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WINFIELD BIBLE CAMP - 2003

FAITH: CHALLENGES AND CONSOLATIONS

LAST WORDS AT THE END OF AN AGE

Speaker: Bro. Andrew Hill

Study #1: Moses- Chose Life and Live!

Reading: Deuteronomy 32

Thank you brother Don, and my dearly beloved brethren and sisters in our Lord Jesus Christ and dear young people.

Just before I start, can everyone hear me reasonably well back there, because we have a lot of air conditioners going on here, that I wouldn't mind, if someone could flick a switch and turn them off for 45 minutes! It might help!

It's one of those marvellous things about bible schools, particularly in this beautiful place, where we can look after each other. It is a very wonderful thing as part of our fellowship that we can renew acquaintances with brethren and sisters of like precious faith of many years standing. It's lovely to be with John and Sandra, and we've got recollections way back into the late 60's, I think, and more recently my family and I happened to come up these parts with a 30 foot Winnebago motorhome, which when I think about it now, I think, how on earth did we do that? But we drove around the States and across the prairies and had an absolutely wonderful holiday and we had a safe journey. So here we are again, and we're here to make new friends and I'm sure that this week will be a week as a stepping stone to the kingdom that we'll enjoy immensely.

Brethren and sisters, I wonder whether you've ever been in the situation like I have occasionally, when we've sat at the bedside, or in a comfortable chair in a home or at the bedside in a hospital with a very dear friend? We've held their hands, we've expressed to their face, into their eyes, and into their hearts that we love them! that we treasure them, we really do appreciate their faithful example, their steadfast faith, enduring unto the end, and we read together from the psalms and we pray together, and as elderly folk perhaps even in the last few hours of their life, that communication one for the other, is so terribly precious. It's precious, b&s, because last words are what they are, they are last words and time is running out. We appreciate, and they appreciate, that issues are not to be trifled with, the words that they give us perhaps those that will continue on, perhaps even in the prime of life that we will heed those words, those last words, and those words are carefully chosen. They're given with a great deal of earnestness and with a great deal of fervour, and I'm sure that those

words have been when you've heard them, they've been imprinted on your mind. Well, b&s, what we have before us in our studies, God willing, are the last words of Moses, of Joshua, of David, of Paul and of Christ. We'll find, b&s, that there's a commonality amongst those last words. The same message variously expressed, **but the same exhortation**. It is given to us who would heed these last words.

So when we think about and appreciate the situation that Moses was in, in the book of Deuteronomy, we realize that the wilderness wanderings are drawing to an end, it really is the end of an era. We appreciate that the time of sojourning is being phased out, and we know that there's a taking over and there's a settling in phase that is taking place. So we have an old man, Moses, 40 years he led and suffered long his people, and here in this book he gives his farewell message. It's far more, far more than a lesson in history, it's a drawing together of the issues of life and death. Moses, as we know, is still mentally alert and strong, and he gives his last speech, he gives his last exhortation.

So, it's the 5th book of Moses, Deuteronomy, and what we're going to do, b&s, is to highlight some of the features from the early chapters, and then we'll go right across to the end, to the last few chapters. It really is a **farewell speech**, and so Israel is gathered on the wilderness side of the river Jordan, they are going to hear the words of their spiritual father, the one who had suffered them long, delivered them from Egypt and brought them to this place. He was as a father to a new generation. Do you know what the essence is of this book, b&s? some 50 times in this book, the very essence of this book is, **HEAR AND DO!** variously expressed but simply that! It's a positive lesson to have learnt the lessons from the wilderness. Those lessons have to be learnt and applied in action as they go into the Land. They've been wandering around for 38 years burying their dead, and now in chapter 1 and verse 8, they are told to go in and possess the land.

