

Moses is Dead and Buried, Satan is Disputing, but Jesus Christ is Victorious

sermonaudio.com

By Shawn Reynolds

Bible Text: Joshua 1:2; Jude 9
Preached on: Sunday, April 21, 2013

Grace Particular Baptist Church
5725 Imperial Lakes Blvd
Mulberry, FL 33860

Website: www.graceparticularbaptist.org
Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/graceparticular

Let us pray.

Dear heavenly Father, most gracious and holy Lord, I thank thee, Lord, for this day and I thank you, Lord, for all that thou hast done. And I pray, oh Lord, that you would open the heavens this morning, that you would drop down thy power, that you would reveal to us, Lord, what thou hast for us. And, Lord, may you give us the rest, to rest in thy finished work for all of the salvation that has been wrought in thy Son. Lord, may you give us this day a guiding light of thy Son to show us, Lord, his preeminence. Lord, may you be glorified today and may you lay the creature down at thy feet where the creature belongs. Oh, Lord, may you increase this day and, Lord, may you fill me with thy love, my love for thee, my love for thy people, my love for thy truth. And, Lord, may you bless this hour to the praise and glory of thy name. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

I want to talk to you this morning about something that I have said in the past a couple of times in a couple of the sermons that the Lord has laid on my heart. I have always a couple of times made reference to something. I am going to use the term creature. I hope you understand what that means. I am not talking about the birds that we see outside and the squirrels that are running around in the trees this morning. But I am talking about that fallen nature.

We have a fallen nature part of us that relies on this creature every day. We desire in our own self to do things. We desire to set things in motion. We desire to bring forth God's will when we believe that we know it. There is a lot to creature reliance. We rely on our own hands. We rely on our own intellect. We rely on our past. We rely on history. We rely on a lot of things in our lives. And unless the Lord comes and shows us where the crown belongs, that the rightful place is upon his head, we would wrestle with him to take that crown and to place it on our own head through creature obedience, through creature obeying and relying and doing. And I know a few couple of months ago we talked about Arminianism and it is not what is heavy on my heart today. But it is to do this and live. the covenant of works that was made with Adam we tend to throw ourselves back into it, back under it. And make no mistake about it. When you take all the fluff away and you take all your excuses away and you take away all your justifying the reason of your actions, you come back to one thing, trying to perform the holy law of God.

Moses said, “Do this and live.” Many of the others in the Old Testament said the same thing. They pointed the people to the law of God and they said, “Do this and live.” And we can all stand in here today and say, “No, that is not me, because Christ is the end of the law. Christ fulfilled that law.” And then we go off and we live the opposite. And if you are sitting in here today and you says, “No, I don’t have that problem, I have been set free from that problem,” I would ask the Lord to examine your heart.

Creature reliance is something that sneaks right into our life. It seems like it does every day. And we can trace it all the way back to the fall. We can trace it all the way back, but like I said, it all comes down to one thing, trying to fulfill that to make our Lord and our Savior happy, trying to do this and live, to live unto him.

If there is any life at all in Christ Jesus—which I believe there is—there is freedom from that. There is freedom in that alone in Christ Jesus. The strong man must cast out the strong man. The stronger than the strong man must do that. It is an incredible battle.

I tell you. And those of you who know me know how much I hate Arminianism. If you want the hair to stand up on the back of my neck, just talk to me about it. But I have an equal hatred for creature exultation. I do. But I know that hatred isn’t of myself. I know that that is something the Lord had to have given me. But I tell you, I hate it in myself. It is something I know that it plagues me while I am here on this earth. And isn’t it amazing that when I am shown that it is a plague of mine how much I try to get out of it, just proving the very fact that it is there.

The rest of the Lord Jesus Christ is a wonderful thing. It is a thing we can’t even speak about because it is hard to put into words. The arms and the hands are laid low. They are not scheming anymore. The mind is made to stop. The mind is made to rest in the finished work of Christ. There is no worrying about tomorrow. There is no worrying about the next hour. There is no worry at all. It is where peace is for the child of God.

I want you, today, to turn to our text and I pray the Lord would have us all to consider these words today. And I pray that the Lord would bring them powerfully to your soul. They are found in the book of Joshua chapter one. I will reads the first verse, our focus verse this morning and the verse where the entire message will come from will be verse two. And then I will read verse one. This is Joshua chapter one.

