

# The Cost of Moses Disobedience

by David Ravenhill

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*David Ravenhill discusses the profound consequences of Moses' disobedience and the lessons it imparts on leadership and faithfulness to God's commands.*

**Duration:** 1:10:48

**Scripture:** Exodus 33:18, Deuteronomy 34:5, Joshua 1:2-9, Luke 12:48, James 3:1

**Topics:** "Leadership Lessons", "Obedience To God"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the transition of leadership from Moses to Joshua in the nation of Israel. The speaker emphasizes the importance of responsibility and the requirement for leaders to understand the ways and heart of God. The death of Moses is discussed, highlighting his unique relationship with God and the knowledge he possessed. The speaker then delves into the commissioning of Joshua, emphasizing God's promise to be with him and not to fail or forsake him. The sermon also touches on the incident where Moses struck the rock instead of speaking to it, highlighting the importance of obedience to God's instructions.

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## Transcript

Well, it's a joy to be back in Palestine. It's nice not to have to fly. Just been able to drive a little over about an hour and 30 minutes or 20 minutes or something like that.

And a delight to be with Joyce and Andy. I just hope when Andy does his message on the hymns that he doesn't start with the Messiah. Because it will be a long session if he takes that one first and works his way through it.

You know, many of the old hymns had 8 and 10 stanzas and over the years we've reduced them down. And even in my generation, maybe 5 or 6 stanzas. But you go back to some of Wesley's old hymns, they went on and on and on.

I mean, 8, 10, 12 was not unusual. And they would sing an entire message, literally. And they finally sort of whittled them down to 4 or 5 stanzas in most hymn books.

So, if you get a hold of an old Methodist hymn book or whatever, you'll have the whole, the original message before it was edited. Anyway, let's look to the Lord in prayer, shall we? Father, once again we thank you Lord for the blood. Lord, thank you Lord that we stand by grace and by grace alone.

Thank you Lord for all that you've done for us. We remember Lord the pit from whence we've been dug. Lord, you lifted me also, the psalmist said, out of a horrible pit.

Out of the miry clay. Set our feet on a solid rock and put a new song in our heart. Even praise unto our God.

And we give you thanks, we give you praise for all that you've done Lord. Nothing that we've merited, nothing that we've earned, nothing that we've accomplished by ourselves, Lord, just purely by your grace. And we thank you again for it.

Bless this time, Lord, open up our eyes, our ears, our understanding. Open up the word, Lord, I pray tonight in Jesus' name. Amen.

Turn with me, if you will, to the book of Joshua. And I want to do a little Bible study with you. First of all, Moses and then into the life of Joshua.

Let me begin reading in Joshua chapter 1, verse 1. Now it came about after the death of Moses, the servant of the Lord, that the Lord spoke to Joshua, the son of Nun, Moses' servant, saying, Moses, my servant, is dead. Now therefore arise, cross this Jordan, you and all the people, to the land which I am going to give them and to the sons of Israel. Every place on which the sole of your foot treads, I have given to you just as I spoke to Moses.

He goes on in verse 5, no man will be able to stand before you all the days of your life, just as I've been with Moses. I will be with you. I will not fail you or forsake you.

Be strong and courageous, for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. And I think most of us are familiar with this portion of Scripture. It is a transition time in the nation of Israel.

One long chapter has ended. That long chapter comprises 40 years under the leadership of Moses. And now comes the word of the Lord to Joshua, Moses, my servant, is dead.

I want you now to assume the responsibility and I want you to take the children of Israel into the land. I want to back up and I want to look at the death of Moses for a little while because we can read it, Moses my servant is dead. And you can calculate, those of you who know something about Moses' life, the first 40 years of his life he was raised the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

He was the king's kid. He lived in the White House of his day, the palace of his day. You know, he had all the privileges and everything that royalty could afford him.

And yet it didn't satisfy him. And the Bible says that he chose to suffer affliction with the people of God rather than all the pleasures and treasures of Egypt. And so he came to that decision that all the material things that the world has to offer are not what I'm looking for.

There was an emptiness as H.G. Wells says, there is God shaped blank in the life of every man that only God can fill. And so the first 40 years, again, he lived a life of luxury in many ways. His own people obviously were in servitude and bondage.

The next 40 years, he spends on the backside of the desert. And he is looking after his father-in-law's sheep. He never attains to his own flock.

That's always amazed me that a man of his caliber, you know, you'd think by the end of 40 years, he would have had his own flock and would have been independent. After all, if it had been Jacob, he would have conned his father-in-law out of the best of all the flock and so on and so forth, built up herds twice as big, you know, and there's a little bit of Jacob in all of us, I guess. But Moses was content to just look after his father-in-law's flock.

He'd lost that sort of drive, that zeal and that get up and go that he used to have. And I think he was slacking more than one way, but God was working in his life. And so that brings us to 80 years of age.

And then we know that the children of Israel wandered for the next 40 years in the wilderness after God raised up Moses to be their deliverer. So you add those 340 years, and when I was in school, before they had the new math, that made 120 years. I don't know what 3 times 40 makes today in new math, but I assume it's the same, just a different way of going about it.

And so you assume that, listen, 120 years of age, that's pretty good going. No wonder he died. After all, you know, I don't expect to reach that age myself.

If I make it to 80 or 90, I'll be happy. You know, nobody thinks in terms of reaching 120 years of age. And so we assume that Moses died of natural causes.

But that is not the case. Moses died for something other than that. And I want you to, at least I'll turn to the Scriptures.

You don't necessarily have to. Let me give you the reference. 1 Corinthians chapter 10.

It tells us here concerning the journey of the children of Israel. Verse 11. Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction upon whom the ends of the age have come.

In other words, everything that we read in the Old Testament, and especially the whole wandering of the children of Israel and so on, it was all written for our instruction. And then notice, upon whom the end of the earth has come. In other words, it's especially relevant to our particular generation.

All Scripture, of course, is inspired by God and profitable. And so as we study the life of Moses, we don't want to just sort of study it as a, you know, from a historical point of view, and just trying to get facts and so on and so forth. I trust that, you know, it will serve as a warning.

