

# Memorial To Moses

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[ 0 : 00 ] So I want to take Deuteronomy 34 and look at the life of Moses together kind of as a memorial service. And I think it would be fitting that a whole service would be given to him. So in the whole chapter of the Bible was given to the death of Moses.

Before I read 34, it says in Numbers that Moses was very meek above all the men which were upon the face of the earth. He was a very meek man. And when I played basketball in high school, Robert makes fun of this.

But we had this saying in a practice, we would say meekness is power under control. When we went to get a rebound, that we had to have our feet placed in the right place and we would jump. And so we would be yelling meekness is power under control.

Robert thinks that was a funny thing because he played football for a public school and they said different things. But we would say that and it got into my head that meekness is power under control. And you learn a lot in sports. I would sometimes pretend to be jumping when I wasn't.

And the coach would make me say that quality is not an act, it's a habit. And so I'd have to say that over and over. But meekness is power under control. We joked about this in Adult Bible Fellowship a few weeks ago.

[ 1 : 02 ] I promise you if you said something to me and the earth opened up and swallowed you whole, it would be very hard for me to be humble about that. I would always hold that over your head any time you got into an argument with me.

I'd say, remember last time? Okay. But not Moses. He stayed meek there. And so we're going to look at his life. And the Bible teaches us to go to the house of mourning is better than the house of feasting.

Even though we don't feel like it because it causes us to consider the weightier things of this world. And that's what we will do. And Spurgeon said of this chapter, he said, Spurgeon couldn't read this chapter without crying so much.

You could hardly read it. If you really get into it, your heart kind of breaks for Moses. And it does that he didn't get to go into the promised land. But when we responded tonight, and I pray you will to the word of God, I pray that you'll respond at the altar in your seat.

I pray that you'll look at the life of Moses and you'll say, I want more of that. I want to be that type of man. I want to be that type of person. But I also pray that you'll look at that warning and you'll see in his life that there's an earthly consequence for sin.

[ 2 : 27 ] And you say, as I pursue that area of my life, I'm also wanting to avoid these types of mistakes that are made. So we'll look at the things that you normally see in a memorial. But we'll also look at the things that you would often leave out in a funeral service that would bring warning to us.

So Numbers 30, Deuteronomy 34. And we'll start in verse number one here together. And Moses went up from the plains of Moab to the mountain of Nebo to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho.

And the Lord showed him all the land of Gilead unto Dan, and Ephdali, and the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah unto the utmost sea, and the south and the plain and the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees unto Zor.

And the Lord said unto him, This is the land which I swear unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed, and I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes. But thou shalt not go over thither.

So Moses, the servant of the Lord, died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Bethphor. But no man knoweth of his sepulcher unto this day.

[ 3 : 31 ] And Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died. His eyes were not dim, nor his natural force abated. And the children of Israel wept from Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days. So the days of weeping and mourning for Moses were ended.

And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom. For Moses had laid his hands upon him, and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the Lord commanded Moses. And there arose not a prophet since then Israel liked unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face.

And all the signs and wonders which the Lord sent him to do in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh, to all his servants, and all his land, and all that the mighty hand, and all the great terror which Moses showed in the sight of all Israel.

Heavenly Father, I pray that in this time that we look at Moses the servant of the Lord, you will challenge us and encourage us, Lord, to be more like this in our character, and to follow after you.

Help us take the characteristics of Moses and look at how they apply in our lives and make application. Help us also look at the pain that is brought on by sin, and leading in a way that would not please you.

[ 4 : 33 ] Thank you for preserving this story for us so that we could see it, and it could be used in our lives. And I pray that your word finds a place in our heart. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen. So as we look here, I first want you to see that the day had finally come.

Moses had done all that he could to set his house in order. And we've been with Moses now for a long time, but we're going to say bye to Moses. We're going to head into the book of Joshua, and we're going to learn more about how he leads.

So here's a few things that Moses did as he came to the end of his life. He commissioned the successor, which we saw in chapter number 31. A whole series could be devoted to this. Such practical application is given there.

He did more than just pick Joshua, but he invested his life unto him. God gave Joshua wisdom through knowing Moses. Verse number 9 says, And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands upon him, and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the Lord commanded Moses.

That the wisdom that the next generation gets is imparted by the people in this generation. By his laying on of hands, by being with Moses, Joshua learned the wisdom he needed to lead.