Now after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses’ minister, saying, Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.¹

I pray that the Lord preaches that to your soul this morning, that Moses is dead. What does that mean? What will it mean to you today? We have such a bondage in this life of legal obedience. You may not realize it. I pray the Lord opens your eyes to it today.

¹ Joshua 1:1-2.

I want to say, first, today, a few things about the death of Moses, the physical death of Moses. What does it mean for the people of God today? And then I want to speak about what it means spiritually. What did the death of Moses mean spiritually?

But, first, we will look at the physical death of Moses and today, as I said, the whole message will come from verse two, but we will be in Deuteronomy here, where we can just slip back a couple of minutes here with our hands in just a moment.

But the first thing I want to tell you about this physical death is something we all need to know is that the Lord's work will go on. None of us in this room are indispensable. None of us in this room... we carry on the work of the Lord today as we live. But as long as the Lord's gospel is in this land, as long as it is in this world, the Lord will carry it. He will carry it on no matter how eloquent or how great the saints are that he takes home to be with him. As he took Moses to be with him, Joshua was raised up.

He said to Moses or he said here to Joshua:

“Moses my servant is dead.”²

One day those words will be said about you and I. It is a certain thing. Death is certain for every member in this flock today, in this room today. But we don't want to dwell upon death, because in the Lord Jesus there is life.

But I want you to see some things about Moses' death, beginning with the fact that Moses was not surprised by it. Does it come as a surprise to you when I say that everyone in this room will die? Does it kind of make you draw back? Does it surprise you when you hear those words? Maybe you are holding out hope that you won't. Moses wasn't surprised. If you turn with me just, like I said, turn back a little bit here to Deuteronomy 32 and look at the words beginning in verse 48.

And the LORD spake unto Moses that selfsame day, saying, Get thee up into this mountain Abarim, unto mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, that is over against Jericho; and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession.³

Great mercy. He allowed all of Moses' life, those 40 years in the wilderness of bringing him to this land and in the Lord's mercy he allowed him to see it. But there was a reason Moses couldn't go into the Promised Land and die, verse 50.

And die in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people; as Aaron thy brother died in mount Hor, and was gathered unto his people: Because ye trespassed against me among the children of Israel at the waters of Meribah-Kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin; because ye

² Joshua 1:2.

³ Deuteronomy 32:48-49.

sanctified me not in the midst of the children of Israel. Yet thou shalt see the land before thee; but thou shalt not go thither unto the land which I give the children of Israel.⁴

Moses was not allowed in, but I want you to see that Moses was prepared for that. Moses was told the day that he smote the rock in anger that he would die, that he would not see the Promised Land.

I have a lot more to say about that, but we are going to wait a little bit later for the spiritually application.

The next thing I hope you see about his death is that Moses was ready by the Lord. You and I today are no different. We love to quote that verse, at least I do, that we are made willing in the day of the Lord's power. And it is true. And when this hour comes for every one of us we will be made willing in the day of the Lord's power. The Lord tells us in Luke 12:40, he says:

“Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.”⁵

He comes for his children. But he prepares his children. But what has he prepared them in? Does he prepare them in their own doings? Does he prepare them in the creature? Does he prepare them in what they have done here on earth? No. He lops that off. He prunes the tree. He wraps it in the robe of his righteousness. He prepares it in the perfect obedience of himself and the holiness of himself. You and I today will not be taken to heaven in our righteousness. You and I today in any creature ability or creature reliance that we have, it will be stripped away in the stripping room. For if it isn't, we will never see the Savior.

But, see, you and I can't strip ourselves of that. Nor do we want to strip ourselves of that. We have this battle going on down here. And when we are left to ourselves, we are very comfortable in it. We are very comfortable of being in control of our lives. We are very comfortable of looking for tomorrow and trying to plan what tomorrow is going to be.

Where is the rest in that? Where is the rest in today? You and I both know that we have planned things in the future that have not come about. Why is that? Our vision into the future is not very good. Our vision past the next five minutes is not very good. But the Lord's vision is 20/20, because it is all done in his will. It is all done in his providence. Oh, to be ready by the Lord. Oh, to be ready to hear the command to go up and die.

