

March 12, 2021

Read Deuteronomy 34

Key verse: Deuteronomy 34:4

The Lord said to him, 'This is the land of which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, "I will give it to your descendants"; I have let you see it with your eyes, but you shall not cross over there.'

Stopped Short of the Goal Line

I never liked the way Moses' life ended, up on a mountain with God, looking at The Promised Land but being told that he's not going to enter that land. Moses had spent forty plus years laboring for God, struggling through all kinds of hardships, dealing with a stiff-necked people, and forming a nation out of them. Didn't he deserve to set foot into the land that he had striven to reach, to cross the goal line rather than ending his career on the one yard line?

But I suppose Moses had learned a lesson: our greatest achievement is obedience to God, and our greatest joy is living in God's company. We can imagine what a celebration Moses would have enjoyed crossing the Jordon River into Canaan. All the people would have been cheering, carrying him on their shoulders, perhaps dousing him with a bucket full of iced Gatorade. O what a glorious feeling that would have been for Moses, and he certainly deserved to be so honored! But then again, coming to life's end on a mountaintop overlooking The Promised Land in the company of God must have been an even greater joy.

Christians understand that our lives are part of a process, God's process that will come to fruition when a new heaven and new earth replace the old, the new Jerusalem comes down from that heaven, and Christ reigns supreme over all creation (Rev 21:1-5). Despite a lot of guessing, no one really knows when that will transpire, *but that is the vision that God has given us*. And regardless of what we accomplish in this life we should consider our accomplishments as stages of a journey that is much longer than our own lives, a journey that began long ago and will end who knows when. And our greatest joy will not be reaching that goal so much as being in God's company throughout the journey.

Prayer: God of Promise, we thank you the vision you have given us of a Promised Land, but we thank you most of all for your presence on our journey to that land. Help us to hear your calling to follow your Son Jesus through life and death and into new life. Amen.