'Behold, I have set the land before you; go in and possess the land which the LORD sware unto your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give unto them and unto their seed after them'. What I hope to do, b&s, in these talks is to just pick up some of these expressions and then draw out the positive encouragement for us, you know, like a Sunday School lesson; you always give the lesson and then you say, 'this is the lesson for us', and we draw it out for mutual exhortation. You know, there's a real exhortation for our young people, there's a real exhortation here for the young people to visualize the kingdom before us, because the young people in the case of Moses were there on the border ready to go in, were about to go in and take the land and to possess it. So too, we need all of us, b&s, we need to have a very positive aspiration for the kingdom. We need to feel that we will walk into the kingdom and inherit the promises. Not to hesitate, not to be hard-hearted, but like the patriarchs to be fully focussed on those promises; those patriarchs saw them afar off, they were persuaded of them, they embraced them and they realized and they confessed that they were strangers, they were pilgrims, they were seeking a country, and so these are **action words**, 'to go in and possess the land'.

So we need to picture the Promised Land, and we did that the other night. We need to picture the very essence of the kingdom of God, and that is, the house of prayer for all nations, where we will frequent those courts, those palaces, marvel at those marvellous archways and behold the glory of Yahweh shining over His dwelling place. So we need to have those sort of pictures in our mind, that is the city of our desire. We desire it more than anything else, don't we? **more than anything else?** You see, we want to look to walk through the length and the breadth of the land, we want to go up to that temple, we want to go into that land, we want to go into Immanuel's land, or is it just a picture? Is it just a picture prepared very well, in this case, an artist's impression of the temple, is it just a picture or is it a personal vision?

So, b&s, we come to chapter 1 and we'll read verse 37 where it says there talking about Joshua and Caleb, 'Also the LORD was angry with me for your sakes, saying, Thou also shalt not go in thither'. In chapter 3 verse 26 we have the statement, 'The LORD was wroth with me for your sakes, and would not hear me: and the LORD said unto me, Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto Me of this matter'. He had a vision of going into that land, b&s, he was denied personal access into that land at that time. I want us, b&s, to appreciate the great **character** of this man. You see, there's a spirit here of utter selflessness, there's a real lack of bitterness as he portrays these events. Of course, he was wrong, of course, Aaron and Moses were wrong in that they did not sanctify Yahweh before all the people. Of course, He was the leader and God must be given the glory and not for man, and yet He saw that denial of opportunity as a lesson for them. We might come across to Psalm 106, and see that there's a comment here in the psalms, Psalm 106 verse 32, 'They angered Him also at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with Moses, **for their sakes**: Because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips'.

So it went ill with Moses **for their sakes**. I want us to consider, b&s, there's a lesson here for them and for us; the lesson clearly in the denial of Moses to enter into that Land at that time, though he will, of course, having died in faith, he will yet enter that Land with us. We should never take the credit for the work of God to ourselves. When the sons of Aaron were slain for offering strange fire, Aaron had to learn the principle and it's a profound principle, 'I, says God, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me, and before all the people, **I will be glorified!**' So for Moses, Yahweh's righteousness could not overlook such a transgression. Moses, His chosen one, whose faith and humility had often been publically acknowledged, must now swallow the disappointment of not going in. This great servant is now spending his last month, not in blaming or justifying himself, but in sparing himself no effort to make sure, that they, his children if you like, they would pass over into the Land, that they might learn this lesson of giving glory to Yahweh and sanctifying His Name, to learn the lesson of obedience. So this is a positive farewell. This is not a bitter, resentful, sour old man, he had fallen short, he knew that, he accepted that! But he overcomes any sorrow by filling his mind with their needs, **not with self pity**. What a great man, this man is! like David in our later study, wasn't permitted to build the house for the glory of Yahweh, David, denied that opportunity, set about enthusiastically to gather the materials and the precious stones.

So we have two old men, Moses and David, too busy with the task in hand, too humble in their own eyes to worry about their own grievances, their own disappointments. So God loomed larger in their minds than any hurt pride. That's a beautiful lesson for us to learn, b&s, you know that is **true humility!** I think it's Dennis Gillett who wrote about true humility, 'these people are too busy about the work of God to be worried about their own reputation, too committed to the work at hand'.