Certainly has in my own life and in view of some current events. I think it's especially relevant that here is a great man of God and possibly one of the greatest men of God that we have in the Word of God. I don't think there's any question about that.

But he died a premature death. When he died, the Bible says, and let's turn to it. I'm going to have you at least know where the Scriptures are.

Let's turn to Deuteronomy chapter 34 and verse 7. Although Moses was 120 years old when he died, his eye was not dim and his vigor abated. In other words, he had not had LASIK surgery on his eyes. He was not wearing contact lenses or glasses.

He was not drinking V8 juice every day in order to, you know, get some sort of strength or mixing some sort of concoction to, you know, get some energy. He wasn't into energy drinks and so on. Nor was he, you know, driving around in his electric wheelchair.

He was 120 years of age and his vigor was not abated. His eye was not dim. He still had good 20-20 vision.

He still had plenty of get up and go. That's quite a remarkable statement concerning a 120-year-old man when you consider again 40 years in the palace where he possibly, you know, ate every cholesterol-clogging food that he could, being a king's kid. The next 40 years he was out in the harsh temperatures of the wilderness, the backside of the desert under the blazing heat of the sun every day and so on and so forth.

You think that would have wrinkled him up like an old prune and so on. And in the last 40 years, the worst 40 years, he had to contend with somewhere around a million people that seemed to have one agenda and that was to complain. And, you know, everybody that, you know, aspires to having a big church, I'd say the bigger the church, the more problems.

You know, when Moses had the, you know, young, he chose size church of his own before megachurches were popular and he had the problems to go with it. So if you're aspiring to a megachurch, you know, you're going to have mega problems. So just be warned.

And you would have thought those things alone would have caused this man to have, you know, dropped dead long ago. But here he is again, an old man and yet full of vigor, vitality. Again, his eye is not dim.

But what we need to do now, we need to begin to look into the life of Moses. And I want you to turn with me, first of all, to Exodus chapter 17. Children of Israel, of course, have just come out of the wilderness on this particular occasion.

And as they have begun their journey, there is a lack of water. And the Lord speaks to Moses here in chapter 3 and he says, Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb, and you shall strike the rock and water will come out of it that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

And of course, we know from other scriptures that out of that rock there came a river that the psalmist says was like the ocean depths. That's amazing, isn't it? Some of you may have read my book. I'm not trying to sell books.

I don't have any here. But I have a book, They Drank from the River and Died in the Wilderness. And we need to understand something about that river in the wilderness.

It was literally, according to the Word of God, like the ocean depths. After all, you had a million people. They were agricultural people.

They did not go to offices during the day to work. They were not involved in some sort of industry, producing something. They were farmers.

And they had crops. They had herds. In fact, Moses finally, you know, said to Pharaoh, Listen, you've got to let us go with our young and our old, with our herds and our cattle.

You know, herds and cattle were absolutely essential for their life. Again, they didn't go to the supermarket to get their milk and their yogurt and so on and so forth. They had to milk their cows every morning and so on and so forth.

But if there was a million people, I can imagine there were at least 5 million cattle. Possibly way more than that. Possibly something more like 20 million cattle.

And so you have 20 million cattle. Let's be super conservative and say 5 million cattle plus a million people. You need a water supply to look after that size city, if you like.

A city the size of, say, Dallas, Texas. What is Dallas? Population wise, anybody? Up on the statistics here, anyway. I assume Dallas and Fort Worth are somewhere in the 3 to 4 million bracket.

Somewhere thereabouts. So you can imagine the water supply that it took to look after Dallas for just today came out of that rock. It was like the ocean depths.

And of course the rock represented Christ. That's what it says in 1 Corinthians 10. The rock that followed them was Christ.

And in typology, that rock was only struck once. The striking of the rock again, out of your innermost being will flow. The Holy Spirit was not given because Jesus was not yet crucified.

But the moment He was crucified, He was able to release again that river of life. The anointing of the Spirit of God, and so on. And what happens, of course, is that a little later on, the children of Israel are complaining once again.

And so we go to Numbers chapter 20. In verse 6 it says, And Moses and Aaron came in from the presence of the assembly to the doorway of the tent of meeting and fell on their faces, and the glory of the Lord appeared to them. When we talk about the glory of God, we're not just talking about a bright, shimmering, you know, halogen headlight type thing that somebody cranks up, you know, turns up the rear stats, so it's this brilliant light.

The glory of God was His nature, His character. When Moses said, Show me your glory, God did not just put him in the cleft of the rock and sort of partially hide him, and God passed by and He was brighter than the noonday sun. That may have been there, but He revealed who He was.

The Lord who is, you know, compassionate and kind and merciful and so on and so forth. The glory of God is the nature of God. In the New Testament it says, God, Jesus turned water into wine and manifest His glory.

Part of His nature, part of His glory, again, is His power, the authority that He has over anything and everything. And so here we find that God comes in His glory, and the Lord spoke to Moses saying, Take the rod and you and your brother Aaron, assemble the congregation and speak to the rock before their eyes, that it may yield its water. And you shall thus bring forth water for them out of the rock, and let the congregation and their beasts drink.

So the rock had already been struck once, there was no need to strike it again. In this case, He said, Speak to it again, rather like the scripture that says, Spring up a well. That says, sometimes there's seemingly that rock, the water disappeared underground and it would spring up.

Verse 11, And Moses lifted up his hands, and he struck the rock twice with his rod. And water came forth abundantly, and the congregation and the beasts drank. But the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, Because you have not believed Me, to treat Me as holy in the sight of the sons of Israel, therefore you shall not

bring this assembly into the land which I have given them.

So God says to Moses, Because of what you've done, you will not go into the promised land. I can't get over the tragedy of that statement. When you consider this man Moses, such an incredible man of God, and yet God says to him, Because of what you've done, you've misrepresented Me before the people.

You have not treated Me as holy in the sight of the people. I told you to do one thing, and you did another thing. You rebelled against My command.

Obviously, Moses was upset. Notice in verse 10, if we back up, And Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly before the rock. And He said to them, Listen to Me, you rebels.

