

LESSON 5



CORNERSTONE CONNECTIONS

JULY 29 2023

last longing look

Scripture Story: Deuteronomy 31–34.

Commentary: *Patriarchs and Prophets* (or, *Beginning of the End*), chapter 43.

PREPARING TO TEACH

I. SYNOPSIS

This lesson focuses on the last few recorded moments of Moses' life. We see him speak to the children of Israel and give them instructions. We read that he blesses them with his words. We also see that he admonishes them to remain true to the faithful God they serve. As well, he is shown by God the upcoming events in which the children of Israel will fall away from the God who has brought them out of Egypt, and again he admonishes Israel to remain faithful. In the end we see God showing His undying love for Moses by resurrecting him from the grave in order to be with God in heaven.

It is a great story to teach from in that we see Moses' humanity as he looks over his life. We also see his close connection with God, and how he willingly gives his life to what God has planned for him. We see him accept the consequences of his actions by not entering the Promised Land, and we understand the utter frustration Satan must have felt at losing this great friend of God from this earth as he was taken to heaven.

II. TARGET

The students will:

- *Know* that Moses, while having ups and downs, stayed true to his God.
- *Feel* that they are encouraged to live the same sort of life Moses did.
- Have the opportunity to *respond* in a positive way in their relationship with God.

III. EXPLORE

Death and Resurrection, Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Beliefs, No. 26

"The wages of sin is death. But God, who alone is immortal, will grant eternal life to His redeemed. Until that day death is an unconscious state for all people. When Christ, who is our life, appears, the resurrected righteous and the living righteous will be glorified and caught up to meet their Lord. The second resurrection, the resurrection of the unrighteous, will take place a thousand years later. (Job 19:25-27; Ps. 146:3, 4; Eccl. 9:5, 6, 10; Dan. 12:2, 13; Isa. 25:8; John 5:28, 29; 11:11-14; Rom. 6:23; 1 Cor. 15:51-54; Col. 3:4; 1 Thess. 4:13-17; 1 Tim. 6:15, 16; Rev. 20:1-10.)"

TEACHING

I. GETTING STARTED

Activity

Refer the students to the What Do You Think? section of their lesson. After they have completed it, ask the following:

- Did you know this was the first time God had raised someone from the dead?
- What else had God done to get someone to heaven (Enoch)?
- Do you think that if Moses had done God's will in regard to getting water from the rock, he would have made it into the Promised Land? Would that have changed history? Why or why not?

Illustration

Share this illustration in your own words:

There was once a young man who was invited to a party by his best friend. His best friend asked if he would bring some raspberries with him to the party. The young man agreed that he would. About a week later, the best friend asked him again to bring the raspberries; again the young man agreed to provide it. On his way to the party he was distracted, his car had some problems, traffic was bad so he was late, and more than anything, with all the stress he forgot what type of berries his best friend wanted.

As he pulled into the supermarket, he had a hard time finding a parking space. He finally found one—now he was that much later—and he went to the fruit aisle. He couldn't believe his eyes; there were all of berries. He couldn't remember the type of berries his friend wanted, even if his life depended on it. So he decided to play it safe; he got strawberries—who did not like strawberries?

Upon arriving at his friend's house, he knocked on the door and was let in. He went to his friend and provided him with the strawberries. His friend had a puzzled look on his face. "I'm sure glad you came, and I'm even glad you did some of what I asked, but how come you didn't follow my instructions completely?" he said. "Raspberries is what I asked for, not strawberries. In fact, I'm horribly allergic to strawberries!"

Needless to say, the young man felt horrible. The stress must have gotten to him, and he wasn't able to fulfill the request. Luckily, his best friend decided he didn't want fruit after all, and they were able to salvage the party and the friendship. In fact, everyone there loved the strawberries and called the party a huge success!

II. TEACHING THE STORY

Bridge to the Story

Share the following in your own words:

What does the preceding story have to do with this lesson? Moses did not do everything God had asked. He made some mistakes. However, together, Moses and God were able to still deliver the people of Israel to the Promised Land. Their partnership is considered a success, so much so that God brought Moses to heaven to live with Him. This just may speak to what kind of friends God and Moses were. This relationship can be considered a wonderful success.