Another glimpse of his character, coming back then to Deuteronomy, is seen in his concern for Joshua. Deuteronomy 1 verse 38, 'But Joshua, the son of Nun which standeth before thee, he shall go in thither; encourage him for he shall cause Israel to inherit it'. Chapter 3 verse 28, 'but charge Joshua and encourage him and strengthen him, for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the Land which thou shalt see'. So in the same context, b&s, of his own personal setback, Moses pleads for **everyone** to rally around the new young leader, 'to encourage and strengthen him'. He's concerned that Joshua suffer not the heartaches that he had to endure under such a burdensome people. You know, there's a great exhortation there for us, particularly us older ones, senior ones amongst us; it's the spirit of good leaders to prepare young faithful men by positive words of encouragement. Our young brethren may have to shoulder many demanding tasks, as we've seen them step forward with a willing spirit to serve the Lord, let's, b&s, let's encourage them as Paul would a young Timothy, to wage a good warfare of faith, and if they desire to serve in the ecclesia, then b&s, they are desiring a good work.

You know, b&s, I once learnt a good lesson on that! You know, we might be able to draw quite well as mature adults, and we give our child, one of our little ones a drawing to do; it's a line drawing and we ask them to colour it in. They colour it in and the hands are going wildly all over the page and the colour goes all over the page; and we think, they've gone outside the lines, couldn't they have been a bit neater? But you know, when you pin that picture up on the wall in your office, in your study, and your child comes in and they look at that picture and they know that you're proud of their effort! That's encouragement to them. You could easily say, 'ah come on now, look, be a bit more tidy; be a bit more tidy and take some care!' But you're an adult and that little one's a child, they are going through that development stage, so let's encourage them, b&s, that when our young ones desire a good work, we should encourage them and not be too critical, and strengthen them to take up that good work.

So what does the aged Moses say are the keys to Israel's success and our success? Well, Deuteronomy 4 verse 1, 'Now therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the judgments which I teach you; for **to do them**, that ye may live and go in and possess the Land which the LORD God of your fathers giveth you. Ye shall not **add unto the words which I command you**, neither shall ye **diminish ought from it**, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.' Verse 6, 'Keep therefore, **and do them**'; verse 9, 'only take heed to thyself and keep thy soul diligently', which, of course, has the bible echoes that Paul picks up in 1 Timothy 4 verse 16. Now there, b&s, is an exhortation in **heeding the word of our God, to heed**

ourselves and take note of these words in their application to us. So let's **examine ourselves** and not others, let's examine ourselves!

You know, there's a real exhortation to us here from an old man who's days are numbered. To **hearken and to do the words of God's statutes and judgments**; to **read them without embellishment**, let the power of this book have its transforming effect. Let it be our guide, our strength, our healer, our consolation, our life! That's the plea that's repeated all over scripture, in the Psalms, Proverbs, and the prophets and the words of Christ. This is the greatest source, b&s, of a full and a rewarding life, yet all too often this source is an untapped source. You know, recently we made a little analysis of the amount of time that we read our bibles each day; if you were to read something like an ½ hour to take ourselves through the three daily readings, do you know what percentage that is of an average waking time of a day? Not a lot! it's only 3%! 3% of a day reading the daily readings. Well, b&s, it is really quite an untapped source when you really think about it, that here we have it, all these words of guidance and encouragement and we have it sitting on our desk, how often do we take it up and read it with real desire; a real hunger and thirsting to receive the exhortation from our beloved brethren and our beloved fathers in Israel? So the problem is with ourselves. You see, Moses is saying to us, 'take heed to thyself, lest you forget', as in the words of Hebrews, 'how shall we escape if we **neglect, if we neglect** so great a salvation?' In no other age has there been so much to distract us, to allure us, to tempt us, to ensnare us, to cause our faith to shrivel and die! In no other age have we got so much in the way of bible study aids; we've even got them in a palm-sized computer. I know there's at least one here and you can call up bible verses, you can call up concordances; it's all there, all the help in the world. So is the Christadelphian community on **fire with the word of God**? Are we out there witnessing for the truth that we verily believe? Are we with our children exciting them in the things of God like we've never done before? We have so many helps, but are we taking heed to them?