[ 5 : 43 ] And so that's the first thing that he did. And as a church that talks about discipleship, we could stay on that verse and spend the rest of our time talking about it. Because God's plan for vision next generation is that every one of us have a 2.0 version in the next generation.

So when you look at vision 2030, either you find us there or you find somebody that resembles us. And saying there is Forrest Chapman. Is that his name? Forrest Jones.

Forrest Jones. Forrest Jones, we see him still today serving in ministry through the life of Chuck Littlefield. And the future vision would have that. And it happens not just by picking somebody, but it says that Moses, he laid his hands upon him, and he had spent time helping him understand what he did.

So that's the first thing that he did to prepare for the end of his life. And we should begin preparing as well. He provided a written law. Deuteronomy 31, 24 through 27 says, And it came to pass when Moses had made an end of the writings of the word of this law in the book until they were finished there.

Verse 26, it says, He kind of cuts to the chase, doesn't he?

[ 6 : 59 ] You guys were some rascally rabbits while I was alive. And I can only imagine what you're going to be like when I leave. But I'm going to provide the written word of law for you, which is to say that we've got to constantly bring back the authority to our children, to those we lead back to the word.

Because even though we die, the word will continue. When I'm gone and I'm not looking at you anymore, are you going to do right or are you going to do wrong? Well, here's the authority of everything I've been teaching you. And we say this often with teenagers, even if they don't remember all that we're teaching them, they should always remember from what we are teaching.

They should always remember that there's a teacher in front of them taking their finger and going down to the Bible and trying to tell them something so that when they get older in life, if they depart from the things of the Lord, they'll go back to a church that has a person that keeps pointing back to the Bible there.

He made arrangements for the regular reading of the Bible. Deuteronomy 31, verse number 10, And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of every seven years and solemnly of the year of release and the Feast of the Tabernacles, when all Israel has come, appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose.

Thou shalt read this law before all of Israel in their hearing. So every seven years, I want you all to get back together and I want to read through the law. I want you to read these first five books.

[ 8 : 14 ] So he made those arrangements. And then chapter 31 of Deuteronomy said, He taught the people an anthem. Moses therefore wrote this song this day and he taught it to the children of Israel. He even prepared them a national anthem, the rally around.

Then we saw the blessings. So now it comes time for Moses to die, but he prepared for this day. God had told him it was going to happen, but he put things in order. He thought about the next generation. There's a lot of talk.

If you've ever been with your insurance salesman, he's going to talk to you about making your will. And part of that's a genuine concern and part of it's probably commission that he would get. But it makes sense. But so much more than a will, right?

We should help our kids know the will of the Father when we leave them behind. And so God had made provision for this day. Not only him, God prepared a burying place. He said that nobody knows till this day where Moses was buried.

And God had prepared that, that God buried Moses. Jesus, Jude chapter number nine or verse number nine, no chapter. He alludes to a story involving a dispute between Michael, the archangel, and the devil over the body of Moses.

[ 9 : 16 ] Let me tell you why I think that might have happened. In Matthew chapter number 17, verse number four, at the Mount of Transfiguration, there's Peter, which we talked about this morning. But he saw Moses and he saw Elijah there.

And he said, why don't we build a tabernacle? One to Moses, one to Elijah, and the one to Jesus. And Jesus had to be like, Peter, you still don't get it, right? If there's anything going to be built here, it will be for me and me alone.

But it could have been that if Moses' body would have been found, they would have worshipped it. They would have created something out of it. They would have done more. They would have exalted him above man. But God said, I'm going to bury Moses and he's not going to be found.

And he never has been there. So God made provision for that day. Moses made provision for that day. And Moses died being called the servant of the Lord. His whole life could be summed up in that one phrase, the servant of the Lord.

So many other things could be said. But if we said, Moses, you got a tombstone coming, nobody's going to see it. But if you have anything written on this tombstone, what do you want? And he would be fine, I'm most certain, with the servant of the Lord.

[10:19] And that's what God called him. God did incredible work in Moses' life to prepare him for this. God saved him as a child, so he grew up knowing that he had a purpose in his life. Just like he had been saved before by a miraculous thing.

You remember the story early on in his life. He was put in the basket and he was floated down the river and he was saved there. He heard from God at a burning bush. He knew that he could hear from God. He had learned how to be alone, 40 years in the wilderness there alone.