Out of the Story for Teachers

After you read the Into the Story section with your students, use the following in your own words to process it with them.

- Who are the main actors in this story?
- Why is Moses so intent on the people listening to his words?
- What does he mean when he says that his words are not "idle"?
- Why is it so important to understand Moses' words?
- Was God gracious in this story even though He did not allow Moses into the Promised Land?
- How do you think Moses felt when God revealed the upcoming events in Israel's future? How do you think you would have reacted knowing these people with whom you had worked so hard would abandon everything you stood for in order to worship other gods?
- What did you think of the song Moses sang?
- What did you think about the blessing Moses bestowed on the children of Israel?

If you have musical students, or you yourself are musical, try putting the song or the blessing of Moses to music. Have the students help. There is some great poetry in the verses! Another option would be to have the group create a readers' theater out of the verses. This would be a good creative exercise that would show the students how lyrical some of the Hebrew text really can be.

Sharing Context and Background

Use the following information to shed more light on the story for your students. Share it in your own words.

Success:

Most people of faith think of Moses' life as a successful one. There was one incident that created a problem for him, but the rest of his life seemed to be according to the will of God—from his time in the basket to his time on Pisgah.

We know what success looks like for a prophet, but what does it look like in your life? Take some time to ask these questions:

- a. Who in your life do you consider a success? How do you try to emulate them?
- b. What is it that you want out of life? When will you feel you have arrived?

c. What is most important to you? Are you living according to a great vision, like Moses, or are you just getting by day by day?

Confession/repentance:

Why is Moses considered a success? Perhaps for the same reason that David is considered a success. While both men clearly made mistakes and bad calls in their lives, they were both willing to be honest with God and confess their mistakes, as well as repent of their sins and move away from them. How do we react to our sins and mistakes?

We have a tendency to wallow in the guilt we feel from our mistakes. However, the lives of these two men are pretty clear in showing us that we can move away from our sins and become successful in our spiritual lives, which leads to success in the other areas of our lives.

Death/resurrection:

This story is a great example of what it means to be a friend of God. Moses maintained that friendship with God to the point that God did not want to be without His friend. He therefore resurrected Moses and brought him to heaven in order to be with Him. What a wonderful testament to friendship and to God's love for us. Do you think God would miss you that much?

III. CLOSING

Activity

Close with an activity and debrief it in your own words.



Tips for Top-Notch Teaching

A Real Character!

Students grow when you present characters with whom they can identify. What are the marks of humanity in the characters that are universal? What are the character traits that young people can hang their hat on and say, "I'm just like that"? We need to present each biblical character in their full robe of humanity; that is to say, what makes them like us! Rather than give a whitewashed example, study the text to see how these passionate people sometimes led incredibly messy lives. Never be afraid to show them as they were. God was not afraid of them, and it will give the young people an understanding that God can use even the messiest of us.

Have the students take a pen and paper and write a list of things that they believe would make them a success in life. They don't need to show it to anyone; it is just for themselves. Then have them fold up the paper and put it in their Bibles. It is a thing to be referenced, changed, and to remind them of what they see as successful. Remind them that there are many things they can be in life, but being a friend of God is the most important.

Teaching From . . .

Refer your students to the other sections of their lesson. Invite students to share the key text with the class if they have committed it to memory.

- **Key Text**

Invite the students to share the key text with the class if they have committed it to memory.

- **Flashlight**

Read the Flashlight statement, pointing out that most of the time it is from the commentary on this week's story found in the book Patriarchs and Prophets. Ask what relationship they see between the statement and what they have just discussed from Out of the Story.

- **Punch Lines**

Point out to your students the verses listed in their lesson that relate to this week's story. Have them share the verse that spoke most directly to them and allow them to explain why they chose it.

- **Further Insight**

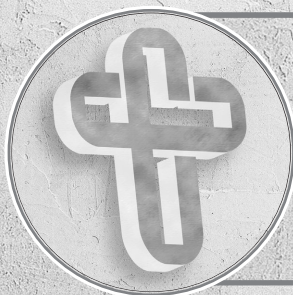
Ask them how the quotes in Further Insight convey the point of the story in this lesson.