So be warned in chapter 4 verse 15, the same warning given by our revered father in the faith, Moses, 4 verse 15, we have, 'Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; lest ye corrupt yourselves'. He's saying to Israel that they might be worshipping those graven images; and we'd say, 'how stupid! that Israel with all of their background, where God has so manifestly revealed His will to them, by wonders and signs in the wilderness, how stupid, that they could bow down to a graven image!' But, b&s, we should be surprised if our generation didn't worship modern images where God is displaced and we enjoy, we crave after, we have our secret and not so secret fascinations with the work of men's hands which are not of God but are of this age, which will soon perish! Is it any surprise that this warning should be so appropriate for us? You see, this is an age of indulgence, this is an age that the apostle said where we would be in the 'perilous last days', where we would be 'lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God', and in its sports, its entertainments and every sensual interest can be gratified. At the flick of a switch, or the consumption of our precious time and energy, we are, if we are prepared to admit it, we are all to a certain extent, we are all idol worshippers in one way or another, at times, in the secret corner of our life. So let us all

take heed and purge ourselves of every vain imagination and captivation of the heart.

So chapter 4 verse 29, 'But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find Him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul'. So let's consider these warnings. We know, if we're perfectly honest we know that these warnings apply to us. Compared to the greatness of our God, there is nothing, b&s, there is nothing in this life that can compare to the assurance that Yahweh is with us and will guide us if we follow Him. So why then, why then do we get preoccupied? why then do we get caught up in those things which are so temporal, that can never really fully satisfy, which of course, will perish with the coming of our Lord, and there are so many things that we know that we'll not take with us to the kingdom, so why get caught up and preoccupied with them?

Chapter 6 is a timeless exhortation! Israel had its priests and teachers but each family had, of course, to redirect those teachings, to the needs and to the circumstances of their own families and in this way the whole nation would become a nation: so all the fathers and all the mothers were to be teachers. Is that any different today? I wonder, b&s, whether sometimes in our reliance upon ecclesial meetings and Sunday School, and youth group and CYC, that we **neglect our instruction of our own children**. You know, too many times we (and I can't speak for folks here, but I'm aware of it back home), too many times we're picking fault with the ecclesia and with the youth group; what it should or should not be providing for our children. But b&s, let's face it, fundamentally we are the **prime teachers**, the fathers and the mothers are the prime teachers. All those other things, essential as they are, they are a backup support mechanism. Or, we might complain about family time being eroded, but do we, do we ourselves, do we honestly, b&s, use our time wisely doing our readings with the children? putting the dishes to one side, get the bibles out (well worn bibles) and happily reading and communicating with our children around the table, appropriate to their age and level of reception of the Word of God? So are we doing that, using our family mealtimes as positive catch up times, speaking positively about life in the truth? Do you know what, b&s, **ecclesial politics should never be table talk!** We have little ears that are flapping and listening and forming impressions about the ecclesia. So when we're at home, in the car, on holidays, wherever we are, are we spiritual providers? Do we place spiritual food before them, as carefully as we put natural food on the table? and is it good wholesome food? or is sometimes the food, as we communicate with our children, is it sometimes laced with negative, carping criticism or worldly talk, or fault finding in others? So are our children taught well by faithful words and by faithful example? You know, it has been said, b&s, that the teenagers see God through the filter of their parents; that's quite a responsibility, isn't it? You know, it's also been said that having a piano in your home makes you no more an expert pianist than having children in your home makes you a successful parent. I think we can see the lesson of the practice and the work we have to do with our children to be a successful parent, and every parent will admit that we're still learning, we're still learning even with our grandchildren to be successful parents!

You know, I came across this little piece, a little while ago, which I would like to share

with you, it's about **example!**

I'd sooner see a sermon, than hear one any day,
 I'd rather that one would walk with me, than merely show the way;
 The eye is a better pupil, and more willing than the ear,
 Find counsel is confusing, but example's always clear.
 The best of all the preachers are the men who live their creed,
 For to see good put in action is what anybody needs.