Do you know what we hear in it today? Fear. We have so much unrest in those words, when we hear them we are so terrified by them. And do you know why you are terrified by them? Because of the creature, the creature that still thinks he has something to do, the creature that wants to hold on to another creature. And that is what I am saying. It is not

⁴ Deuteronomy 32:50-52.

⁵ Luke 12:40.

what I am saying. I hope you see it in the Word of God, how the Lord prepares his people.

You and I might not be ready right now in this hour. We will be ready in the day of his power. We will be readied by our Lord and Savior who has no blemish in his bride, who has washed his bride in his efficacious blood. The power of that blood to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Maybe you don't see that perfectly today. But his promise to you is that you will.

Now I want to say something about Moses' life. And, you know, he loved the people of God. Moses loved the people of God. If you trace Moses' life with how many times he interceded for the people of God, he is a picture of our Lord. He is a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ as a mediator, as an intercessor. How many times did he ask the Lord to have mercy upon the people? And what did the Lord tell him here in Deuteronomy? Be gathered unto thy people. We know that there was a great fervent love in Moses for the people of God, because that is the Lord's love.

We have been to this passage many times, but if you turn with me back over to Hebrews 11 again that we in the roll call of faith, we hear something about Moses that we have shared with you many times in verse 24.

“By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.”⁶

By faith now, by the faith of the Son of God. We see today what overcomes the fear. We see what overcomes this desire to do something with our hands, the creature ability. It is the faith of the Son of God. Moses was living a life of luxury, but by faith Moses, when he was come to years, and every time you see that in this passage, by faith, you might as well take the word faith out and put him in there. By him, by the Lord Jesus Christ. That is how it was performed.

“By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God.”⁷

If they are afflicted, I want to be afflicted. If they are suffering, I must suffer. If they are prospering, I want to prosper with them. If they are going into the Promised Land, Moses' desire was to go into the Promised Land. He desired it. He wanted to go there. But he couldn't. We are going to talk about why he couldn't. The easy answer would say, well, it is the Lord's will not to. But why? Why? Because these Scriptures are not about Moses. They are about the Lord Jesus Christ. We lose sight of that sometimes when we read these Old Testament passages. The children and I have been covering Jonah. The book of Jonah is not about Jonah. It is about the Lord Jesus Christ and salvation in him alone. It is about the people of God and what he brings the people of God to see in their life.

⁶ Hebrews 11:24.

⁷ Hebrews 11:24-25.

Do you honestly think what is going on in the world is about that world? The world, this is the, the United States exists because of the people of God.

What is it we have to learn? What is it we have to see? Romans 8:28 tells us it all works for our good. Do you believe it? And you believe it with this faith. You will believe it by him, the same way Moses believed it by him. And he left all of that.

Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.⁸

Respect unto what? Christ. Moses' desire was to be with the people of God. I hope you see that.

And then I want you to, if you go back to our text in Joshua and you just turn one page back again we are going to go to Deuteronomy 34:1. I want to show you something else about the end of Moses' life and hopefully the end of our lives.

“And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho. And the LORD shewed him all the land of Gilead, unto Dan.”⁹

I want you to see that first verse. The very first phrase says what? Moses went up. The people of God go up when it is time to die. They don't go down. But what do they go up in? They go up in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. They don't go up in their works. They don't go up in their duty. That is creature reliance. When the creature is exalted the crown is taken from his Lord and is put on his own self. Do you understand that? And it is so subtle. And I am going to show you why it is subtle here in a few minutes. We are going to see who really loves this. We are going to see who uses this as a tool. And it may surprise you. But our creature reliance and our creature abilities and our creature doings and our creature selfisms that is not going up. That is going down, down where we will all return as dust to the ground. But the Lord's finished work is what he brought Moses up in, the child of God.

Grace abounded mightily over sin. And I want to say just follow me here, because you may be thinking or you may be doubting in your mind right now that grace didn't abound because Moses was not allowed into the Promised Land. You might sit there and entertain that and you say, “Well, no, you know, sin kept him out. So sin did not abound.” But I tell you now today and I pray you search your Word and tell me. Did he go into the Promised Land? Did he? Did he appear there with Jesus? Did he appear there in the mount of transfiguration? Was he there? Did he set foot in the Promised Land? Yes, he did. Because grace abounded over sin.

⁸ Hebrews 11:25-26.

⁹ Deuteronomy 34:1.

