

Safest Place In The World

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[0 : 00] The experiences that Moses had there were absolutely unique. But the time had come for Moses to leave this world. Now as we know, Moses had experienced life at every level.

As a baby, he had been born at a time where there was genocide taking place, infant genocide. And he had escaped that.

I remember how his mom had hidden him in a wee basket in the bulrushes in the Nile. Remember how he was brought up by Pharaoh's daughter?

So he was brought up in the palace of Egypt. So he had all the best training in the world and he was taught in all the ways. He would have had the best education, the best social instructions, the best political understanding of the day.

He would have had the very, very best. So the first 40 years of Moses' life were really quite extraordinary. As we say, as a baby escaping infant genocide and then being brought up as a prince in Egypt.

[1 : 12] But then at the age of 40, remember, he had to run into the desert. He had to escape for his life after he had killed an Egyptian who was attacking an Israelite.

And for the next 40 years, he was just a shepherd in the wilderness. And many people think what wasted years these were in Moses' life, but they were anything but wasted.

Because in these 40 years, God was breaking Moses and molding Moses and shaping Moses to become the great leader who was being prepared to lead Israel out of Egypt into the land of promise.

And we must always remember this, that when we're maybe put aside, that God hasn't abandoned us or forgotten about us. God always has a purpose, even when to us it doesn't make sense.

I'm sure there were days when Moses would think, what on earth is happening here? Maybe after 25 years in the desert looking after his father-in-law's sheep, he was saying, what on earth is this all about?

[2 : 21] Why did I have these 40 years in the palace in Egypt to be a shepherd in the wilderness? It doesn't make sense. But it made sense to God, because God had a plan, and God always has a plan.

God has a plan for our lives, even when it's not making sense to us. And so we know that God then took Moses after these 40 years to lead Israel out of Egypt.

And here is Moses now at the end of his days. He's 120 years old. And the amazing thing is that his eyes were as clear at 120 as they were probably when he was 20.

It tells us in the next chapter, in chapter 34, that his eyes were undimmed and his vigor unabated. He was as strong as a horse. He had all the energy and all his faculties, everything.

He was as sharp as a tack at that age. It was quite remarkable. But that's what makes this book, particularly this last section in Deuteronomy, so vital in many ways.

[3 : 36] Because here is, as it were, the closing speech, the last speech of this great man of Moses. And Moses, in verse 26, tells us that there is no God like the living and true God.

And again, we've got, as we said earlier, we remember that Moses was a man who saw or understood God in a way that probably very, very few others had.

And he uses this word then of Israel. And he says, there is none like God, O Jeshurun. And this word, Jeshurun, is used only, I think, four times in Scripture.

And it's a word that comes from, or basically comes from the word, or the root of the word for righteousness. And it is used, like, with a sense of endearment of God's people who are set aside for righteousness.

That's kind of the idea, that here are a people who are loved, but they are set aside for righteousness. Because that's what God wanted.

[4 : 50] When God chose a people, it was to be, these people were to be the channel of blessing for the whole world. And we know that that was ultimately fulfilled in the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ into this world.

So it was, it was for, God was using Israel to be a channel of blessing for this world. And they, when Israel followed the Lord and tried to obey his word, God blessed them.

And there were times in Israel history when they were, when they were so prosperous, when things went so well for them. But there were also other times when they turned their back on God.

And we know what happened there. It just went in a downward spiral. And God had said to them, look, if you follow me, the blessings will overtake you.

You can't prevent the blessings if you're following me. And it's very interesting, he talks about this nation with this word of righteousness mingled into it. And we know what scripture says, that righteousness exalts a nation.

[6 : 04] And whatever our leaders, whatever political agendas they may have, whatever, what we've got to realize is that unless we are built upon God's word and seeking to follow God's way, we will never know the blessing that God will have for us at a national level until we seek to follow him.

He says it right throughout his word. And that righteousness, keeping to his way, to his word, to his standards, to his laws, that is the foundation for life.

And it is through this that we will experience the blessings that he has for us. So, Moses here is in this, he's reminding Israel of who the living and true God is.

And that he's not like any of the other gods of the nations round about. And there is no God like unto our God, he is saying, like the God of Jeshurun, who rides through the heavens.

Now, it's an amazing expression that, who rides through the heavens to your help, through the skies in his majesty. And what an awesome picture this gives us of the glory and the majesty and the sovereignty and the power of the living and true God.

[7 : 29] And we see this display of who he is riding through the heavens. And you know, it's encouraging to think of God as not just the God of this world, but the God of the, the God who is in the air as well.

Because we're told in the New Testament about Satan, that he is the prince of the power of the air. In other words, his whole evil dominion is operating, not just in this world, but all around it.

But it shows us however powerful he is and his forces are, that within that same sphere that he operates, that the God of heaven and earth also operates.

And his glory and his majesty and his power is far greater. And so we've got to remember that. And it's a great encouragement to us. But we'll notice what God is doing.

He's coming through the skies. Why? There is none like God, O Jeshurun, who rides through the heavens. Why? To your help.

