

Connection to Numbers 27:12-23

The time for Moses' leadership of Israel has come to an end. God told Moses to go up the mountain of Abarim and look out over the promised land and die. Moses was unable to enter the promised land because of his sin at Meribah. A new leader had to be chosen to lead the people of Israel into the promised land.

Introduction/Opening

Many corporations follow the drop-dead principle. This principle takes into account what would happen if their leader were to drop-dead. God made Moses into a great leader and supplied him with Joshua to learn under Moses' leadership. Here we see the succession plan God had in place for when Moses died. As we look to the future, all of us must think about what happens to the next generation of people who will carry on our tasks.

Outline

1. God's Judgment (Num. 27:12-14)
 - a. God told Moses to go up the Abarim range to view the promised land from afar. This fulfilled the judgment God pronounced upon Moses at Meribah for striking the rock instead of speaking to it.
 - b. Upon first thought, Moses' inability to enter the promised land may seem like a harsh judgment until you consider the depth of the sin. Moses was supposed to deliver God's message to the people; instead, he rebelled against God. God explained further that Moses "rebelled against my command to demonstrate my holiness in their sight at the waters" (v. 14).
 - i. Sin has consequences, and Moses learned that. Today, those who trust in Christ and repent of their sins are forgiven, but there are consequences for our sinful actions.
2. Moses' Godly Prayer (Num. 27:15-17)
 - a. God reminded Moses of his rebellion. Instead of making an excuse for his sin, Moses prayed that God would appoint a man to lead the people so "the LORD's community won't be like sheep without a shepherd" (v. 17).
 - i. Godly leaders care about those they lead.
 - ii. A leader's care is expressed in preparing the people for their departure. Instead of getting angry and moving on, Moses desired to set the people up for success. Godly leaders care about the present and the future as well.

3. God's Compassionate Answer (Num. 27:18-21)
 - a. God answered Moses' prayer by identifying Joshua as the next leader. God could have told Moses to go and die on the mountain. However, he involved Moses in appointing Joshua.
 - b. Only some of Moses' authority would be passed on to Joshua (v. 20). One of the differences between Joshua and Moses was that God would often speak directly to Moses. Joshua would follow a different model.
4. Moses' Faithful Obedience (Num. 27:22-23)
 - a. Moses faithfully obeyed as God told him.
 - b. Moses was not threatened by the younger man Joshua taking over his leadership role.
 - i. Godly leaders are not threatened by other leaders. Pride occurs when leaders are threatened by other leaders.
 - ii. Godly leaders seek to equip other leaders.

Conclusion

Many churches should learn from both God's plan and Moses' action from Numbers 27. In God's wise plan, for nearly forty years Joshua had learned under Moses' leadership. Joshua did not threaten Moses; instead Moses conferred his authority to him and laid his hands on Joshua as a sign of his leadership being passed down. Godly leaders seek to equip their organizations in the present and adequately prepare them for the future.

Moses was not a perfect leader; he was a sinner. His sinfulness and inability to lead the people into the promised land point to Jesus Christ who was not only without sin but leads His people into eternal life.

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