

October 9, 2022

“The Song of Moses”
Lesson 2 of Unit

Deuteronomy 32:1-18

Intro

The songs in Scripture express worship, lament, praise, and joy. They give people a way to express complex feelings about life and about following God. In today's passage, the Israelites are taught a song for their future.

This song is presented to the people by Moses, as he is speaking to the people for the last time before Joshua takes over leadership of Israel. This song reminds one of those psalms that celebrate God's relationship with His people. As with the psalms, this song is meant to be sung.

There are three sections to this song. In 32:1-14, God's loyalty is contrasted with the people's sinfulness. The second section shows the negative consequences that result from sinfulness (vs. 15-35). Finally, the last eight verses (36-43) show that forgiveness, healing, and protection are still available.

Read Deuteronomy 32:3-6

1. vs. 3: Proclaiming God's name is vital to our worship of Him

His name reflects His nature, His very being

We are praising Him by proclaiming truths about Him

Proclaiming God's name is a way of showing His greatness

He showed Israel His greatness in how He delivered them in Egypt

2. vs. 4: This verse brings out three of God's qualities for which we praise Him

He is a rock

This shows His stability and His unchanging nature

Because He doesn't change, we can rely on Him

His works are perfect / all His ways are just

Humans are imperfect and not always just

God is the opposite of this

God calls us to follow His ways

This includes seeking to be just in all our human interactions

He is faithful / does no wrong

In other words, He does what He says He will do

This goes along with the idea of Him not changing

It also goes along with the concept of His works being perfect

All three of these show clearly that God is worthy to be praised and worshipped

3. vs. 5: The “they” in this verse refers to the people of Israel

God calls them “corrupt...warped and crooked”

This is the opposite of the life God called them to

It is also opposite of Him (faithful, does no wrong)

This song refers to a “generation”
However, these ideas are timeless as they apply to humanity
There are many that are corrupt and crooked
We are reminded that “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”
(Rom. 3:23)
God first tells us where we have fallen short, then He provides the remedy
For us now, it is forgiveness through the blood of Jesus Christ
In Moses’ day, it was law obedience and temple sacrifices

4. vs. 6: God begins this section with a question
“Is this the way you repay the Lord?”
This shows that He expects the people to stay loyal to Him
They aren’t to follow and worship foreign / false gods
When they do go astray, He calls them “foolish and unwise”
This is the same type of reprimand we might get from our earthly fathers
God calls Himself “your Father”
He created humanity, and made Israel a people—a nation
This shows Israel how highly God values them
His disappointment is understandable in light of what they’ve done

Verses 7-9 describe how God would “set up boundaries” for his people. God then brought His people into safety.

Read Deuteronomy 32:10-14, 18

5. vs. 10: The “him” in this verse is referring to the nation of Israel
Here God finds Israel in a desert place
Egypt was a desert, as it stifled life and growth of God’s people
In the Exodus, Israel wandered in an actual desert
Not that even in places that are trying and unfriendly, God is there
Here he shields and cares for His people
He calls His people “the apple of His eye”
This phrase speaks of closeness, intimacy, and deep love and care
6. vs. 11: The next image is of God caring for His people like an eagle cares for its young
Parent eagles protect their young by expanding their wings over the nest
This is a good image for God’s protecting us
He covers us with His care and protection as we grow
The eagles also “spreads its wings to catch them and carries them aloft”
When they learn to fly, eaglets glide behind their mother’s wings
If they should fall, her wings catch them
This idea shows not only God’s care but also His guidance
He brought them out of Egypt to a place they could flourish
7. vs. 12: God’s place with His people is brought up here
“The Lord **alone** led him; no foreign god was with him.”
Israel’s identity is as the people of God through the covenant He made with Abra

God alone is the one who leads and guides them
They are not to follow any foreign gods
When they follow these principles, they have freedom and peace
As we know, they don't always do this

8. vs. 13: God shows His goodness to Israel here in two ways

He puts them "on the heights" of the land
This is a promise of safety from enemies and destruction
High places in Scripture are also where interactions with God occur
He feeds them "with the fruit of the fields"
This is an echo of the promise in Ex. 13:5
"a land flowing with milk and honey"
God will provide abundantly for His people
He will do this even in rough places (the rock, the crag)

9. vs. 14: The blessings of God continue in this verse

First mentioned are the various livestock that provide food
Curds and milk as well as the meat itself
The "choice rams of Bashan"
Then the land's produce is brought out
"finest kernels of wheat", "foaming blood of the grape"
All these blessings aren't just the bare minimum needed to get by
They are the best, the most, the finest
God's care for his people are noted and celebrated in these verses

10. vs. 18: Today's passage ends with a sad note

Despite all these blessings from God, the people don't remain faithful to Him
"You deserted the Rock, who fathered you; you forgot the God who gave you birth."
Perhaps their abundant blessings made for a comfortable life
They forget who gave them the food and the safety they needed

God is here described as both a Rock and as a parent
It's a mixed metaphor—these two images don't go together!
But it shows the width of God's relationship with His people
He is both the source of life and the sustainer of life

Application: This song is a praise to God for His goodness to His people, and a reminder that humanity has a tendency to slide away from God. Singing songs of praise, like this one, is one way to be continually reminded of God's goodness and blessings. Constantly being reminded of His faithfulness to us is one way to help prevent us from becoming complacent and self-satisfied.

Prayer: Father God, thank You for being our Rock and our provider. Help us to daily seek You so that we never turn away from You or forget Your constant blessings. In Jesus' name, Amen.