

FPFWC Christian Development



Out of Slavery to Nationhood

October 2022

Fall Quarter

October 8, 2022

Lesson #2 – Song of Moses

SCRIPTURE TEXT – Deuteronomy 32:3-6, 10-14, 18

ICE BREAKER –

1. What is the purpose of singing to the Lord?
2. How can believers ensure that they do not disregard God as their Rock, the source of salvation and blessing?

Key Verse: “He said unto them, Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, which ye shall command your children to observe to do, all the words of this law.”—Deuteronomy 32:46

LESSON BACKGROUND

As the book of Deuteronomy comes to a close, Israel’s leader, Moses, was on the verge of death. As a result of the impending change of leadership, Moses spoke publicly for the final time. The result is several smaller speeches and songs (found in Deuteronomy 29:2–33:29) that serve as the dramatic conclusion to Moses’ ministry.

At first Moses reminded the Israelites to remember and accept the stipulations of God’s covenant (Deuteronomy 29–30). This covenant was based on God’s love for His people and their responding love and commitment to Him (see 4:37–40; 5:2–3; 6:5–6; 7:9; 11:1; 13:4). A failure to adhere to God’s requirements would result in dramatic negative consequences for Israel (see 28:15–68). In addition, Moses’ speech included a statement on his successor (31:1–8), a recitation of the law (31:9–13), and a prediction of the future (31:14–29).

In the midst of Moses’ speeches, he presented a song for the people (Deuteronomy 31:30–32:43). The song is reminiscent of psalms that celebrate the people’s relationship with God (examples: Psalms 78; 105; 106). Just as the psalms were meant for singing, so was this song of Moses (Deuteronomy 31:19, 21–22).

The three divisions of the song speak to the scope of the Israelites’ relationship with God. God’s loyalty is contrasted with their sinfulness (Deuteronomy 32:1–14). As a result, negative consequences are certain (32:15–35). However, forgiveness, healing, and protection can still be attained (32:36–43).

LESSON COMMENTARY

The book of Deuteronomy concludes with two songs: the Song of Moses (chap. 32) and the Blessing of Moses (chap. 33). Moses in psalm-like fashion poetically crafted the words as a memorial to Israel’s future generations. He invoked heaven and earth (v. 1) to pay attention to what was being communicated because they would be eyewitnesses to verify what they saw Israel do while in the land. Moses

desired that his lyrics would be like refreshing **rain** on **fresh grass** (v. 2). With these words Moses proclaimed the Lord's name and His greatness. For the first time in the Scriptures the Lord is described as a **Rock** (v. 4), suggesting His constancy and permanence. His actions are **perfect** and **just**, compared to the often-capricious actions of other ancient Near Eastern deities. He is faithful and treats everyone **without injustice**.

32:5–14. In sharp contrast to the Lord's righteousness, the nation of Israel acted **corruptly toward Him** (v. 5). They bore no likeness to their father but instead were **a perverse and crooked generation** (v. 5). Sadly, the nation responded foolishly and unwisely to their Creator (v. 6). Their fathers and elders could testify of the Lord's gracious actions when He **separated** (elected) them out as **His inheritance** (vv. 8–9). The elders could also testify of God's great deliverance in the exodus when He protected them like an eagle that **hovers over its young** and He **carried them on His pinions** (v. 11). The **LORD ... guided** them through the wilderness where in the Transjordan they enjoyed the finest of produce of the field and flock (vv. 13–14).

32:15–18. In spite of all that prosperity the nation grew **fat** and **forsook God** who created them and **scorned the Rock** who delivered them (v. 15). Israel is ironically referred to as Jeshurun (cf. 33:5, 26), meaning "upright one," even though they were anything but righteous. Their apostasy extended to worshiping idols and sacrificing to strange gods (v. 16). They were so perverse that they were involved in sacrificing to demons (v. 17; cf. Lv 17:7). They preferred new deities to the One who actually **begot** them (v. 18). God is portrayed both as the One who fathered them and the mother who gave them birth (v. 18).

LESSON NUGGET – God gave Moses this song to teach the people so that they would learn to love and obey Him. Our songs today should follow this pattern by revealing the greatness and goodness of the Lord and thus encouraging us to live for Him. (v.3). The key image for God is "the Rock." It speaks of His stability in a changing world and His dependability in a demanding world (v.4). The Rock is our Savior (v.15), Father (v.18), and Deliverer (vv. 30-31). He is all that we need.

Sources: Moody Bible Commentary, Standard Lesson Commentary, Wiersbe Study Bible and The Essential Everyday Bible Commentary