God was preparing him for that ministry. God prepared his servant for this. If you were to think about what type of person needs to lead the children out of Egypt, you would say somebody that was confident that God had a purpose for them.

A person that could hear from God. A person that knew what it was like to lead when he was lonely. You would say all these, maybe a person that was trained in Egypt that had a good education so that he could lead this diverse group of people.

Everything you would say would be Moses' resume because God created it. God prepared him for a life of service as he has done for you. You know, we could all take our resumes and go different places.

[11:25] I could go to work with my resume and they would tell me to get lost there. But every one of you can take your resume of your life, the good parts and the bad parts, and you can take it to God and he says, I got exactly the job for you that I need done right now.

That excites me. I hope that excites you as well. I had a youth pastor when I was in the hospital for a while. I was 16. He called me up one night and I've told this story before, but he took the phone and he was pounding it on the pulpit there.

I'm not sure why Jim Roberts does that because that really hurt. All right. And he pounded the phone against the table there. And he said this verse to me, Isaiah 41, 48, 10.

Behold, I've refined thee, but not with silver. I've chosen thee and the furnace of affliction. I'm not sure if it was in context, but it sure didn't matter to me that day. When I was laying there in the hospital bed, feeling all alone, going through a hard time, that God hadn't forsaken me, that God was doing something in my life then for moments like right now.

And so Moses had a resume created for his job, and we see that in a servant of the Lord. He gives individual training for every one of the jobs that he has for us to do. We must remember he was merely a man, not to be worshipped, but he did leave an example worth following.

[12:39] As Paul would say, he follows me even as I am of Christ. That could be said of Moses. He lived a life as a man worthy of our consideration. So Moses, completely a man, but he lived the life.

So we can follow up that. Let's look at the heart of Moses here. He knew heartache. He was disappointed in Acts chapter number 7, where Stephen kind of gives you a summary of much of the Old Testament still, the children of Israel.

He said that he supposed that his brethren would understand that God by his hand was going to deliver them, but they didn't understand it. He was disappointed by his fellow brethren because, remember, he wanted to lead the children of Israel earlier in life.

He killed that Egyptian, and then he came to them, and he said, Hey, guys, I'm one of you. And they said, We can't trust you. We just saw you kill somebody the other day, and he knew heartache. God said, Not right now, later.

And God put him on the backside of the desert for 40 years to get him prepared. Not going into the promised land. Deuteronomy 3.25, I pray thee, let me go over and see the good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain in Lebanon.

[ 13 : 39 ] He's praying to God and listening to God's response. But the Lord was wroth with me for your sake, and he would not hear me. And the Lord said unto me, Let it suffice thee, speak no more unto me of this matter.

Do you hear that? When he came to God and says, Please let me see the promised land, God said, I don't want to hear from you about this anymore. That caused heartache, doesn't it? It was an unmet expectation in life.

His family was criticized. Miriam and Aaron spake unto Moses because of his Ethiopian woman that he had married. His family was criticized. His authority was questioned. And number 16 there, the whole congregation sitting there, they said, You lift up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord.

Moses didn't choose this role in his life. God chose that for him, and he was questioned on every side. And nobody approved of what he was doing at certain times. But God said, I have chosen you.

What an incredible example of a servant of the Lord that we have in Moses, that he was confident that he was doing what was right. Moses loved the people. He had such an intense love for the people. Exodus 32, he says, I pray thee that you would, he wanted to say, You could blot me out of the book which you have written.

[ 14 : 47 ] What a love for the people. Can you imagine? I think all of us in here would say, I don't have that love for each other in here that you would have. Anybody want to stand up in here and say, Block my name out of the book of life for the sake of everybody else in this room.

That's an intense love for them. When Jehovah made him an offer that he would make him a great nation, he declined solely for his love for Israel. Numbers 14, verse 12, I will smite them with pestilence and disinherit them and make of thee a greater nation, mightier than they.

Verse 19, he says, Pardon, I beseech the iniquity of the people according unto the greatness of thy mercy, as thou hast forgiven this people from Egypt even until now. He loved those people.

He was a servant. He died with the generation that he rescued, where he says he chose them over the riches. He wanted to be associated with those Hebrew people, and he chose to suffer with them over the riches in Egypt, and he was going to die with that generation.

