisgah belong to this range." (Rupprecht Bible History References Vol. 1, p. 226)

Urim and Thummim (Numbers 27:21, Deuteronomy 33:8) - "Beneath the breastplate - in order that it might be on the high priest's heart when he 'went in before the Lord' - was the Urim and Thummim ('lights and perfections'), the crowning glory of the Levite tribe, but nowhere described in Scripture. With the Urim and Thummim the will of the Lord concerning judicial matters was learned, not only in the Sanctuary of where the Ark of the Covenant was, but in any place, provided the authorized priest with the ephod was present." (Rupprecht Bible History References Vol. 1, p. 202)

OUTER AIM

Moses prepares God's people for his death.

INNER AIM

God's blessing on His people continues as they are prepared to enter the promised land.

BACKGROUND

(*Rupprecht Bible History References Vol. 1, pp. 226-230*)

The 120 years of the life of Moses can be neatly divided into three equal sections. The first 40 years were spent in Egypt. The second 40 years were spent in Midian. The final 40 years were spent leading the people of Israel in the desert toward the land of promise.

Numbers 20:1-13

Because of a particular sin God forbade Moses "to bring this congregation into the land which I have given them." (vs. 12b) The sin of Moses was the sin of unbelief.

(vs. 12a) This apparently resulted in anger and possibly pride. (vs. 10-11) God's instructions were very simple and complete.

(vs. 8) Nevertheless Moses angrily upbraided the people and seemed to adopt a rather prideful attitude. Secondly, he apparently adopted a mode of operation different from what the Lord had instructed. God had said, "Speak to the rock." Moses rather "struck the rock twice with his rod."

Numbers 27:12-23

Joshua is commissioned to assume the responsibilities of Moses as God commanded.

Deuteronomy 6-8

The book of Deuteronomy consists of a series of farewell messages by Moses, the 120-year-old whom God appointed leader of Israel. He addressed the generation of Israel who would soon be faced with the trials of entering the Promised Land.

These three chapters make three primary points: 1) teach the Word, 2) possess the promised land, 3) remember the LORD your God

Deuteronomy 18:15-18

These words of Moses point to the coming Messiah, Jesus Christ, who would be the Prophet of prophets. (cf. John 1:19-21; 5:46; 6:14, Matthew 17:5, Acts 3:19-26; 7:37)

Deuteronomy 30-34

In his final words, Moses predicts what will befall Israel in the days ahead. He rehearses the blessings which God will pour out upon Israel. He also shows the judgments that will be their lot because of their unbelief and perverse ways.

God buries Moses in an unknown place. This may have been done to prevent undue reverence to the past or even possible idolatry.

Though Moses was permitted to see the land of promise only at a distance before his death, he did return to this home for God's people when he appeared with the Christ on the Mount of transfiguration. (Matthew 17:3)

Some of the significant verses in this section: 30:11-20, 31:6, 12, 16-17; 32:1-7, 43, 48-52; 34:5-12).

STUDENT PRAYER

We thank you Lord for the many servants that You call to serve You in the labors of Your kingdom. We thank You for pastors, teachers, parents, relatives and Christian friends who guide us according to Your Word of truth. Give us, we pray, ready hearts to hear Your servants as they teach us Your Word. May we be led to respond with willing and thankful hearts. In our Savior's name we pray. Amen.

PRESENTATION

An entire generation of Israel died in the wilderness. A new generation took its place. This was the generation which Moses was now preparing it for entrance into the Promised Land. Was this generation better equipped to handle the adversity that stood before them? The challenge was to occupy the populated land of Canaan which the Lord gave to them. On one hand, the answer is, yes. They had been trained in the adversity of the wilderness. On the other hand, they too were sinful as are all of mankind. Their complaints at Meribah resulted in Moses losing his patience and sinning against God. As a result God did not permit Moses to enter into the Promised Land.

Moses at no time debated the matter with the LORD but fully accepted God's righteous judgment and the punishment. Under God's direction he appointed Joshua his successor and commissioned him to complete the work which he had begun, namely, to lead the children of Israel into the land of Canaan and divide it among the tribes of Israel. With deep devotion to His Lord and concern for God's people, he gathered all the representatives of the people and repeated the Words of God so that this new generation of Israel might know the will of God clearly and simply. He reminded them of the many blessings of God and showed them that they could best manifest their gratitude by walking in the Words of their God.

Furthermore, he admonished them to destroy completely all the inhabitants living in the land of Canaan, lest they lead the people of Israel to worship idols. The final words of Moses might be summarized in such words as these: "I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live; that you may love the LORD your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days; and that you may dwell in the land which the LORD swore to your father, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them." (Deuteronomy 30:19-20)

Finally, in the presence of all the people, he ascended Mount Nebo. At that time he was 120 years old, and during the last 40 years of his life he had endured many hardships; yet his eyes were not dim, nor was his strength abated. God had wonderfully preserved him. With a lively step he walked up the mountain side until he reached its summit. There God showed him the whole land of Canaan. How delighted Moses must have been to see that beautiful country which stretched before him. There he died and we are told that the LORD "buried him in a valley in the land of Moab...but no one knows his grave to this day." (Deuteronomy 34:6)

APPLICATIONS

Down through the generations God has used many people, sinful though they were, to accomplish His divine purposes. As revealed in the Bible, God's will was always that mankind would be redeemed and saved from sin. Through the sinful world, Satan and the sinful ways of mankind continually challenged and obstructed the will of God, yet, God's will is always done. Thank God that this is so! The central point of salvation in the Messiah overshadows every other consideration. Praise the Lord!

When the Lord instructs us to do a thing in His Word, we do not have the right to change His words, add something to them or interpret them according to the ways of our sinful flesh or of the world around us. God brought water out of the rock at Meribah even though Moses put his own spin on the event. Moses permitted his sinful flesh to dictate how he carried out God's instructions rather than abide by the simple words of God. This is done constantly in the world around us today both in the unbelieving world and sometimes in the Christian Church at large. We must take care not to be influenced by advice and judgments which are contrary to the Word and will of God.

We should thank God for people that He has used and continues to use today to lead and guide His people in His ways. Discuss the teaching and pastoral ministry and the privilege to serve God in these special ways. Discuss the priesthood of all believers and how we all have the privilege and responsibility, as children of God, to share God's blessings of salvation in Christ Jesus with everyone.

PASSAGES

These passages can be assigned as memory work or simply discussed in class as to how they fit the lesson.

Lower

Psalms 143:10 - Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God; Your Spirit is good. Lead me in the land of uprightness.

Middle any of the above and...

Romans 12:2 - And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

1 John 2:15-16 - Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

Galatians 5:17 - For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.

Upper any of the above and...

1 Timothy 3:1 - This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. (bishop - literally a spiritual overseer)

2 Timothy 4:2 - Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season; convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.

Hebrews 13:20-21 - "Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is wellpleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen

HYMN CHOICES

"What God Ordains Is Always Good" (TLH #521)

"I Leave All Things To God's Direction" (TLH #529)

"Rejoice, My Heart, Be Glad and Sing" (TLH #535)

"With the Lord Begin Thy Task" (TLH #540)