[8 : 39] Isn't that amazing? No parent ever rushed to help their child with the same urgency as the living and true God does to help his children.

Now, sometimes we might find that almost hard to understand in the way that our lives unfold. But it is true. God is watching over everything and has a plan and a purpose for everything.

And then it says, The eternal God is your dwelling place. And that must have been such an encouragement to the Israelites because you've got to remember how things were for them at this time.

They were living in tents in a wilderness. Now, if you're out in a wilderness, you really have nowhere to call a home. It's not really a dwelling place as such.

And a wilderness is a windy place. It's a dangerous place. There's wild animals. There's robbers. You're away from everything.

[9 : 46] Well, there wouldn't be emergency services as such in these days. But you're away from everything that can help you. And you're open to every kind of danger. It was that they were in the most vulnerable place possible.

And yet, here they are with these wonderful words of encouragement that the Lord, He is your dwelling place. And it must have been hard for them out there because I'm sure they often said, If only we had our own land.

If only we had a place that we could put our roots down. If only there was somewhere that we could feel secure and settled. Because we feel very vulnerable.

You see, we see it so often on our television screens, the plight of refugees today. And your heart always goes out to them. Because when you've lost your home, we so often take our homes for granted.

But the security, the settlement, the sense of identity and everything that's attached to our home, it's powerful. And to lose that puts us into this state where we feel fragile and vulnerable and all these things.

[11 : 02] But Moses is speaking to Israel. And he's saying, Yes, that might be how it is just now. But you're all right. Because I am your dwelling place.

And you are more secure and more protected, more watched over and safer than all the other people round about who are in their houses.

Because that's basically how it is when we have the Lord as our dwelling place. It's a beautiful picture. The eternal God, the God of heaven and earth, the God who has always ruled and reigned over everything.

The rock of ages, the ancient of days. He is your dwelling place. He is your home. He is your security, your refuge.

And what Moses was saying to Israel, he's saying to us as well too. And it's a great security that we have when we come to faith in the Lord Jesus.

[12 : 08] Because, you know, when we live in this world, and I'm sure we've all been down the road of trying to find our own way in life. And we've tried this, that, and the next thing.

And sometimes we felt great and other times we didn't feel so good. But, you know, life in a sense, it doesn't matter what dreams we pursue, it doesn't matter what achievements we make.

that until we have the real rock of security that is found in Jesus Christ, there is a fragility to life.

There is this sense of never really having the fundamental peace that we crave. You know, people crave that in life.

They want something to undergird their life, to make them feel secure and that they're in the right place. And, you know, when we come to faith in Jesus Christ, that's one of the wonderful things that happens.

[13 : 11] We come to realize, I'm in the right place. You know, we often ask ourselves, am I in the right place? Well, if you're a Christian today, spiritually, you're in the right place.

And it gives you what you didn't have before. And you just wish that so many people who today, that you can see they're searching and their lives are empty and they seem to be going nowhere if only they could focus in and see what there is in Jesus Christ.

And so it is here that we have this tremendous security, the dwelling place, the refuge. God is our refuge as we sang. God is our refuge and strength.

And that's all around. There was every kind of calamity going on. And yet, God is our refuge and our strength. Even although the earth move, even although there's earthquakes and tornadoes and volcanoes and everything going on, God is our refuge.

That's a wonderful thing. But it says even more than that. The eternal God is your dwelling place and underneath are the everlasting arms. Isn't that wonderful?

[14 : 25] Arms that are long enough to reach you wherever you are. And can I say today if there is anybody without Jesus Christ and you feel that you're beyond being saved, you're not.

Anywhere in this world the arms of the Lord can reach. These arms that were stretched out on the cross, these arms are able to reach. He is able to save to the uttermost.

It's not an amazing statement. He's able to save to the uttermost. You are not beyond saving as long as you have breath in your body.

Seek the Lord while he may be found. And you know, these arms never tire. No matter how much you might love your children, no, I shouldn't say might love, of course you love your children, no matter how much you love your children, supposing you're carrying them and when you carry your little one for a while, they begin to get heavy and if you've got to carry them all day, supposing you had to carry and walk all day and all night for 24 hours carrying your little one, you would want somebody at some point to say, oh can you, I'm so exhausted, even though I'm pleased to take great care of him, great care of her, but I cannot carry, my arms are giving way, just for a wee while, till I get a wee bit of rain.

Lord never says that. He never has to hand us over, so to speak, to somebody else. These arms, these hands, they're full of power.

[16:13] And the thing is, the problem is, with ourselves, is that we're very slow to hand ourselves over into his care. Because we want to keep, we kind of want to keep ourselves to ourselves.

And you know, even as Christians, we give to the Lord, but we take back. And basically, what we're saying to the Lord is, Lord, you know this, I'm happy to give you most of my life, but I want to hang on to a wee bit myself.

I'm happy to, I'm happy for you to guide me in most things. But there's a few things I won't control of myself.

And you know, until we throw ourselves, as it were, completely upon the Lord, we won't know what it really is to be upheld and to be kept by these arms.