I'm sure that I could do it, if I could only see it done
 I can watch your hands in action, but your tongue too fast may run;
 The lectures you deliver may be very wise and true,
 But I'd sooner get my lesson from seeing what you do;
 I may misunderstand the high advice that you may give,
 But there's no misunderstanding how you act and how you live.

So, b&s, to ensure that we have godly young men and women, taking up the reigns of ecclesial service, we must cultivate God fearing children in our midst, in our homes and in our ecclesias. We must have God fearing children who will grow tall, as they live and breathe and grow in an atmosphere that's **positive**, a positive delight in God's law. There are some exceptions, I acknowledge that! there are some exceptions. Some overcome obstacles in great disincentives, but the words of Deuteronomy 6 verses 3 to 9, if we scan our eyes down through those words, are so true, those words are **timeless**, b&s. You know, the very first thing that is used as an extension of the teaching that 'the LORD our God is one LORD, and thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy might', the very first extension of that teaching is, in verse 7, '**and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children**, and shall talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, or when thou walkest by the way, or when thou liest down and when thou riseth up'. Those words are so true! You know, those words have been verified in many faithful families throughout the length and breadth of this land and throughout this globe, in fact, through many generations those words have been proven to be true. So to love Yahweh thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy might, is first and foremost **a family responsibility!** yours and mine. The first application is to your family, my family, so you and I create the environment in our home where the love of God may find true expression.

You know, we may well be loving and caring towards many other families, and that's right that we should, we're all to be burden bearers, but we must not, in extending ourselves to others, we must not ever be charged with neglecting our own! We are accountable for faithful stewardship in our own homes, before others. So out of the well springs of the heart the mouth speaketh, and because we firstly loved God whose daily blessings we enjoy, we express with our children, our joy and our thanksgiving, and we naturally speak one to another in our family of the good hand of our God towards us.

Let's come, b&s, to Deuteronomy 9 and there's another clear warning for Israel and for

us in this passage, verse 3. I want you to just notice some words, I'm not going to read through the whole verse but just midway through verse 3, '**He shall destroy them and He shall bring them down before thy face**', this is God delivering His people and ensuring the victory. Verse 4, '**Yahweh thy God hath cast them out**, Yahweh doth drive them out'. Verse 5, 'Yahweh thy God doth drive them out from before thee'. So what did Israel think? Well, unfortunately verse 4, let's read this, 'Speak not thou in thine heart, after that the LORD thy God hath cast them out from before thee saying, for **my righteousness** hath the LORD brought me into to possess this land, but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD doth drive them out from before thee'. Now, that self-righteousness was the core of the problem, it's the root of Israel's sin and our sin. So the lesson for us, b&s, if we ever puff ourselves up, and imagine that there's any inherent goodness in us that commends us to God, as Israel we are prone to take pride in what we have done, conscious of our works, conscious of a certain image that we may have; puffed up maybe in self importance, living up to a perceived status or standing or position in life or in the ecclesia; b&s, **we are nothing, we are flesh**, we are a flower that fades and withers away as a vapour, a child that's told from cradle to grave, given to pride and to vanity and self deception. So at best we have been but faithful in a few things, we have done what is our due, and I'm sure that we could acknowledge that we are unprofitable servants, yet so often we foolishly go through some play acting! You know, acting as though we were perhaps a little bit better than our fellow brother or sister or family: maybe we don't feel inclined to stoop down to lift up a fallen one, maybe we walk by and we point the finger, the censorious finger of judgment, maybe at times we have a 'holier than thou' attitude that is laughable if it were not so endemic in our nature.