Shall we bring forth water for you out of the rock? In other words, you know, He is upset. And in that moment of anger, instead of following explicitly the command of the Lord to speak to the rock, He just takes out His anger and He beats that rock twice. And of course, again in typology, spoiled, if you like, that whole typology.

God is the God of types, as you know. In the Old Testament, the New Testament refers to Him as the shadow, Christ is the substance. But there was a destroying of the type.

The rock was never to be, Jesus was never to be crucified over and over again. He was to be stricken once, and once only. And so here is the sentence now for that one state of anger.

Because of what you've done. Let's go to verse 23. Verse 22, Now they set out from Kadesh, the sons of Israel, the whole congregation, and they came to Mount Hor.

And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron at Mount Hor by the border of the land of Edom, saying, Aaron shall be gathered to his people, for he shall not enter the land which I have given to the sons of Israel, because you rebelled against My command at the waters of Meribah. Take Aaron and his son Eliezer and bring them up to Mount Hor and strip Aaron of his garments and put them on his son. Now the stripping of his garments was not simply taking off his clothes, it was stripping him of his priestly office.

He was no longer to function in his calling. He was no longer to function in the capacity that God had originally anointed him for. What a tragedy when a man of God is stripped again of his garments.

I know there's varying views on this. You know, the gifts and callings of God are without repentance, but the context of that is speaking about Israel, not the gifts and the callings of the Spirit of God. At least that's my understanding, and I think if we interpret it correctly, it is speaking of the nation of Israel.

I do believe men can lose their anointing. I do believe God can strip somebody. And Aaron, it says, is gathered to his people, and he dies there.

We then go on following this story in Deuteronomy 1, verse 37. And Moses is now recalling the events of the last 40 years basically, and he says, the Lord was angry with me on your account, saying, not even you shall enter there, speaking of the promised land. So he reminds Moses again that you are not going to enter the land over into chapter 3 of Deuteronomy.

And verse 23, Moses does, I think, what all of us would do. He tries to get God to change his mind. Verse 23, I also pleaded with the Lord at that time, saying, O Lord God, Thou hast begun to show Thy servant Thy greatness and Thy strong hand.

For what God is there in heaven or on earth who can do such great and mighty acts as Thine? Let me, I pray Thee, cross over and see the fair land that is beyond the Jordan, that good hill country, and Lebanon. So here he is, trying to get God to change his mind. I pleaded with God.

I can see Moses on his face before God, crying out, God, please, this is the thing I've longed for. This was my original assignment. You told me there at the burning bush, I was to lead this nation, bring them into the promised land, and so on and so forth.

And, you know, for me of all people to be cut short, and not go in. You can imagine the embarrassment, the humiliation. And so, again, he is crying out to God, Let me, I pray, cross over and see the fair land.

But the Lord was angry with me on your account, would not listen to me, and the Lord said to me, Enough. Speak to me no more of this matter. So God, there's times when God is a little rough in a righteous way, and he says, Okay, forget it, Moses, listen.

When I say no, I mean no. You know, no amount of pleading, no amount of fasting or prayer is going to change my mind. I don't care how many people lay hands on you, and so on and so forth.

You know, you will not go in to the promised land. But on the other hand, he says, You can climb up to the top of Mount Pisgah, lift up your eyes, verse 27, to the west, to the north, to the south, to the east, see it with your eyes, but you shall not cross over this Jordan. So God says, You know, I'll give you a distant view of it.

Climb up the mountain, you know, take out your binoculars, if you like, and look northward, westward, eastward, and at least you'll get to see it, but you will not go in and possess it. Then we go into chapter 4 of Deuteronomy, verse 21. Now the Lord was angry with me on your account, and swore that I should not cross the Jordan, that I should not enter the land which the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance, for I shall die in this land.

I shall not cross the Jordan, but you shall cross and take possession of this good land. So, Moses is aware of the fact that he's going to die. He's aware of the fact that his term of office, if you like, is about ready to come to an end.

God has made it absolutely clear to him, even though he's begged and pleaded and so on and so forth. Then we go into chapter 31 of Deuteronomy, and verse 14. And the Lord said to Moses, behold, the time for you to die is near.

I don't know how God spoke that, whether one day he sort of woke him up early in the morning, says, by the way, Moses, let me just remind you, you're going to die pretty soon. What a friend we have in Jesus. I don't know how he did it, but listen, don't forget, Moses, just a reminder, time's just about at the end.

Just let you know, Moses, the time for you to end is near. Call Joshua, present yourself at the tent of meeting, that I may commission him, and so on. Then over into chapter 32, and verse 48.

And the Lord spoke to Moses the very same day, saying, go up to this mountain, at the Abarim, Mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, opposite Jericho, and look at the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the sons of Israel for a possession. Then die on the mountain where you were sent, and be gathered to your people, as Aaron your brother died on Mount Hor, and was gathered to his people, because you broke faith with me, in the midst of the sons of Israel, at the waters of Meribah, Kadesh, in the wilderness

of Zin, because you did not treat me as holy, in the midst of the sons of Israel. For you shall see the land of the distance, but you shall not go there, into the land that I am giving, to the sons of Israel.

The Jerusalem Bible says, because you did not display my holiness, among the sons of Israel. Because you did not display my holiness. Another translation says, because you did not manifest my holiness.

Moffat's translation says, when you failed to honor me, among the Israelites. I don't know how many of you are in leadership, but this is certainly a solemn warning, the Bible says, to whom much is given, much is required. James says, be not many teachers, thus incurring the greater judgment.

Moses had pleaded with God, show me your glory. He was one of the few men, that had seen God face to face. And to whom much is given, much is required.

He knew God. The Bible says, the children of Israel saw the acts of God, but Moses knew the ways of God. He understood the mind of God.

He understood the heart of God. He had an intimacy with God, that nobody else had, at least in that particular generation. And therefore, he was held to a higher degree of accountability.

I'm sure most of you by now, have heard the tragic news. I don't know all the fullness of the allegations, that Ted Haggard, the head of the Evangelical Alliance, and the pastor of the megachurch there, New Life Church in Colorado, has been accused of homosexuality, plus drug usage. And he has at least admitted, supposedly according to the news, that some of those charges have stepped down now, from being the pastor, at least for a little while.