Summary

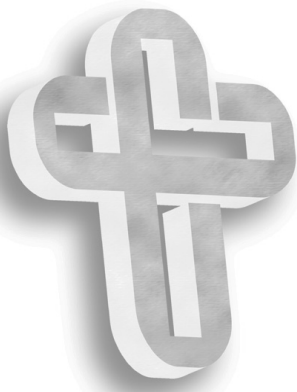
Share the following thoughts in your own words:

Moses lived his life to the fullest by following what it was that God wanted for him. As well, he made it his utmost priority that he become a friend of the Creator. In doing so, he showed a race of people how to honor God by their lives. More than that, he left a legacy of obedience that we can look to and which will help us understand what it means to be blessed by God in

everything we do. Moses showed us that success is not about what we do, but about who we know. As well, Moses' life has taught us that God cares for His people and is willing to communicate to those who are willing to seek Him out. He does not end relationships when we sin, but allows us to confess and repent of what we have done, and He helps move us in a different direction.



Remind the students about the reading plan, which will take them through the inspired commentary of the Bible, the Conflict of the Ages Series. The reading that goes with this lesson is *Patriarchs and Prophets* (or *Beginning of the End*), chapter 43.



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STUDENT LESSON

Scripture Story: Deuteronomy 31–34.

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last longing look



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flashlight

“The great adversary declared that the divine sentence—‘Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return’ (Genesis 3:19)—gave him possession of the dead. The power of the grave had never been broken, and all who were in the tomb he claimed as his captives, never to be released from his dark prison house.

“For the first time Christ was about to give life to the dead” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 478).

keytext

“When Moses finished reciting all these words to all Israel, he said to them, ‘Take to heart all the words I have solemnly declared to you this day, so that you may command your children to obey carefully all the words of this law. They are not just idle words for you—they are your life. By them you will live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to possess.’ ”

(Deuteronomy 32:45-47, NIV)

what do you think?

Agree or disagree: (1) Moses should have been allowed into the Promised Land; (2) Moses was a success.

How long do you think it would take you to get frustrated with the person in charge of a trip you were on if they kept you wandering around in the desert for 40 years?

- 1 month?
- 3 months?
- 12 months?
- 5 years?

(Think how quickly you get frustrated when your dad won't stop to ask for directions.)

did you know?

M

oses has been given credit for being the author of "the Torah" or the first five books of our Bible. While some

might dispute this, it is generally understood to be true. At that time, it was probably passed

down by oral tradition (the telling of stories) from generation to generation. The finding of the Dead Sea Scrolls has taught us that oral tradition was very accurate in keeping the key points

of the stories. Can you imagine keeping every detail together in a long story like that of the Israelites and their exodus from Egypt? We have a hard enough time remembering one thing that our parents ask us to do!



INTO THE STORY

"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 Mediterranean 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.'

is. Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died, yet his eyes were not weak nor his strength gone. The Israelites grieved for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days, until the time of weeping and 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.

"Since then, no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, who did all those 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."

(Deuteronomy 34, NIV)

"And Moses the servant of the LORD died there in Moab, as the LORD had said. He buried him in Moab, in the valley opposite Beth Peor, but to this day no one knows where his grave



OUT OF THE STORY

Have you ever pondered this part of Moses' story before? Was God fair in not allowing Moses to enter into the Promised Land because of one mistake?

To whom was God trying to teach a lesson by not letting Moses into the Promised Land?

What's the big deal about hitting a rock rather than talking to it? The results ended up the same, didn't they? (See Deuteronomy 32:48-52.)

Did Moses do anything else in his life that could have earned the same kind of punishment the rock incident did? What reason did God give for choosing the punishment He did? (Read Numbers 20:12.)

Not only was Moses the first person to be raised from the dead, he had another special honor in His relationship with God. What was it? (Read Exodus 33:11 and Numbers 12:8.)

What legacy did Moses leave to the Israelites at his death?

Read Deuteronomy 31:1-8. Moses left a new _____.

