

The Journey of Faith - The Life of Moses - Week 8

The Finish

It is impossible to study adequately the life of Moses in a short eight weeks. Yet, we can get an overall picture of his life as we look at certain situations and key events. We ended last week with the sons of Israel camped out three days journey from Sinai. It had been a year since they left Egypt, yet they appeared to have not grown very much in their relationship with God since the exodus. They were still complaining about the “wonderful food” they had in Egypt, complaining about how much better off they were in Egypt, and continually complaining about Moses and Aaron. Moses was God’s chosen leader, but that didn’t mean that life would always go smoothly for Moses. God has shown us His great patience as He chose not to destroy the obstinate and stubborn sons of Israel. Moses had interceded for them repeatedly, and God always listened and answered Moses’ requests and prayers.

We will spend this final week studying sections of Numbers and Deuteronomy, looking at some major events in the life of Moses as he neared the end of his earthly journey. We all have those times in our lives that we will not forget because of their impact on us. Some are good memories; others are ones we’d like to forget. Yet, God uses everything, even the negative events, in our lives for a purpose.

Day 1: Hurtful Relationships

Miriam, Aaron, and Moses had gone through much together. Miriam is presumably the older sister who watched and protected Moses when he was placed into the Nile as a newborn baby. Aaron had been Moses’ friend and partner, as well as brother, as they followed God’s calling on their lives. However, today we will look at a situation in which there was family conflict among them. Sometimes, the ones we are closest to can hurt us the most deeply.

Looking To God’s Word

[Numbers 12:1-16](#)

1. What was the stated issue of the conflict between Miriam, Aaron, and Moses (v. 1)?
What was the root issue (v. 2)?

Moses’ wife Zipporah may be referred to here; if so, the term “Cushite” is used in contempt of her Midianite ancestry. It is more likely that the reference is to a new wife taken by Moses, perhaps after the death of his first wife.

2. How was Moses and his relationship with God described here (vv. 3, 7-8)?

3. What do you learn about Moses from the way he dealt with this situation?

Looking Deeper

Why would Miriam and Aaron's sin (12:11) have caused the anger of the Lord to burn against them?

[Numbers 11:24-30](#)

As you look at a situation that preceded, and perhaps precipitated, the murmuring of Aaron and Miriam, contrast the perspective of Joshua with that of Moses.

Looking Upward

4. How do you respond when someone complains or "murmurs" about you?
5. How do you recognize humility in someone?
6. What are some reasons why we may complain about someone? What should we do instead of complaining?

Looking Reflectively

Humility is a quality that prevents us from "lording" it over anyone or avenging a wrong done to us.

We are not only to pray for those who are easy to pray for, but also for those who have wronged us.

Ask God to search your heart and show you if humility is lacking. If so, confess your pride.

Is there someone who has wronged you or spoken unkindly about you for whom you need to pray? Ask God for the grace and love to pray for that person.

Is there someone about whom you have spoken unkindly? If so, confess it. If necessary, go to that person and ask forgiveness. Ask God to allow you to see others through His perspective.

God has placed some wonderful people in my life over the years, people who have loved me, encouraged me, and helped me persevere on my journey of faith. He has also placed some relationships in my life that have been extremely difficult and painful at times. He has used those relationships to "sharpen" me, to help develop my character, to make me dependent on Him, as I fall short in loving (and liking) others. I don't enjoy working through those difficult relationships, having to confront someone, or asking forgiveness when I've spoken out of line. Yet, God uses those times for a purpose. I can't always see

the reason in the midst of it, but I can look back on a number of difficult relationships and see how God used them for good in my life.

Day 2: A Wrong Perspective

The sons of Israel were camped at Kadesh-barnea when Moses sent 12 men to spy out the land of Canaan. Only two of the 12 spies, Caleb and Joshua, came back with a positive report, and the people chose instead to believe the negative reports. Moses once again had his hands full with the disobedient Israelites.

Looking To God's Word

[Numbers 13:25-14:10](#)

7. What was the perspective of the 10 spies who brought back a negative report (13:27-29, 31-33)?
8. What was the perspective of Joshua and Caleb (13:30; 14:6-9)?
9. All 12 spies saw the same land and people. Why were their perspectives so different?
10. Describe the attitude of the Israelites in [Numbers 14:1-10](#).

Looking Deeper

[Deuteronomy 1:26-33](#)

As you look at another telling of this event by Moses, how did the people view God in this situation?

How did Moses describe God's relationship with the sons of Israel (vv. 30-33)?

Looking Upward

11. Why is it often easier to focus on the negatives in overwhelming situations instead of focusing on God and the positives?
12. What helps you to look at a tough situation from God's perspective?
13. What can cause someone to stop trusting God after seeing God's faithfulness repeatedly?

Looking Reflectively

Regardless of the obstacles we may face in life, we must continue to trust God and His faithfulness.

God is greater than any fear or “giant” we may face. Keep your focus on Him, not your fears.

What are the “giants” in your life that are keeping you from moving forward with God in obedience? Give those fears to Him. Thank Him for His faithfulness to you and for His great power to accomplish whatever He desires.

List specific ways you have seen God’s faithfulness in your life over the past few months.

The Israelites let fear keep them from going in and taking the land God had promised them. The result of their disobedience was that none of that generation would go into the promised land, other than Caleb and Joshua ([Deut 1:34-40](#)). The price of disobedience carries a hefty price tag. We need to consider seriously the consequences of our disobedience and lack of trust in God.

Day 3: A Life-Changing Mistake

We now turn our attention to the beginning of Israel’s last year in the wilderness. It had been 40 years since the exodus out of Egypt, and this was a new generation: the children of the rebellious generation that Moses brought out of Egypt. We find them now in the wilderness of Zin. [Numbers 20](#) begins with the death of Miriam and ends with the death of Aaron. In between the two is the tragic sin of Moses at Meribah. Notice that this new generation complained about the same things that their parents did. Today we will look at a specific situation in Moses’ life in which he disobeyed God and the results were extremely costly for him.