You know, b&s, it's not a case of us being conscious of what we have done. You know, the apostles in the Acts show a marvellous spirit coming back to Jerusalem; like, for example, in Acts 14 where they acknowledge all that God had done in the opening of the door of faith unto the Gentiles. Who had done that? Well, God had worked through His humble servants; so, God had visited the Gentiles in Lycaonia to call out a people for His name. Who visited those Gentiles? well God did effectively through His servants! So, b&s, salvation is of **grace**, it does involve works but these are works that **spring out** of our faith and out of our profound thankfulness. These are not matters of self merit or self virtue. Whatever we do, it is God who is **working through us!** both to will and to do of His good pleasure; we serve, He gives the increase, yet even our service is marred by sin, so there is no place for spiritual pride. So what does Yahweh want us to do? Deuteronomy chapter 10 verse 12, 'What doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and to keep the commandments of the LORD, and His statutes which I command thee this day for thy good?' You know, that's one of the most all embracing requirements of the whole of scripture! It finds its echo, of course, in Micah; we know the words are echoed in Micah 6 verse 8, we find the words echoed in Matthew 22 verses 37 to 39; these are doing words, to fear the greatness of Yahweh, to walk before the God of the universe, to love Him who has so graciously considered us, and to gratefully service him with all of our

heart. That's it! that's the sum total of our life. God's expectations of us are designed for our good, no good thing then will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.

So in this special position of blessing both now and in the age to come, in that special position of privilege, Israel and spiritual Israel are called upon to **bow the knee** before the supremacy of such a great God and to act like He does! I think it's really tremendous that in this particular chapter, chapter 10, we've just read there of the first principle if we want to use the words of brother Mike, the first principle there in verse 12, and we come over the page and glance down through verses 16, 17, 18 and 19, in the very context of extolling God with all of those names and titles of the Deity in verse 17, in the very expression of His greatness, out of His awesome majesty it says, 'He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow and loveth a stranger, in giving him food and raiment; 'love ye therefore, the stranger, for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.' So at one and the same time, God was both **unsearchable in His greatness, but He was an ever present help in time of need** to those, the fatherless, widows and the strangers.

So what a wonderful contrast there is in the impeccable justice of the God of the universe, also having an ear to hear the cry of the defenceless; and, we know that's going to be replicated, we know that Psalm 72 is all about the Lord being in the earth, responding to the cry of the needy, like they've never been responded to in all of their generations. So, b&s, surely that was the spirit of the Lord in His first ministry, the zeal and the tender compassion, the justice and the mercy. So Israel unfortunately didn't know their God, in their exclusiveness they shut off their bowels of compassion for their fallen friends, they were respecter of persons and James brings this out very powerfully, even in the ecclesia. They had men's persons in admiration for advantage, but should not we who were sinners without hope and outside the covenant remember, **the grace of God in bringing us in to the fold?** in first loving us? So far from being self satisfied, b&s, let's be selfless in, figuratively speaking, reaching out to the strangers and to the fatherless and widows amongst us! because that's exactly what Christ did. That's exactly what God does, He expresses that in Deuteronomy 10, so there should be no preferential treatment, should there? God sets the solitary in families, He is a nourisher of those who are without strength, a guide to the lost! So let's practice what God does every day, to those who are within and without the household.

So let's come to the developing climax now, to Deuteronomy chapter 30. We've read these words this morning, and appreciate these words are picked up, those early verses are picked up, 11 to 14, are picked up by Paul in Romans 10 where he speaks of the word of faith which we preach, and so that word of faith is dependent upon the Lord Jesus Christ. So having gone through all of those chapters, reminding them of His superintendence of their lives, the children of Israel couldn't say, 'I didn't know'. God's ways were illustrated all the way through, this farewell speech of Moses. Verse 15, he rallies now to a climax, 'See I have set before thee this day, life and good, and death and evil'. Here is the sum of the whole matter, it really was a matter of **life and death**; they were on the border of the Promised Land, but in effect, they were at the **crossroads**; choices had to be made, there was every incentive there for them to go

on, cross over, to go into the Land, and to serve faithfully their God. Every disincentive was there to be drawn away and to get caught up in the web of idol worship which would bring certain death. Is it any different with us, b&s? Are not we on the threshold of the kingdom? are we not at the crossroads? with every incentive for us to go on faithfully into the kingdom; and every disincentive is there for us to turn our sight and our hearts and our minds away from the sorrow and song of the world.