Read Deuteronomy 31:9-13. Moses left a written _____.

Read Deuteronomy 31:30-32:47. Moses left a _____ to memorize.

Why was this legacy so important?

punch lines

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you" (**Deuteronomy 31:6, NIV**).

"He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he" (**Deuteronomy 32:4, NIV**).

"They are not just idle words for you—they are your life. By them you will live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to possess" (**Deuteronomy 32:47, NIV**).

"Since then, no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, who did all those 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" (**Deuteronomy 34:10-12, NIV**).

further insight

"[The Bible's] principles of diligence, honesty, thrift, temperance, and purity are the secret of true success."

—Ellen G. White, *Education*, p. 135.

"The secret of success is the union of divine power with human effort. Those who achieve the greatest results are those who rely most implicitly upon the Almighty Arm."—Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 509.

connectingtolife

Sabbath

Read Deuteronomy 34:10.

In the *What Do You Think?* section of this week's lesson there was a question about whether or not you thought that Moses was a success. The question "What defines success?" is loaded. Actually, it can be answered in different ways for different people. Spend some time thinking about what makes someone successful in your mind. How do you want to define success in your life?

Sunday

Read all of Deuteronomy 31 to 34. Pay specific attention to the texts listed in the *Into the Story* section of this study. What specific things did you learn about Moses? Had you ever before read his blessing on the children of Israel? How did God know the people of Israel would relate to Him? How do you think Moses felt when God told him that Israel would forsake Him? Do you consider Moses a success when he died? Why or why not? (Remember, he did successfully take the people to the Promised Land.)

Monday

Read Deuteronomy 32:47.

In the *Key Text* this week, why does Moses tell the people to remember the words the Lord has for them? That is also true about what the words of the Bible have for us. Moses' life is a great example of what it means to follow the laws and the words of God. Even at the end of his life, when he had been with these people for a lifetime, Moses was admonishing them to be true to the Word of God, for truly that was their salvation. And the Word of God continues to show us the saving grace of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Why might memorizing Scripture texts help us in our daily lives?

Tuesday

Read Matthew 17:1-3.

Did you realize that this was the first time that Christ was going to raise someone from the dead? Think about what must have been going on in the mind of Satan as God came down to raise Moses from his sleep! He must have thought that he had dominion (rule) over Moses because he had died. However, the *Flashlight* quote tells us that Christ came down and took Moses to heaven with Him. What a blow to what Satan perceived as a victory. It is one of the first times we see, in the Bible, how Christ is more powerful than death!

Wednesday

Look up "quotes about success" on any Internet search engine. What do you find interesting about the results you get?

They rely on different measures of success. To some, it is money, to others fame, to even others it is something more intangible, such as intelligence or peace or satisfaction. Success is one of those things that we all look at a little differently.

Christians have an even different outlook. For us success is measured in relation to the will of God in our lives. We rest our success squarely on Christ's shoulders and try to become examples to the world of what He is to us. That is the measure of our success.

Thursday

Read Philippians 4:13.

How do you know if you are a success? Who is it that you compare yourself to in order to measure up? Is your success based on grades or on athletic achievement?

There are so many ways we find ourselves not measuring up. Sometimes it is scary. Moses had a great number of people who were looking to see if he was a success or not. It must have sometimes been scary for him, leading God's people to the land He had promised them.

But Moses was a success because he always came back to full reliance on God.

Friday

Read Deuteronomy 31:6.

The story of Moses is full of adventure, right up until the end of his life. He faced many trials and tribulations with wonderful results because of his faith and relationship with God. Think about being at the end of your life and looking back on what you have done, and how you have fostered your relationship with God; what would you say about it?

Write a paragraph as if you were about to die and you were looking back on your spiritual walk with God. What was it like? How do you want others to remember it?

this week's reading*

Patriarchs and Prophets (or *Beginning of the End*), chapter 43.

**Beginning of the End* is a special adaptation of *Patriarchs and Prophets*, created for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press®. Get more information about it at www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companion-books#.URlhF1rBO9s. By following the weekly reading plan, you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages Series each year.