Looking To God’s Word

[Numbers 20:1-13](#)

14. What were God’s specific instructions to Moses in verse 8? What did Moses do in verse 11?
15. How would you describe the attitude of Moses based on the words he spoke in verse 10?
16. How was Moses’ action indicative of not believing and treating God as holy?

Looking Deeper

Why was Aaron included in the punishment of not bringing the people into the land even though it was Moses, not him, who struck the rock and spoke?

What additional insights do you see from these passages?

[Psalm 106:32-33](#)

[Deuteronomy 32:48-52](#)

Looking Upward

17. What are some examples of how we do not revere God as a holy God today?
18. What are some ways we rationalize our sin and disobedience?
19. What does our disobedience reveal about our attitude toward God?

Looking Reflectively

God wants us to revere Him as a holy God. Does your life reflect that?

Our disobedience has consequences. Have you counted the cost of disobedience?

As you reflect on this lesson, is there a past sin that has changed the course of your life? What were some of the consequences? You may want to spend some time journaling your thoughts to God.

Ask Him to reveal any disobedience in your life today. Confess it. Thank God for His forgiveness. Thank Him that He is a gracious and loving God who can still work in and through us if our hearts are right before Him.

Day 4: Investing In A Life

Moses had the heart of a shepherd, always caring for and looking out for the Israelites. Now he asked God to appoint someone after him who would carry on the task of leading the people. Joshua was the likely choice. It is never wasted time to invest in someone's life and help prepare that person for what God has called him/her to do.

Looking To God's Word

[Numbers 27:12-23](#)

20. What was Moses' concern for the people and how did he pray?
21. As you look at other passages concerning Joshua, why was he a good choice to lead the people after Moses?

[Exodus 17:8-16](#)

[Exodus 24:13](#)

[Exodus 33:11](#)

[Numbers 11:28](#)

[Numbers 14:6-9](#)

[Deuteronomy 34:9](#)

Looking Deeper

[Deuteronomy 31:1-8](#)

How old was Moses now?

What did Moses emphasize about God's character in order to encourage Joshua and the sons of Israel?

Looking Upward

22. What qualities make a good leader?

23. What are some specific ways that you can invest in and build into those that God has placed in your life?

24. How would you rate yourself as a "shepherd" of others? How can you improve?

Looking Reflectively

We should always be building into someone's life in some way regardless of our life stage. It will look different for each one of us.

Spending time with people, allowing them to see how you live life, is a crucial part of discipleship and mentoring.

Thank Him for those He has placed in your life to disciple and equip you, including your parents.

Thank Him for those He has placed in your life for you to build into, including your children. Pray for them and their relationship with God.

Meditate on the characteristics of God in [Deuteronomy 31:1-8](#).

Day 5: The End Of The Journey

Moses was 120 years old when he died. Yes, he made some mistakes in his life, but he was still used greatly by God. Today we will look at how he finished the "course" God had chosen for him. When Moses gave his charge to the people and to Joshua, he could have been bitter because he was not allowed to lead the people into the land, but he wasn't. The journey of faith for Moses was soon to end. It was now time for him to close the "book" on his earthly life.

Looking To God's Word

[Deuteronomy 3:23-29](#)

25. How did Moses describe his interaction with God and God's response concerning the issue of crossing over into the land?

26. What are some possible reasons why God did not change His mind and allow Moses to enter the land?

[Deuteronomy 34:1-12](#)

27. How was Moses' life described in this passage?

Looking Deeper

[Hebrews 11:23-29](#)

How did Moses' choices in verses 24-26 exhibit faith?

What was the reward he was looking to in verse 26?

Looking Upward

28. What characteristics would describe a life lived by faith and not by sight?

29. What would be a potential area in your life that could tempt you not to finish strong in your walk with God?

Looking Reflectively

God forgives our sin, but we still must live with the consequences of our sin.

Our spiritual journey may begin strong, but there may be obstacles throughout our lives that attempt to trip us up. Beginning strong doesn't necessarily guarantee a strong finish.

Take some time to evaluate your spiritual journey. Where are you in your relationship with God? Are you right where He wants you, being obedient to what He has asked you to do at this time of your life? Are you struggling with your walk with Him? Are there some obstacles that are holding you back from being all that He wants you to be? Spend some time with Him, thanking Him for where He has you, asking Him to direct you step by step. Ask Him to protect you from the enemy and the enemy's methods to get you off God's path.

Each of us has our own journey of faith that God has sovereignly planned for us. Enjoy your journey, whether you are just starting out, right in the middle of it, or beginning to wind down your "earthly journey." As you can see from the life of Moses, a life of faith

is never boring or dull. We are expected to trust God in the greatest of times and in the darkest of times; in the midst of victories and in the midst of failures; in the times of deep loneliness and despair and in the times of great fellowship and intimacy with God and others.

Life is never certain, but one thing we can always depend on to be true – God is faithful to His children. He loves us, and because He loves us, He challenges us to grow deeper in our faith and relationship with Him. Sometimes, He must allow us to go through painful and difficult times in order to bring about an end result far better than we could ever have imagined. Sometimes He must discipline us when we step out of line in disobedience. At times, we find ourselves enjoying the thrill of the mountaintop. Other times, we experience the depth of the valley. Wherever He takes us, He has our journey of faith mapped out. We don't need to know what's around the next corner, but we just need to take one step at a time, allowing Him to guide us.

As you continue your journey of faith, keep your focus on the One who goes before you, with you, and behind you... all the way home.

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