I don't think we understand the depth of that. But in this understanding and in this account Moses could not set foot into the Promised Land. Why? We are going to get to that now. Finally we have to get to that. Well, Moses is a representative of the law, in case you haven't figured that out, because Moses was the law giver. And you and I today must understand and we must be brought to see that the law and obedience to the law and serving of the law will never bring a sinner into the Promised Land. It can't. The obedient of the creature, the must tos, the have tos, the duty of the creature can never bring you or I to heaven. That is the beauty of this passage. That is the beauty of Moses my servant is dead. He is dead. And I don't want you to miss that Joshua is the one that must go into the Promised Land, Joshua, meaning savior. Jesus' name translated Joshua. There is only one way into the Promised Land.

“For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.”¹⁰

My prayer today in this hour is that the Lord Jesus Christ has preeminence, that the crown is put upon his head for what he has done. Grace and truth came by Christ. And do you know what the truth of the matter is today? Tat no matter what you do, no matter how hard you think it, no matter how far you press on to change or to alter the Lord's will or to fulfill the Lord's will, you will come short. There is no peace in the creature, doings. There is no eternal life in the creature. And make no mistake about it. I am not telling you not to obey. I am telling you how. And I am not telling you how like an instruction manual, but it is in Christ. There is a difference. Have you ever experienced the difference in your life of obeying something of yourself and having Christ's obedience? Christ's obedience doesn't murmur. Christ's obedience doesn't complain. Christ's obedience is the love. He laid down his life. He fulfilled the law. The law could only condemn. The creature and all that the creature can do can only condemn. It leads to death. Moses must die. He must die.

And do you know something else? He must be buried. Moses must die in us and Moses must be buried. Just turn one... it is one page back in my Bible. It may be more in yours, but turn back to Deuteronomy 34. You should look at verse five and six.

“So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD. And he buried him.”¹¹

Understand that, dear ones. He buried him. Who else is in the place right now? It is the Lord and Moses. The Lord buried Moses in the mountain.

“And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Bethpeor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.”¹²

¹⁰ John 1:17.

¹¹ Deuteronomy 34:5-6.

¹² Deuteronomy 35:6.

That is very important. I want you to understand that the Lord buried him. He buried him in his Son. The law is swallowed up in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is swallowed up and fulfilled in his perfect obedience. He is buried.

Do you want to know what the answer is for you and I today? He must be buried. But we can't get out the shovel and we can't dig a whole, because it is him who buries him. And it is the same for you and I today. He must be buried in all of us. The creature must die and must be buried that he is exalted.

Romans 7:4 says:

“Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.”¹³

We must die to the law. We must die to the creature and the law and the creature must die to us. It is buried in him. Where is our answer again? It is in Christ Jesus. It is buried in him. But I want to tell you something about this law, too. And I want to tell you something about that creature that is in you and I today. The law never loses its power. The law is strong to condemn. Look at verse seven.

“And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old.”¹⁴

People say, “Well, Moses, you lived a long life. You were ready to die. Your strength was gone. That is the end of life.”

No.

“And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.”¹⁵

He was a strong man. He hadn't lost vision. He hadn't lost anything and neither has the law. He is a picture of the law. Isn't it amazing when the Holy Spirit brings forth these words and shows you what they mean to you and I today? It is a warning to us. You think, well, no, I am immune to this because I can see Christ at times. But what about when he is hidden by your sin, by your creature dependence?

But now I want to get to the big point, the one that I believe is essential that we know. You see, there is a third party in all of this. There is someone else watching in all of this. There is someone else with a great desire that you and I dig up Moses. There is a someone else with a great desire that you and I follow the law. You think, well, wait a minute. This is the law of God. How could Satan desire you to follow the law of God?

¹³ Romans 7:4.

¹⁴ Deuteronomy 34:7.

¹⁵ Ibid.

Because the end of it is death. The end of it is condemnation. You see, this part that says:

“...but known man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.”¹⁶

Have you ever wondered about that passage over in Jude nine? Turn with me over there a minute.

We try to put ourselves back under the law. That is what creature obedience is. We put ourselves back under it. If we just do this, we will live. If we just perform this, if we just plan this we will live. And then Satan is sitting down there going, “Yes. That is exactly what I want to hear.” And that is exactly what we hear here in Jude nine.

“Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses.”¹⁷

Why? Why is the devil wants to know? Remember what the Lord said? I buried him in the mountain. I buried him in the valley and nobody knows where he is buried. And if Satan comes along and says, “Where? I need to know where he is buried. I want him dug up. I want all the superstition.”

Do you know what they said to Jesus when he healed that blind man? “We be Moses’ disciples. We are the letter of the law people. We follow the law.”

Satan says, “Yes, I have got them where I want it.”

What about you and I? Why does he want us? Why does he care so much about where the body of Moses is? Because he is trying to drag us back to him. He is trying to get us to fulfill the law. He is trying to get us to put ourselves back under the law. That is why his desire is so. He wants you to see that Moses is resurrected. And when we see that Moses is resurrected, who do we lose sight of that is resurrected? The Lord Jesus Christ.

Oh, it is a wonderful, deep passage. Why does the devil dispute about the body of Moses? Why does he care? Why? Because so many people today are perishing under the very same thing. Do this and live. And do you know what? Without grace they will die there. Without the saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ they will die in their duty. They will die in their works. They will die in what they are doing for God. And do you know who the happiest one is going to be? The one who is still contending for his body. And he is telling you.... we hear his voice, don't we? You hear his voice, don't you? Don't you hear his voice to tell you to do this and live? Don't you hear him contending with you wanting you to be back under the law?

I tell you. This is a hard thing to preach, because I am under great conviction.

¹⁶ Deuteronomy 34:6.

¹⁷ Jude 9.

“Moses my servant is dead.”¹⁸

And I hope he dies in me. I hope he dies in you. I hope the Lord Jesus Christ buries him.

Romans 10:4 tells us:

“For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness.”¹⁹

You know, he went to the end of the law in perfect obedience. And he wrought him a beautiful coat of perfect righteousness. And I long for the day that he puts that on me and takes that tattered rag and puts those, burns those tattered rags and buries them with the body of Moses where they belong.

“For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.”²⁰

There is his faith again. His faith is the answer, isn't it? It is the victory that overcomes Satan. It is the victory that overcomes the world, the victory that overcomes the bondage to the law.

The Lord said in John 8:32:

“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”²¹

And he is the truth. And the truth is that he buried him. And I pray to God wholeheartedly that he reveals that to each one in here of his dear children. And in 36 he says:

“If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”²²

Oh, Lord, make us free. Make us free, Lord.

Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 3:17:

“Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.”²³

And it is my prayer for you and I both today is that the Lord reveals his liberty, the Lord reveals to you his preeminence and the Lord lops off and buries the creature, he buries him in a valley that we can never find, although we try, because the Lord buries it and he takes it away. You know, he is buried on that cross, isn't he? He is taken away, isn't he?

¹⁸ Joshua 1:2.

¹⁹ Romans 10:4.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ John 8:32.

²² John 8:36.

²³ 2 Corinthians 3:17.

And you and I no matter how hard we try to unearth him, we are never going to be able to do it perfectly, because grace always abounds of us.

The last thing I want to say this morning as I read this verse.

“Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people.”²⁴

You know, you and I we are very worried about Jordan. Forty years, for 40 years they wandered in the wilderness under a great fear of Jordan, because they knew to get to that promised land they had to pass that river. And you see it, don't you? It is death. It is that great specter of death that we look at all our lives. Hebrews tells us that all our lives are subject to it. And there it is. We wander around in the wilderness for 40 years and we keep thinking, when is it going to be. When is it going to be that we are going to cross Jordan? When is it going to be that us and all the people of God, when are we going to cross Jordan? But I hope you see the beauty of this, that it is Joshua who is leading us. It is the Lord Jesus Christ who has to take us safely over Jordan. And it is the Lord Jesus Christ who has put down all of our enemies and it is the Lord Jesus Christ who readies us for this hour to be taken over Jordan. And all our lives we may be subject to that fear. But in that moment in the time that the Lord has made the Jordan ready to be passed over, when the great miracle takes place and it will be a miracle to you and I when that fear is no more, when death is swallowed up in victory and when the Lord Jesus reveals to us that eternal life is just around the corner, just a blink away and Jordan will be crossed with Joshua taking us over.

Dear heavenly Father, glorify thy name. Bless this message to the souls of they people. And, Lord, may you bury Moses today and, Lord, may you give us the faith of thy Son to believe it, to know it and to live it in the day of thy holy power. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

²⁴ Joshua 1:2.