And this is tragic to say the least, that a man of that caliber, a man that has had such a noticeable, recognized ministry, phone to the White House, able to counsel and talk to the president, a man with a very high profile, even if the allegations are not completely true. Tonight they interviewed him, just as I was leaving, and he said, well, he said, I did buy drugs, but I didn't use them. So I don't know why you buy drugs, when you don't have any plans on using them.

I'm not that sort of a shopper. Normally I buy things that I use. But he may have just been out, thought it'd be nice to have some drugs, even though I don't use them.

You know, I can't imagine the head of a mega church buying drugs and not using them. But we will see in the days to come. But I think we need to pray certainly that the enemy does not use that to his advantage.

The Bible says that when a man falls, great is the fall thereof. And the ramifications, you know, are incredible in a church of that size. They say it takes an average of five to eight years for a congregation to recover when a pastor falls morally.

It has such a ripple effect, let alone on his family, his children. I understand he's got five children and so on. It's devastating news.

But here is a man, again, one moment of anger, and God says, listen, I've raised you up to represent me. And you have failed to represent my true nature, my true character. I do not fly off the handle.

My anger is a righteous anger, and my anger builds. I am slow to anger. I don't just, you know, get mad.

I don't call people, you know, a bunch of rebels just because they've been hard on you and so on. So here he is. And of course, Joshua now is his replacement.

And what I want to look at is, I want to look at what qualified Joshua to be a leader. And then I want to go back and tie in something that God says to Moses with, sorry, something that God says to Joshua with what he says here to Moses. So this is, again, a season of transition now.

Joshua chapter one, Moses, my servant, is dead. Joshua, it's time for you to arise. I want you now to assume the responsibility of the man who has mentored you, the man that you were a servant to all these years.

And I want you to take over. Now nobody is just sort of taken that quickly and thrust into a position of authority. A friend of mine says you have to earn your stripes.

And certainly Joshua is a man that earned his stripes. And I want to look at some of the things that qualified Joshua to be the leader that he was. And the first one is that he was victorious over sin.

The very first time we're introduced to Joshua is back in Exodus chapter 17. Children of Israel, again, have just come out of the land of Egypt. And one of their first battles is with the Amalekites.

The Amalekites are referred to in the Bible as the sinners, the Amalekites. And let's pick this story up in verse nine. And Moses said to Joshua, Choose men for us and go out and fight against Amalek.

Tomorrow I will station myself on the top of the hill and the staff of God in my hand. And Joshua did as Moses told him and fought against Amalek. And Moses and Aaron and Hur went to the top of the hill.

And it came about when Moses held up his hands, or his hand, that Israel prevailed. When he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands were heavy.

And they took a stone and they put it under him and he sat on it. And Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side, one on the other. Thus his hands were steady until the sun had set.

And so Joshua overwhelmed Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. One of the very first battles for all of us, for that matter, when we come out of Egypt, is the battle to not only do we leave sin behind, but we've got to know how to master that sin. And the Amalekites are referred to as the sinners, the Amalekites.

In other words, different tribes that the children of Israel drove out have got different aspects of significance. But the Amalekites are referred to as the sinners, the Amalekites. And it seems that the Amalekites were one problem that constantly dogged the nation of Israel.

And so this picture here, we have to take as a whole, we have Moses on top of the mountain, we've got Joshua down in the valley fighting, leading the troops, but we can't separate the two. If we do, then there's going to be defeat. And as long as Moses' hands were held up, we find that Joshua was successful in overwhelming the Amalekites.

In other words, he was able to prevail over sin. As soon as Moses' hands came down, we find that the Amalekites gained the upper hand and they were able to destroy the people of God. Aaron and Her see what is going on, they notice the tendency and they put a rock under Moses because obviously the battle goes on for hours and hours and hours and one stands on one hand, on one side, and holds up his hand.

Aaron stands on the other, holds up his hands. And what is interesting in my Bible, in the margin of my Bible, it says this, because a hand is against the throne of the Lord. Because a hand is against the throne of the Lord.

In other words, again, if you like, in typology, Moses was touching the throne of God. There's only one way you and I will ever be successful like Joshua in overwhelming Amalek, overwhelming sin, standing victorious against sin, and that is to be in contact with the throne of God. The moment you and I lose our relationship with God, or lose contact with God, sin will always gain the upper hand.

We cannot do it in our own strength. It's impossible. I think that's why the New Testament says men ought always to pray lifting up holy hands.

It's not just that, you know, we put our hands up just sort of symbolic. Well, part of it's symbolic, but I mean that symbolism is I am taking hold of God. I am touching the throne of God.

That's what prayer is all about. Like I want to speak in the morning on prayer and spiritual warfare, but I would love if we change the word prayer to let's touch the throne of God. You know, prayer is, it's so used and abused almost.

You know, you announce a prayer meeting and everybody thinks, you know, how exciting that's going to be. You know, nobody shows up for prayer meetings anymore. But if we said, listen, we're going to have a meeting where we're going to touch the throne of God.

You know, maybe we need to just sort of change our terminology. It sounds a little more exciting, doesn't it? Because prayer has sort of lost its meaning. But that's really what it is.

It's touching the throne of God. Moses is touching the throne of God. He is in partnership with Joshua.

And as long as he's got a hand against the throne, we have a young man that is able to conquer and be victorious over sin. So that's the first qualifying thing that we see in the life of Joshua. As far as I know, that's the very first time that his name is mentioned in the Old Testament.

But that's where it begins, isn't it? That's where ministry begins. And let's face it, whether you're in a full-time ministry or not, we're all called to be ministers. We all have one calling.

We are ambassadors for Christ. God wants to plead through us to the last be reconciled to God. But in order to do that, we need to live a separated life.

We need to know what it is to conquer sin. The next thing about Joshua we find is in Exodus chapter 24. And this is where Moses is called by God to leave the children of Israel.