What an incredible example of a servant of the Lord. But I remind you, he was a man, which means that we can strive for that. We can do that. That can be said of us. At the end of our lives, it can be said that we serve the Lord despite this opposition and all those things that were going on.

[ 15 : 54 ] Moses was faithful to deliver God's message to his people. In his first sermon, we hear about God's grace. That's chapter 1 through the end of chapter 4 there.

He told them that God was going to give them the land. He tells them to consider, to hear all that God had done to them. Moses reminds them how good God had been to them through the wilderness, and he keeps preaching that to a group of people that were whining and complaining.

He was faithful to that message. In his second sermon, chapter 4, 44 through the end of 28, we find here he lays out the law for life in the land. This is where the people understand what it means to be guided by God's instruction.

He shows that a relationship requires rules, that because he loves you, he's going to set blessings and cursings. He's not going to leave you out there. Occasionally, you'll meet somebody, and they'll say, I don't feel like my family loved me.

And they're like, well, it looks like you were provided for. Your parents paid for your college. They provided all this for you. You said, yeah, they gave me whatever I wanted, but they never really cared about what I did because we know that an aspect of love says we don't just provide for you, but we also show you how to live out your life.

[ 17 : 05 ] We all know that in our parents, but we should also know that in our God, that his giving of the law showed his love for us. The second time the law is being given here during this time, we don't just teach our children by telling them, but we teach them by showing, and Moses did that.

And in the third sermon where he's about to die, he exhorts them that they might choose life. And pastors show that to us, that blessings and cursings are before you here. Israel now stands poised to enter the land, and there's an urgency in his voice begging them to choose well.

Then he says to go in and take the land that they've been given and to be a showcase to the nations, and that life and death was before them. He couldn't make their decision. He had to minister to them as they dealt with their consequences.

He told them what to do, and they chose wrong, and he still continued to do that. But the thing that we wouldn't normally talk about in this is where did Moses go wrong? Why doesn't he enter the promised land?

Moses had an anger issue in Numbers 20, verse 8 through 12. The first time he comes upon the rock, God tells him to strike it. The second time he says, I want you to speak to it. And we find that the second time he strikes it, and he messes up the symbolism that is there, that Christ wouldn't go to the cross twice for us.

[ 18 : 15 ] But we also know it's more than just the reason, but it's the symptom there. He said, because I loved you in Deuteronomy 4, 21, because I loved you, now I'm not able to enter into this land.

He has struck that rock, which God is saying here, and we don't fully understand. But Moses, that you can't lead by your own strength. You're going to have to follow my word.

You have to speak and not strike. And Moses, you can't lead like this. You have to obey my voice and do what I tell you to do. God isn't mad that somebody messed up a picture because he could fix that, but he was being judged here, and he dealt with the consequence because of a matter of his heart.

That Moses said, God, I'm just going to take this matter into my own hands, and he didn't listen there. And think about the severity of the discipline towards his faithful servant there. And this ought to make us fear about this and think about it.

Truly, the Lord our God is a jealous God, and we're sure that he is never unjust, and we're sure that he's never too severe for us. That God is not too severe, but he is always just.

[ 19 : 16 ] But God's love for us demands an earthly consequence for us. He knows us, and he cares for us. And in Amos, he says, I've known you above all the families of the earth. Therefore, I will punish you for all your iniquities.

And the New Testament, he says, if you are my own, I will chastise you. And if you're not, that won't be the case, but it will be chastised. And for unbelievers, judgment comes after their death.

God loves the children of Israel and gave them the law as a demonstration of love. That's where we left off last time in chapter 33. It says, yea, he loved the people.

And because of that, they had this law as an inheritance. The law is a gift of love towards them that he was giving very precious to them. It's how they would know God. It's how they would know how to live together.

Most importantly, it would teach them their need for a mediator and a sacrifice, but it would come from obedience to the law that brought the blessings. Deuteronomy chapter 28, verse 2, it says, and these blessings shall come on thee and overtake thee, and thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God.

[ 20 : 18 ] Your obedience will make blessings overtake you, meaning it's cause and effect, meaning you don't have to worry about going to God and say, hey, God, I've done everything that you've told me to do. Now, where's the blessings?

That your blessings are gonna overtake you. And so that's how and the why that he does that. I love you, and because I love you, I'm gonna give you the law, and in the law, you're gonna find blessings.

