

Into the Promised Land - Joshua's Story

Lesson #44 - "Moses' Conclusions" - Deuteronomy 33:26 -Deuteronomy 34

•HANDOUT•

► This study will look at Moses conclusions. Moses has experienced God in ways no one else has experience and he summarizes by saying "There is no one like God." How blessed Israel has been and will continue to be if only they will be obedient.

But, before we do that, we must determine which tribe Moses omitted from his prophetic blessings, and why. Was the omission accidental or was it punitive? Is there an historical trail of bread crumbs which we can follow, that will lead us to the answer?

Of course, identifying who is missing is the easy part: it is the tribe of Simeon. But the answer as to why takes us back to Genesis 49:5-7 where Simeon was mentioned in conjunction with the tribe of Levi and begin our search there.

Q: What did Jacob prophetically state regarding Simeon and Levi?

So what happened to cause such a breach in relationship with Father Jacob, a beach that has continued down to Moses?

► From Genesis chapter 34 we learn that Simeon and Levi had a sister named Dinah. She was sexually defiled by a Hivite named Shechem, who was the son of Hamor, the ruler of the area in which they lived. According to verse 3, Shechem genuinely loved Dinah and wanted to marry her. Yet the response of Simeon and Levi regarding Shechem's desire to marry Dinah, was "*he should not have treated our sister like a prostitute.*" They then proceeded to initiate a plan to get revenge for his act.

Simeon is depicted as a man of anger and violence. But all the brothers – not just Simeon and Levi – joined with them to conspire and initiate a plan to establish a false treaty with Hamor's family. They came up with a plausible plan: If all the men of the city agreed to be circumcised then the family of Jacob and the family of Hamor could live peacefully together. Hamor and the men of the city all agreed.

But, after the men of the city had all been circumcised, and while they were still in pain, Simeon and Levi took their swords and attacked the unsuspecting city, killing every male. They put Hamor and his son Shechem to the sword and took Dinah from Shechem's house and left.

Jacob's response was to rebuke Simeon and Levi for their bloody act. "*You have brought trouble on me by making me obnoxious to the Canaanites and Perizzites, the people living in this land*"

Q: If Simeon and Levi hadn't intervened with their cruel and wrong revenge, would the initial plan for the Canaanite men to be circumcised and thereby take the mark of the Covenant, have been a workable way to have peace? After all, God did allow for proselytized Jews to live in harmony with Israel.

Q: What is significant about Jacob's response: "*Simeon and Levi had made me obnoxious to the Canaanites and Perizzites?*"

Before his death, Jacob cursed both his sons Simeon and Levi for their murderous and cruel actions regarding Shechem, because of Dinah. Now, more than 400 years later, Moses writes his final, individual prophetic message. The tribe of Levi receives praise and the tribe of Simeon is ignored altogether.

Q: What happened that caused the tribe of Levi to receive praise and the tribe, Simeon, to be ignored, even though Jacob had prophesied a curse over them? [ref: Genesis 49:7]

► First let's look at the following summary statement regarding Simeon's tribal inheritance followed by the scriptural account of Joshua assigning the inheritance to Simeon:

► When Joshua allotted the tribal inheritances, The Tribe of Simeon, was given land inside the territory given to the Tribe of Judah. Some scholars say this was done because the Tribe of Simeon was very small and they couldn't maintain a tribal inheritance like the other Tribes. Whether they are correct or not, it precisely fulfilled Jacob's prophecy. They were indeed scattered in Israel.

► One interesting note: the tribe of Simeon is listed in a place of honor, among the twelve tribes of Israel who are sealed by God's protection in the tribulation. [ref: Rev. 7:7]

► Joshua 19:9 • The inheritance of the people of Simeon formed part of the territory of the people of Judah. Because the portion of the people of Judah was too large for them, the people of Simeon obtained an inheritance in the midst of Judah's inheritance.

► Now we look at the Tribe of Levi

► The Tribe of Levi was also scattered throughout Israel. But Jacob's curse on them was turned into a blessing by the Grace of God. Because they were exceptionally loyal to God, and stood for Him when no other tribe would, God rewarded them by designating them to be a Tribe of priests, and given spiritual responsibilities beyond what any other Tribe experienced. In this way they were "scattered through Israel" but their scattering was a blessing, not a curse.

Even though the Tribe of Levi was never given their own designated land as an inheritance, God provided for them and those who did not have priestly responsibilities within the Tabernacle were given the cities of refuge in which to reside and oversee.

Now ... setting aside the Simeon omission we move on to Moses' Summary Conclusion ...