He leaves them in the hands of Aaron. And he is called to go up into the mountain. Verse 12, And the Lord said to Moses, Come up to me on the mountain and remain there, and I will give you the stone tablets with the law and the commandment which I have written for their instruction.

And so Moses rose with Joshua his servant. And Moses went up to the mountain of God. Now we don't have all the details there, but it seems that Moses then went up further because it says, Verse 17, And to the eyes of the sons of Israel the appearance of the glory of God was like a consuming fire on the mountain.

And Moses entered the midst of the cloud as he went up to the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain 40 days and 40 nights. So we have no record of Joshua actually going up, if you like, right into the very summit.

But it does seem that he was there alone on the mountain. And he is there for 40 days. It is during those 40 days, you recall, that the children of Israel eventually become restless and rebellious.

They go to Aaron and they say, Listen, we want a God that will go before us. We don't know what's happened to Moses. 40 days have gone by.

That's a long period of time, a good month, a month and a half has gone by. And there's no sign of Moses. Last time we saw him, we saw him making his way up the mountain there.

No doubt he's fallen down into some crevasse or something or broken his neck or something. But obviously he's not coming back. Two days, three days, four days, five days and so on.

But he's never been out of our sight from the moment he, you know, led us out of Egypt. And this is unusual. This is not like him to be gone that amount of time.

And anyway, they put pressure on Aaron. Aaron, during that time, creates the golden calf. And around that golden calf, of course, there's all sorts of immorality and so on and so forth.

But here, during that same period of time, Joshua is alone. And I take from that that he is a man of character. A man of character.

You know, he does not, we have no record of Joshua getting involved in the worship of the golden calf. The rest of the children of Israel, every last one of them seemingly, was involved in the worship of the golden calf. But Joshua is there on the mountain.

And character, I think, is revealed when you're alone. What do you do when you're alone? He could have made his way down. He could have said, listen, I don't know what's happened.

You know, it's been 40 days, or it's been two weeks now. I've waited and waited and waited patiently for Moses to come down. Last time I saw him, you know, he was a good 200 or 300 yards ahead of me.

And then a cloud rolled in, and I haven't seen him since. You know, what should we do? And he could have joined in all the revelry and everything else. But are we prepared to go through these testing periods? 40 is always a time of testing.

And it's always difficult to be alone when nothing seems to be happening. You know, we like to light a fire. The Bible says, woe unto those that kindle their own fire and try and walk in the light of it.

And when there's a time of darkness, you know, many of us don't know how to handle it. We do things that we regret later, but here is a man again that remained faithful during that period of time. The next thing about Joshua is over in Exodus chapter 33, and verse 11.

And here we find that he was a man that loved the presence of God. He loved to pray, loved to worship. Verse 11, And the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his friend.

And when Moses returned to the camp, his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart from the tent. What a beautiful picture of a young man. Oh, I can understand an old man, 80 years of age, he's mature, he's wise, he's already tasted and seen that the Lord is good, and so on and so forth.

I can understand that. You know, an old godly saint of a man, but this is a young man. And a young man that is hungry for the presence of God, that even though his mentor leaves, he says, listen, boss, you know, is it okay if I linger? You know, the presence of God is here.

I want to be in the presence of God. Again, these are the things that qualify Joshua to be a leader. Number one, his determination to gain victory over sin.

Number two, the area of character in his life, of being able to go through that 40 days of testing, and come through it, and now here again, this man that loves the presence of God. Then over into Numbers. Numbers chapter 14.

Of course, this is the portion of scripture that deals with the spies going in to check out the land. And I don't know if you've ever studied this. It's a very, seemingly a very interesting study.

God had already told them they could go in and possess the land. He'd already given them assurance of that. That was his command, go in and possess the land.

And yet, according to Deuteronomy chapter 1, I think it is, it says they came to Moses and said, listen, don't you think before we all go in and possess the land, we should send in some spies? I personally don't believe it was ever God's intention that the spies go in to spy out the land. God had already made it clear that they were to go in. But Moses said, you came to me and said, let us go in.

And so, that's what they did. And so they go in to spy out the land here. And of course, Joshua is one of those that says that we can do it.

Numbers 14 verse 6, And Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephthah, and those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes. And they spoke to all the congregation and the sons of Israel, saying, the land which we are passing through to spy out is an exceedingly good land. If the Lord is pleased with us, then he will bring us into this land and give it to us, a land which flows with milk and honey.

In other words, guess what? God was right. It really does have milk and honey. As though God would lie.

Only do not rebel against the Lord. Do not fear the people of the land, for they shall be our prey. Their protection has been removed from them, and the Lord is with us.

Do not fear them. But all the congregation said to stone them with stones. And then the glory of the Lord appeared in the tent of meeting to all the sons of Israel.

So here is a man that believes the word of God. Even though there are ten against him, Joshua and Caleb, as you well know, were ones that said, listen, we can go in and possess the land. And if we are going to be used of God, certainly we've got to be men and women of faith.

We've got to believe the word of God, regardless of the odds, regardless of what circumstances say, and so on. And I know that God brings that about in various ways. I look back there, and I see Joyce, and I remember just a couple of months ago, that it would seem that the giants were going to take her out.

And if she would have looked at the x-rays, and listened to the doctors, and so on and so forth, she would have said, well, I guess my time's up. But she dared to believe. And she said, listen, God can heal me.

And every time I've talked to her since, how are you doing? I'm blessed, you know, I'm doing great. You know, I mean, I can go in, I can do it. You know, we've got to take the word of God, and stand on that word.

You know, the word did not profit them, not being mixed with faith. No matter how good this word is, and it is, it is the pure word of God, it won't do you a hell of a beans, unless you believe it. And Joshua said, listen, I believe what God says.

I know there are giants in there, but our God is a greater giant, so to speak. You know, he can tread upon those giants. He can take care of them.

And so these are the things, again, that qualified him to go and possess land. And you remember that it was only these two out of a million people that made it into the promised land. And that's the whole story in itself.

A million people that never made it into the purpose of God, even though they were surrounded with the supernatural. They saw signs and wonders of a magnitude that we have no comparison to in the New Testament. Even though the Hebrew says we have greater covenant and greater promises, and so on and so forth, and so there's going to be a lot to be fulfilled.