We do not live under the law, but we still know what God wants for us. We still have plenty of things we're taught very specifically in the New Testament, like do and don't, but we also know the heart of God, and we know how he feels about anger and sin, and how we're supposed to feel towards one another, and then the law is written upon our hearts.

We have the Holy Spirit working in us, and every time that we say no to God, we're fighting against our own joy. Every time we say no to him, we're fighting against God's blessings and our family.

And so why did God give the law through Moses? Why do, in verse three, it said there that we will sit at his feet, and we will receive it from him. And so here in Moses' life, we see an incredible testimony of a servant of the Lord, despite opposition.

[ 21 : 23 ] Just like in all the people you mentioned, and also in your own life, we will come to the end of our lives someday, and I pray that it's said that every one of us, servant of the Lord, and they will look at our lives, they will see what God did in our lives, and they will see that how we took all that he did in our lives to prepare us to do what we did.

And I hope you look at your life in the same way. God did not produce a few extra special people and the rest of us he just spit out real quick, but he has a plan for every one of our lives, and he has built a resume for you in your ministry.

And I want you to also see the beautiful picture we have here of the necessary penalty for sin and the never-ending love of God at the death of Moses. Moses doesn't go up to the mountain alone there.

Even though nobody else is with him, God takes Moses up on the mountain, and he says, I want you to see it. You don't get to enter into it. Some say that you might have to have even extra strong eyesight to see all that he did.

I don't know about that, but I know that he saw the promised land and all of it, and God showed it to him. He was still in full strength, as it says there, and he says, this isn't for you. That wasn't God teasing him.

[ 22 : 32 ] That wasn't God being mean, and that was our heavenly Father putting his arm around Moses and saying, you're dealing with the earthly consequence of your sin, but I'm going to take you home.

I'm going to bury you, and I'm attending your funeral service. Do we not see a great God in this picture that says that even though you're dealing with the consequences of your sin, I'm going to be there right beside you and do that?

And I just think that's wonderful, that our God would love us that much, that even when we're dealing with the consequences of our sin, his love never stops there, but he's just and he's holy, and there was more there for Moses that could have been.

He says, you don't get to see it all, but Moses, you've had a great life, and what is your reward? You're going to heaven. He took him to heaven there, and so that's a wonderful time. Moses' heart's not breaking as he says, I don't get to see this.

He really gets to see the promised land, and the promised land is so much greater when he goes to heaven, but that fact that when we mess up that God doesn't say, hey, now you're on your own. I'll see you on the other side.

[ 23 : 32 ] He says, I'm going to keep working with you. I think shows something wonderful about our God, but it also brings a warning to us as well, doesn't it? We want all that God sets out before us, and we don't want to lose opportunities because we decided in this moment of weakness that we're going to make a bad decision.

Poor Moses there in that, and so we see a loving God, and let me read this to you. I'm not sure who wrote it, but as we leave Deuteronomy and we get into our next book of Joshua, it says, Moses may lead to Jordan's flood, but there surrenders his command.

Our Joshua must have the waves divide and bring us to the promised land. Trained by the law, we learn our place, but gain the inheritance by grace. So Moses brought us right up to the point of the promised land, but it's now Joshua, which is the Hebrew translation for Jesus is the one that's going to lead us into the promised land, and it's going to be equally great.

And just like some of you came in in Deuteronomy, there's a whole new group of people that are going to come in in Joshua, and we're excited about that. So before I pray, could I challenge you just to kind of review a few things that you look back on your life, and every one of us have different stories, but God was building your resume for this time and for a certain ministry.

So go and find it and give your life to it. Let it be said of you that no matter what else you do with your life, no matter what you build, that you're able to say at the end of your life that you are a servant of the Lord.

[ 24 : 57 ] And can I remind you of the never-ending love from your father? So he loves you now as you're sitting in church like good boys and little girls in here, all right? And he's also going to love you during that time where you're looking out and saying, all of that could have been mine, but I missed out on it.

He never stops loving his own, and we see that up on the mountain as God attends Moses' memorial service. So let's reflect on our own lives. And why don't you go to God and say, God, I want more of that.

I want that in my life. I see things in the life of Moses that are missing in my life, and by your strength and by your power, I'm going to implement these things in my life right now. God bless you.