► Deuteronomy 33:26-29 • "There is no one like the God of Jeshurun, who rides on the heavens to help you and on the clouds in his majesty. The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. He will drive out your enemy before you, saying, 'Destroy him!' So Israel will live in safety alone; Jacob's spring is secure in a land of grain and new wine, where the heavens drop dew.

Blessed are you, O Israel! Who is like you, a people saved by the LORD? He is your shield and helper and your glorious sword. Your enemies will cower before you, and you will trample down their high places. "

Q: Moses gives praise to "the God of Jeshurun." Moses used this same terminology in the Song of Moses, Chapter 32. Who or what is "Jeshurun?"

► Isaiah 44:1-2 • "Don't be afraid, dear servant Jacob, Jeshurun, the one I chose. This is the word of the Lord your Maker who shaped you from birth; He will help you: Do not fear; Jacob is my servant; I have chosen Jeshurun."

Q: What are the six attributes given to God in Moses' concluding statement?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Q: What is the term "Jacob's spring" referring to?

Q: What are the things the God of Israel promises to accomplish?

Q: Are these promises actual guarantees that no matter what, God will do this?

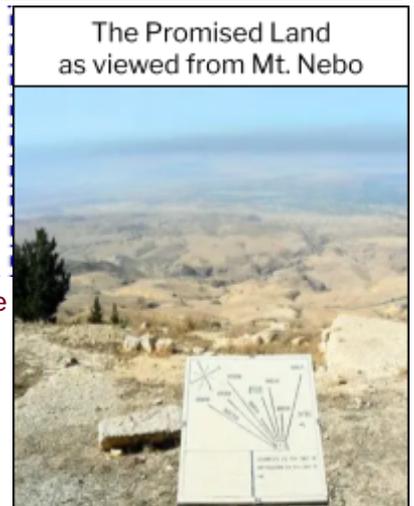
Q: How does Moses close the door to his ministry?

The Final Journey – As Recorded and Inserted into the Record, probably by Joshua ...

► Deuteronomy 34:1-4 • Then Moses climbed Mount Nebo from the plains of Moab to the top of Pisgah, across from Jericho. There the LORD showed him the whole land--from Gilead to Dan, all of Naphtali, the territory of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the western sea, the Negev and the whole region from the Valley of Jericho, the City of Palms, as far as Zoar.

Then the LORD said to him, "This is the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob when I said, 'I will give it to your descendants.' I have let you see it with your eyes, but you will not cross over into it."

Q: What emotions do you think were coursing through Moses as he looked at the Land of Promise from the top of Nebo?



Q: Of course all of the above is speculation about Moses' attitude toward the situation, but what are the things we know for sure about Moses' attitude toward Joshua taking over?

Q: Did Moses know that the Lord God had forgiven him? Can we know that Moses was forgiven?

► Deuteronomy 34:5-9 • So Moses, the servant of the Lord, died there in the land of Moab, just as the Lord had said. The Lord buried him in a valley near Beth-peor in Moab, but to this day no one knows the exact place. Moses was 120 years old when he died, yet his eyesight was clear, and he was as strong as ever. The people of Israel mourned for Moses on the plains of Moab for thirty days, until the customary period of mourning was over.

Now Joshua son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom because Moses had laid his hands on him. So the Israelites listened to him and did what the LORD had commanded Moses.

Q: What is significant about Moses being given the title: the servant of the Lord?

Q: What is significant about the scripture stating that Moses died just as the Lord had said?

Q: Why does the scripture stress that, even though Moses was 120 years old, he was physically strong and his eyesight was keenly unaffected by his age?

Q: How and where was Moses buried? Why is this important?

Moses' Eulogy is inserted into the record

► Deuteronomy 34:10-12 • Since then, no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, who did all those miraculous signs and wonders the LORD sent him to do in Egypt--to Pharaoh and to all his officials and to his whole land.

For no one has ever shown the mighty power or performed the awesome deeds that Moses did in the sight of all Israel.

With the death of Moses a transfer of leadership takes place. This brings us to the Book of Joshua ...

► Joshua 1:1-5 • After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' aide: "Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them – to the Israelites.

I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses. Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates – all the Hittite country – to the Great Sea on the west. No one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life.

As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.

Q: What is the message that the Lord is conveying to Joshua in this opening passage?

Q: What is the greatest promise the Lord makes to Joshua?

**Israel is now perfectly positioned to enter the Land of Promise.
Joshua is ready and able to assume leadership.
This is where we will pick up the story when we continue ...**



Next Time • Lesson #45
“Keys for Success”