We get excited about Jesus turning water into wine, Moses turned the Nile to blood. You know, I mean, what would you rather have on your resume? Oh yeah, I turned this glass of water into blood. Well, you know, I turned the Mississippi into blood.

I mean, I turned this into wine. Oh well, I turned the Mississippi into blood. Yeah, I mean.

Well, I fed 5,000 people with a kid's lunch. Well, I fed a million people every day for 40 years with bread out of heaven. I mean, you know, the miracles of the Old Testament were incredible.

You know, the parting of the Red Sea, I mean, they saw all of that. They were surrounded with the supernatural. And yet two of them made it into the Promised Land.

And these things are written for our instruction upon whom the end of the age had come. And what was it that wiped them out? Murmuring, complaining, lack of faith, immorality, all the things that are current today. And we've got to make sure we don't allow that to get into our spirit where we're always whining and murmuring, complaining, and so on and so forth.

And Joshua is the exception to this. Again, we can do it. All right, the next thing about Joshua.

Joshua 1 and verse 1. It says that he was a servant. Servant. Not too many of us are aspiring to that title.

At least it doesn't seem to me. All you have to do is pick up Charisma magazine. A few years ago it was popular to be a prophet.

Now it's popular to be an apostle. And I'm waiting for it to be popular to be a servant. I have a letter from a leading intercessor who is now a leading apostle.

And she signs her letter, National Apostle. National Apostle. And I didn't know there was such a critter, but she's it.

And the only thing she can become next is a pope, I guess. If they let women become popes, she will be it. But, you know, it would be nice if she had just humbly said, you know, you're a humble servant.

Wouldn't it? But I've watched her evolve, you know, from an intercessor to a prophetic ministry to a prophet, to an apostle, and now she is the National Apostle. I don't know what's above that, you know. I guess International Apostle.

I don't know who he is or she is, but anyway. But here he is, the servant. Joshua, the son of Nun, Moses' servant.

That's what God looks for. He looks for those that are willing to serve. I worked with a wonderful man of God, Nancy and I, for 15 years in New Zealand.

He always used to say, if you want to know how much of a servant you are, watch your reaction when somebody treats you like one. In other words, somebody says, listen, could you help set up the chairs or clear out the chairs, you know, and you sort of bristle a little bit like, you know, why don't you get the young kids to do that. Don't you realize I'm one of the elders or deacons or, you know.

It's amazing, isn't it, when we're asked to serve, how we can react. But Jesus said, he that would be the greatest among you. And Joshua is about to assume that position of leadership, which in that sense is the greatest among them.

But he served for 40 years as a servant. He earned his stripes. He proved.

And that is the very nature, isn't it, the very character of the Lord Jesus Christ. I believe with all of my heart that Jesus did not just assume the role of a servant during his earthly ministry. He said, take my yoke upon you and learn of me for I am meek and lonely.

Of course, Philippians says that even though he was in the form of God, he thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but he took on himself the form of a servant. And the way in which that's phrased, it's almost like, well, I'll step into this sort of, you know, I'll put on the apron for a few years just to prove that I can do it. That's not Jesus.

Jesus doesn't do things just to say, well, see, I did it. No, it's his very nature. And in fact, one of the verses that has always appealed to me is here in Luke chapter 12.

And let me have you turn to this and you see if you read it the way I read it. Verse 35. He says, Be dressed in readiness.

Keep your lamps light, and be like men waiting for their master when he returns from the wedding feast, so that they may immediately open the door to him when he comes and he knocks. Blessed are those slaves whom his master shall find on the alert when he comes. Truly I say unto you, he will gird himself to serve and have them recline at table and will come up and wait on them.

Be dressed in readiness. Keep your lamps light. Be like men waiting for their master.

But then it says that when the master does come, the master puts on the servant's apron and he will gird himself and serve and have them recline at table and will wait on them. How do you think it will feel at the marriage supper of the Lamb to have the Lord Jesus Christ as the head waiter? I think that's what's going to happen. I don't think he's going to be at the head table there, you know, on the cameras and everybody.

I think he's going to be, so good to have you here. After all, that's what he did with his disciples. Wash their feet.

Again, it wasn't just something he was doing as a sort of an act and said, see, I did that, now I want you to do it sort of thing. No, that's who he is. That's the Godhead.

That's the nature of God. That's the character of God. He's a servant.

And Joshua, again, the servant of Moses. That's what God is looking for. Numbers chapter 27.

Something else about Joshua that qualified him. Moses now is aware of the fact that his time is coming to a close. Verse 12, And the Lord said to Moses, Go up this mountain, Abiram, and see the land which I have given to the sons of Israel, and so on.

Verse 15, And Moses spoke to the Lord, saying, May the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation. In other words, God again reminding Moses, your time is coming to an end. Moses, by this time, has embraced it, but he says, listen, God, whatever you do, I'm sort of embellishing this somewhat, but whatever you do, if you're going to take my life, don't leave the sheep without a shepherd.

Notice what he says. Appoint a man over the congregation who will go out and come in before them, and who will lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the Lord may not be like sheep which have no shepherd. And the Lord said to Moses, Take Joshua, the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hand on him.

So God saw something in Joshua that he had a shepherd's heart. And if there's ever a need of shepherds today, boy, this is the hour, isn't there? Somebody gave me, about two years ago now, a CD that I had in my car for I guess possibly about a year, and I never listened to it. But the title, I got an entire sort of message out of it, was called Pharaohs are Fathers.

And when I did play the CD, it had nothing to do with what I thought it was about. I don't know why it had that title on it. But we have too many pharaohs and not enough fathers.

Pharaohs, you know, are happy as long as you're building cities for them. But woe betide you if you go across town and want to build your own city, you know. And pharaohs whip and fathers weep, and, you know, I did a whole comparison.

I don't have it here, so I can't get into it. But, you know, we desperately need some fathers. We need some shepherds.

