

Deuteronomy 31 – 20 May 2021

“Passing The Spiritual Torch”

Introduction

*Moses has completed giving the Law & reiterating in Deut. the things God would have him say again

*We’ve seen the ratification of the covenant of Law

*Now today, this covenant people will experience a changeover of earthly leadership

*They have something precious to protect – this special relationship

*This’s Moses retirement ceremony that God oversees

*Lot like a Christian HS / college graduation ceremony

*Lot like any Christian goodbye & the desire to have the next generation hold the legacy

*Let’s learn from Moses “passing the spiritual torch”

***Today we’ll see 4 guiding principles for those coming behind us in the faith**

1st Guiding Principle: Be Strong; the Lord will overcome for you (Vs 1-8)

Read Chap Vs 1-3

1. Change of human leadership, doesn't affect the Christian's ability to live victoriously
 - a. The power, effort and conquering ability has always come from the Lord
2. Israel still has the Lord as their leader and now Joshua as the human instrument to continue to point them to the Lord
 - a. You wanna raise your kids to know God?
 - i. Even if the people involved changes, it's still Gods' power that's available to prosper

Read Vs 4-5

1. Just as God made the way for Israel to beat their enemies, God will continue to overcome for you
2. Move forward with an expectancy that God will allow you to (1) share your faith, and (2) live your full purpose to His glory

Read Vs 6

1. What are you afraid of today?
 - a. Afraid of changing your beliefs?
 - b. Afraid of telling a friend you're different now that you're growing in Jesus?
2. We can be strong b/c our reliance is in God that never fails & our reliance isn't in ourselves
3. If God will never leave or forsake you, then what's the worse that can happen to you?
 - a. You can live in the freedom of knowing that your soul is bound for eternal heaven!

Read Vs 7-8

1. Moses now turns & tells Joshua to be strong
2. Some of you have had an older Christian tell you, "now go and be strong & courageous".
3. Some of you need to look at some younger Christians & tell them to "go be courageous".
4. See, we're not just learning the Bible for our own encouragement, but to encourage others too!

2nd Guiding Principle: Be Open; acknowledge your covenant with God (Vs 9-13)

Read Vs 9-11

1. Every 7 years all Israeli debt to each other was to be wiped out. A festive time of freedom!
2. Levites were to publicly read of the Law
 - a. This was a re-identification time
 - b. It's a remembering of treaty that you're in
 - c. This was a re-establishing of the oath & covenant that they have with God

Read Vs 12-13

1. Occurrences
 - a. Joshua 8:30 – for the 1st time
 - b. II Chr 34:30 – Josiah – has the people make a recommitment to the covenant
 - c. Neh 8:1-8 – Ezra read for rededication
 - d. Martin Luther – started the reformation after reading God's Word for himself
2. Have you publicly declared your faith in Jesus?

3rd Guiding Principle: Be Nominal; view yourself realistically; w/o God you can do nothing (Vs 14-22)

Read Vs 14-15

1. God prepares to pass the charge of Israel from Moses to Joshua
2. Joshua is tasked with being the one to encourage Israel to serve & be faithful to the Lord

Read Vs 16-18

1. How do ya like that for a parting msg to Moses?!?
2. God tells Moses that Israel will go after other gods and forsake the Lord
3. Notice that the Lord hides His face
 - a. We FIRST removed ourselves from His presence, the place of blessing & ran into sin
 - b. THEN He hides Himself from the sin & shame that we've gotten ourselves into
4. But God is always right there, ready to take us back (Read Hos 5:15 & Hos 6:1) "Come let us return unto the Lord, for He hath torn & He will heal us."

Read Vs 19-22

1. Moses was to teach them this song (in Chap 32)
 - a. This wasn't to rub salt in their wound
 - b. It's so in rebellious times it will speak to them about how God already knew it would happen
 - c. See, God already knows the state of our sinful heart...but do we?
2. So many books/movies have the plot in which the reckless adult returns to their childhood home & get reacquainted w/ their stable upbringing.
 - a. God already knows that, of ourselves, we'll fall apart.
 - b. He wants them to memorize this song, so in those future times of defeat, they can remember God is still there and He still loves them.
3. Gaining a realistic view of yourself, you see...
 - a. How helpless you are apart from God
 - b. How wonderful it is to have a loving Father

Read Vs 23—God tells Joshua: be strong & courageous

4th Guiding Principle: Be Grounded; Use God's Word like a beacon; pointing to truth (Vs 24-27)

Read Chap 31:24-27

1. Keep the written Law in Ark of the Covenant
 - a. With Aaron's rod that budded
 - b. With pot of manna
2. You see, reading the Bible will keep you from sin, but sinning will keep you from the Bible
 - a. Read James 1:23-24 – Beholds but forgets
 - b. Col 2:6-7 – Rooting & established
3. The light of God's Word will either...
 - a. Repel you like a vampire
 - b. Light your path to new heights
 - c. Read Psm 119:105 – Thy Word is a lamp...

Read Vs 28-30 – Moses gathers the people to hear his 'Song of Witness' that will now be in chapter 32

1. God says, "I know all about you, & I still love you anyways".
2. He just waiting for us to realize it.

Conclusion

So as Moses did at his retirement ceremony, so let me pass the spiritual torch to you.

1. **Be Strong; the Lord will overcome for you**
 - a. God has great things ahead so be courageous
 - b. God will do more than you think when you ask Him and seek for Him and His will
2. **Be Open; acknowledge your covenant w/ God**
 - a. Do you have spiritual routines in life that remind you of your worship of God?
 - b. Have you told you family/friend that your life is devoted to honoring God?
3. **Be Nominal; view yourself realistically; w/o God you can do nothing**
 - a. Whatsoever is highly esteemed among men is an abomination to God.
 - b. Humble yourself & He will lift you us
4. **Be Grounded; use God's Word like a beacon; pointing to truth**
 - a. You're either running from or running into God's Word. Does it scare you or excite you?