And that's where the apostle Paul found himself, because Paul was somebody who had learned. He learned, he talks about having learned contentment. He learned various things along the way.

[17:20] And one of the things was he discovered that the best place was where his own strength gave out. Now, straight away we say, hey, I don't want that.

Because, you know, we hate when we feel weak and not sufficiently strong to cope with what we have to do, where we feel vulnerable and insecure because of it.

God says, no, what you've got to do in these situations is just throw yourself completely on me.

Completely. That's what we've got to do. And that's why Paul was able to say that when I am weak, then I'm strong.

He was able to say that he was able to do all things through Christ who enabled him, who strengthened him. Couldn't do it himself, but he found the enabling and strengthening through the Lord Jesus Christ.

And so we see here, time is moving, just very briefly, we see these arms, arms that, as I say, are all will say arms to protect us.

[18:35] You know, again, if you're children, if you would do anything, you would give your life for your child or your children. And really, if there was a threat to them, you would stand in the way and you'd be saying to the threat, you have to come through me before you get to them.

And you know, in a sense, that's how it is with all God's children. God is saying to the enemy, before you, the enemy, can destroy them, you have to get through me.

And that's a wonderful consolation and comfort to us. And so, these are arms that are always there, arms to care for you, arms to nurse you.

You know, sometimes when people are so ill or maybe so old and they can't lift up their own head, and there you put your arm under to support them and give them the water or whatever they need. Well, it's like that, the Lord has this idea of being there as a God of comfort and consolation all the time, these arms to uphold and to keep.

[19:44] And then, there's so many things we could look at here, but then he says, underneath are the everlasting arms, and he thrust out the enemy before you.

You know, that must have been music to the ears of the Israelites. Because remember about a long, long time back, close to 40 years, about 39, 38 and a half years earlier, 39 years earlier, they had come to the borders of the promised land.

They didn't enter in. Why? Because they thought the enemy was too big for them. You remember the report the spies brought back? They said, oh, it is a land flowing with milk and honey.

Brilliant land, but whoa, you should see the people, see the cities, great walled cities. There's giants living there compared to us. They're big guys. And basically, we haven't a chance.

Do you remember how Israel, they rebelled? They wanted to stone Moses and Joshua and take new leaders and to head back to Egypt. And God said to them, okay. Then they began to wail and they said, we would rather die in the desert than go ahead and be killed like this.

[21:00] God said, all right, I'll give you what you want. You will die in the desert. And that's what happened. They wandered in the wilderness for all these years. And it was the younger generation, those who trusted in the Lord that went forward.

And the Lord is now saying he's going to thrust out the enemy before you. Paul knew all about this. That's why he was saying that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.

See, in the face of the enemy, we can do nothing ourselves. The force of this world, the force of ourselves, our own sinful nature, the force of the powers of darkness, we have no hope against these enemies.

But with the Lord, we can. And he has said, you follow me, you trust in me, you depend on me, and we'll go forward victorious.

And then finally, and he thrust out the enemy before you and said, destroy. You know, that's the responsibility that's placed upon us, that we are to destroy the enemy within us.

[22 : 21] In other words, don't make friends with God's enemies. Don't make friends and make an alignment with this world.

Now, of course, as we know, we're in this world, but not of it. When we talk about the world, we talk about the sort of the philosophies and the aims and the standards that are opposed to God's word. Of course, there's so much of this world we're involved in and we have so many friends within this world. That's not what it's talking about. but it's worldly standards and aims and ideas and philosophies.

Don't sympathize with them because they'll get into you and they'll weaken you. We need to be ruthless with all these things. Having God is the most wonderful thing that anybody can have. You know what the Bible says? If God be for you, who can be against you. You can go through all the forces and powers in this world and you won't find anyone or anything that is equal.

[23 : 33] Gather it all together to God. He and he alone is worthy of following. You make sure that you're following him and depending upon him today.

We're going to conclude by singing from Psalm 9. Again, it's a recorded singing. This is from the Scottish Psalter, Psalm 9, 7-11.

Psalm 9, 7-11. Psalm 9, 7-11. The Lord forever reigns on high, his throne for judgment stands. He'll judge the world in righteousness with justice, rule the lands. The Lord will be a hiding place for those who are oppressed. and he will be a strong defense for those who are distressed.

Psalm 9, 9-8. Oh, sorry, I'm going to sing psalms. It's in the Scottish Psalter, Psalm 9, and we sing verses 7-11.

[24 : 42] Of these, God shall endure for he, he doth for judgment set his throne. God shall let you for he come for God and set his throne in righteousness to judge Scriptures to His Lord God vient ■ flew to hear in His heart and rock and and singers like interest and to I Lord the Die

Our refuge will be in time, For the humble truth is sheds.

And with that love I gave in thee, The only ends will waste, For thou hast not forsaken well, That truly see thy face.

O sing ye praises to the Lord, And dwells in Zion here, And all the nations above, His deeds record ye still.

Now may the grace, mercy, and peace of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit Rest and abide upon each one of you now and forevermore. Amen.

[27 : 20] Amen. shoe & .