I believe the sheep are crying out for genuine shepherds, those that know how to weep with those that weep and rejoice with those that rejoice. And this is the sort of individual, again, that we find here in the life of this young man, Joshua. Not only that, God recognizes the spirit that is in him.

A man in whom is the Spirit. We cannot function without the Spirit of God. Not one single one of us can function without the anointing of the Spirit.

So, God looks at this young man. He's already chosen him. He's been observing him, watching him.

And the time has come now for him to replace this great man of God. One other thing there. A man totally committed to following the Lord.

Over in Numbers, going back into chapter 32. Verse 11. None of the men who came out of Egypt from twenty years old and upward shall see the land which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, for they did not follow me fully, except Caleb the son of Jephthah, Kenazite, and Joshua the son of Nun, for they have followed the Lord fully.

A man who followed God fully. It's a strange sort of a way of putting it. Follow the Lord wholeheartedly.

Follow the Lord in every facet. You know, Revelation talks about these that follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes. There are certain places that the Lamb goes that I'm not sure I want to go.

You know, I'm happy to go up to the Mount of Transfiguration. That would have been an incredible sight. Peter never forgot it.

He says, we were eyewitnesses of His majesty when they saw the spectacular display of the glory of God as Jesus was transfigured before them. But He also went to Calvary. He also drank the cup.

He went into the garden. These are they that follow the Lamb whithersoever He goes. And here is a man that fully followed the Lord.

You know, we pick and choose a little bit, don't we? You know, I'd like to do this. I'd like to have that and so on and so forth. I'm not sure about this.

But Joshua was not that sort of an individual. And then the last thing, Deuteronomy chapter 34 and verse 9. Now Joshua, the son of Nun, was filled with a spirit of wisdom. For Moses had laid his hands upon him and the sons of Israel listened to him and did as the Lord had commanded Moses.

A man filled with a spirit of wisdom. The Bible says, with all of your getting, get wisdom. Wisdom is the principal thing.

Wisdom is what we do with knowledge, how we handle knowledge. It's one thing to have a word of knowledge. It's another thing to know what do I do now that I have that word of knowledge.

I may have shared last time I was here about a young man who is very popular these days in the prophetic realm. He had gone into a meeting and been asked to minister over some of the leaders. And as he was approaching one man, God gave him a picture, an open vision.

And he saw this leader with a knife in his hand kind of stabbing the senior pastor in the back. And he said it was a very clear word and the people, as he was sharing, the people sort of laughed a little bit like, well, you know, it's obvious. God's shown me clearly what to do.

And he said, no, he said, I have learned when God gives me a word, how do I deliver that word? He said, if I go to that young man in the midst of his peers and I say to him, God's just given me a picture of you

with a knife in your hand stabbing the senior pastor in the back. He said his peers will never trust him because there's been a seed of doubt and betrayal sowed into the lives of those men. Watch out, this guy's a backstabber.

And he said there's no redemptive value. He says whatever God does, there's always a redemptive value to it. And so he prayed and God said, I want you to have the senior pastor stand and I want you to have this man stand.

And he said, I want you to put them back to back. And so this man is, you know, his back is against the senior pastor's back. And he says to this man, he says, God has shown me something and that is that you are to protect your pastor's back.

And he said, all of a sudden the man began to weep. And he says, I knew, God knew, and he knew that he was on the wrong side of what he was supposed to be doing. He was not functioning in the capacity that God wanted him to function in.

And he was broken. That conviction came upon him because he realized I've been stabbing this man and God wants me to cover this man's back. And we need wisdom, not only in our own houses, as far as our families are concerned, but certainly in the house of God.

We need the wisdom of God. Joshua now is about to assume this position of leadership. And the very last thing, Moses lays hands upon him and the spirit of wisdom comes upon him.

He is then commissioned and assumes the role. Now, let me go back, as I conclude this, to Joshua chapter one again. Now, it came about after the death of Moses, the servant of the Lord, that the Lord spoke to Joshua, the son of Nun, Moses' servant, saying, Moses, my servant, is dead.

Now therefore arise, cross this Jordan, you and all the people, to the land which I am giving to them, to the sons of Israel, every place on which the sole of your foot treads, I have given to them, just as I have spoken to Moses. And he goes on from the wilderness of this Lebanon, and so on and so forth. Verse five, No man will be able to stand before you all the days of your life.

Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you. I will not fail you, nor forsake you. Now, there's two ways of looking at this, and I think both of them are legitimate.

Just as I've been with Moses could be a sort of, I'm going to take his rod, I'm going to see the Red Sea's part, I'm going to see manna come down out of heaven, I'm going to see signs, wonders, and miracles, just as I've been with Moses. I mean, if God spoke to you, and said that, if there was an audible word of God tonight, in the middle of the night, where you wake out of a sound sleep, and there's an angel there, and he says, just as I've been with Moses, I'll be with you. You'd take that in a very positive way, and boy, you'd be excited, wouldn't you? Moses, wow, you know, I'm going to have that power, that authority, and so on.

But, the other side of it is, the last time that Joshua sees Moses, his master, is making his way up a mountain, never to come down. And God then appears to Joshua, and he says, listen, Moses is dead. Just as I've been with Moses, I will be with you.

In other words, there's a warning there as well. He says, take heed, be strong, courageous, be careful, verse 7, to do according to all the word, or the law, which Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn

to the right or the left, and so on, for this book of the law shall not depart from your mouth.

Have I not commanded you? And so God keeps on saying, listen, when I command, I command, in other words, I'm giving my word, I gave my word to Moses, and he did not obey my word. Be careful that you obey the word. Just as I've been with Moses, I'll be with you.

I don't know about you, but I know that would strike some sort of measure of fear in me, that if my, you know, if I was the associate pastor, if we could put it that way, of a mega church, and the senior pastor all of a sudden, you know, announces, listen, I will not be with you too much longer. I sinned in a major way the other week, when I, you know, did something, God told me it was not pleasing to Him, I misrepresented Him to you, I told some off-color joke, or whatever it is, you know, and God says, listen, you have not treated me as holy in the sight of the congregation. Therefore, I'm going to terminate your office.