So unlike Joshua, who insists that Israel would inevitably fall into idol worship, Moses here lays down the issues, plain for all to see, he says, 'choose life that both thou and thy seed may live'. Let's appreciate what Moses is doing here: Moses is a faithful watchman, he's giving a clear resounding cry of warning. In effect, their blood was upon their own heads. Moses is very conscious that he's about to die, he would die in faith but he doesn't want them to die, he wants them to live, he wants them to enjoy the blessing of long life promised in the land, promised unto the fathers. He wants the **best** for his children, and every aged parent, I'm sure, every aged parent after many, many years of faithful service would say exactly the same thing. I've heard it from my parents and from my parents-in-law, words that are almost identical with these faithful last words of Moses. This choice, lining it up and making the right choice is not diminished by time, if we want the kingdom, b&s, we must love Yahweh our God, must listen to His word, obey His word, and cleave to our God, that's it! Dare I say, it's as simple as that, but if it's all a bit too hard and if we're not really focussed on that kingdom; if these pictures are just simply pictures, and not in our hearts and our minds; and if our heart wanders and sets its affections on other things, if we're not reading and thinking about God, we shall surely perish, because we've loosened our grip and we're no longer cleaving like glue unto our God. So let's show **stick-ability** (not sure if that word's in the English language) but it fits; let's show stick-ability, let's hold fast, let's cleave unto our God, endure hardness, keep the faith! How appropriate then are the last words, the words of Hebrews, to people who are facing the same choice, cast not away, therefore, your confidence which hath great recompense of reward, for ye have need of patience that after you have done the will of God, you might receive the promise'. As our pioneer brethren have told us in their writings, 'if the truth is to be anything, it must be everything. The truth is our life, not a part of it!

So there's a real sense of sadness in these closing chapters: chapter 31 verse 2 as Moses simply says, 'I am a hundred and twenty years old this day: I can no more go out and come in: also the LORD hath said unto me, Thou shalt not go over this Jordan'. Again, there's no note, is there? of self pity. He's quickly assuring them that it would be the LORD who would go before them, who would fight their battles, he says that in verse 6, 'He doth go with thee; He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee'. Again the Spirit does a bible echo there, that's the exact spirit of Paul who says, 'If God be for us, who can be against us and I'll never leave thee nor forsake thee'. And, passing from Israel to Joshua again, he gives instruction to Joshua in verses 7 and 8; so he's giving Joshua every encouragement that God would not fail him! So, in effect, he's saying to Joshua, 'be strong and of good courage'.

You know, we say those words, don't we? I'm sure we say those words or words very much like it, when we speak to the newly baptized young brother or young sister, we say in effect, 'be strong, be of good courage, that God will not fail you, God will not forsake you'. Or we say it at a farewell, 'God be with you till we meet again'.

So, b&s, the world seeks after all sorts of investments and insurance policies in vain hopes to achieve peace of mind. Can there be any greater reassurance than these words, particularly the words of verse 8, 'The LORD, He it is that doth go before thee: He will be with thee, He will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed'. B&S, let's listen to those words, let Moses speak to you and let him speak to me, whatever is our situation in life, whether we are blessed with faithful companionship or not, whether we are blessed with faithful families or not, these words are very appropriate for you and for me, personally. **The LORD, He it is, that doth go before thee; He will be with thee; He will not fail thee, neither forsake thee, fear not, neither be dismayed.**' So we know what happened with Moses, we know that he was lead up to a mountain to look over, to look over that land for the last time. It was his land and he will yet inherit that land; we know that in the last chapter, 34, we have the description of Moses being laid to rest, verse 7, 'His eye was not dim nor his natural force abated'. He had been alone with God high up in the mount Sinai many times, now he was alone with his God in this mountain, with his dream, with his vision, with his trust in God undiminished. He died in faith, b&s, and as the angels laid him to rest somewhere at Beth-peor, God could say of His servant Moses, (do you know what God does say?) this is, if you like, written on the gravestone, 'There arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom Yahweh knew face to face', verse 10.

Perhaps the greatest compliment of all, the greatest compliment that the scriptures could write about this man, our spiritual father, was that **the Son of God would be a prophet like unto Moses!**