Just as I've been with Moses, I'll be with you. And we need to, I think, take special heed to this, at least to me, as I got the news this morning, I've had several phone calls, people calling me, did you hear about, you know, Ted? I had at least three from across the nation, and obviously this is a buzz, but I'd already begun to prepare this last night, and I thought, this is relevant, there is a warning here to every single one of us. How do we represent God to our family? How do we represent God to our congregation? How do we represent God to the world at large? Am I a true representation of God? Do I represent Him as a holy God? The way I conduct myself, the way I talk, the way I think, the way I act, all of those things.

Hallowed be thy name. That's part of the Lord's Prayer. I have to manifest again the very nature of God Himself.

Christ-likeness, that's what it's all about, isn't it? The Christian character, that we may be conformed to the image of His Son. I am worried these days about the lack of Christian maturity. That's always been my passion, and I don't in any way claim to have arrived.

But I think one of the great problems as a church, again, are spiritual pygmies, if you like, that we've never really, we've accepted Christ as our Savior, but we've never fully matured. And the ultimate purpose of God is conformity to His image, not just being born again, but that we may grow in wisdom, grow in stature, grow into the fullness of Christ. He's looking for an expression on this earth of who He is.

That's what the church is to be. It is to be an expression. And when the world hears again of what it did today, and I hope that the facts are not as bad as were first mentioned, but if they are, what a tragedy how the name of Christ, again, the reproach that comes on the name of Christ.

In fact, according to the man that he had the affair with, he said the reason he announced it was because here is a pastor standing against a particular bill that's going on there in Colorado dealing with homosexuals and so on and so forth, and they were taking a stand against gay marriages or something. And this man said, you know, the hypocrisy of this. Now again, if what he says is true, it's tragic, I just hope it isn't as bad as they're saying.

But nevertheless, it serves as a warning that we are epistles written and read of all men. And people are looking at your life, they're looking at my life, they're looking at our life in the workplace, in the church, and so on. Do I represent God for who He is, His nature, His character, as I've been with Moses? So I will be with you.

Let's just take a moment and just pray. Again, I don't want just to run through this just for the sake of doing a Bible study. I know it's been a good warning for me just to take stock of my life, realize that none of us are exempt.

The enemy is alive and well. He's out to try and bring down each and every one of us. He's our adversary.

He will use whatever means he can and so on. And in this case, it was just a frustration with the people, just a little bit of anger. To me, it doesn't seem to be that bad.

I mean, Moses was not sleeping with some of the women who served at the Tender Meeting like the sons of Eli were. It seems to be somewhat minor that he would just momentarily lose it. I mean, he was a meek man, but it cost him.

Sin will always cost us something. I believe God wants us to go in. This is a day, I believe, in which He wants us to go in and possess the land.

And I don't want to stand there and see it at a distance. I don't want to see another generation take it from me, so to speak, and go in. I do believe God is raising up another generation, but I don't at the same time believe that He just sort of wipes out the old generation.

I believe we can go in together in that sense. Certainly that was true in the Old Testament. You've got two old men going in with the young guys.

So it doesn't have to be that way. And I want to make that transition. I want to go into all that God has for us.

But I also want to look at this in a very practical way and realize to whom much is given, much is required. Father, we thank You. Lord, this is a solemn word in many, many ways.

Father, to see a man that ascended into the very heights and touched Your glory in a way that very few people have ever touched it, saw You face to face, spent time in Your presence, dined in Your presence, heard Your voice, received the commandments and all the laws of Israel. Father, just had so many encounters. The burning bush.

Lord, His entire life it seemed, at least there were different times when You intervened in the life of this man, even as a baby. Lord, You were preparing him, and yet, Lord, He never made it in to that final segment of the race, as it were, cut short. His eye was not dimmed.

His vigor was not abated. Father, I ask that, Lord, You would just sober us tonight as to our lifestyle, what we're doing, what we're seeing. Lord, shake us where we need to be shaken.

Father, we want to see more than we've seen. We want to go in and possess the land. Father, You said if we fall on the rock, we'll be broken.

But if the rock falls on us, we'll be ground to powder. Father, teach us to fall on the rock. Teach us, Lord, to come in openness, brokenness, confession.

Acknowledge our sin, Lord, lest You come and fall upon us. Father, we pray tonight for our nation at this time. Pray, Lord, for Ted Haggard.

Lord, You know the details. But all things are naked and bare before the eyes of whom we have to do. Lord, if any of these allegations are true, give them the grace to acknowledge them.

The grace, Lord, to confess and forsake His sin. Thank You, Lord, for Your mercy. Thank You, Lord, for Your cleansing.

Thank You, Lord, You're a God that is a God of restoration. Lord, we pray that, Lord, this man would not try and cover, Lord, out of embarrassment, out of trying to protect his family or protect his church. Lord, if these things are not true, that, Lord, You would expose the hand of the enemy.

Lord, You would bring these things to light. You're able to do that, Lord. That which is done in secret, You said, will be shouted from the housetops.

And we pray, Lord, in either way that this would be exposed. Father, we ask, Lord, You would raise up a people in this nation that, Lord, would represent You. Lord, they'd let their light so shine before man that they may see our good works.

Lord, not the evil, not the filth, not all the trash that they see, Lord, coming out of the church. But, Lord, they'd see light, righteousness, righteousness, godliness, integrity. Father, we're supposed to be a city set on a hill.

Lord, cleanse Your church, purify Your church. Lord, expose our own hearts. You said the heart is deceitful above all things, desperately wicked.

Who can know it? Lord, we say with a psalmist, if there's any wicked way in me, Lord, search it out. Try me, Lord. Father, we want to stand before You with a conscience void of offense between God and man.

Lord, put the fear of God in us. God, bring us back to that place, Lord, where we truly honor You, reverence You, love You, fear You. Lord, not that cringing fear, but that reverential fear, that love relationship with You, Lord, that we would never even dream.

Like Joshua, how can I sin against God and do this thing? Father, restore that to Your people. Father, just take these words tonight. As I've been with Moses, so I will be with You.

Lord, just write them indelibly on the heart of every single one of us. Let them be a warning, Lord.

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