

Trinity Home Teams

Sermon Notes / Sept. 21, 2025

The Measure of Greatness

KEY PASSAGE: **Deuteronomy 34:1-12**

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How do we measure greatness in this culture? How does scripture measure or evaluate greatness?
2. Consider **Deut. 34:33-35**. What do we learn of Moses' relationship to God?
3. **Read Heb 3:1-5**. Examine Jesus in light of God's work through Moses.
4. Read **Heb. 8:3** and **8:13** Why is the new covenant better? If obedience is the best measure of greatness, consider Jesus' worthiness for worship and honor. How does my own obedience factor into my desire for greatness?

What is greatness? Who is the GOAT? Who is the greatest in business, politics, faith? Elbert Hubbard said, "The final proof of greatness lies in being able to endure criticism without resentment."

The greatness of Moses

Moses was called the servant of Yahweh (v5, Joshua 1:1,2,7,13) Kevin DeYoung: "This is a rare title given in the Old Testament but one commonly given to Moses." Jesus said:

Mark 10:43-44 "whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all."

Moses served Yahweh by leading and serving his people. Moses was described as the greatest OT prophet: "*there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses*" M. Henry: "Never was there any man whom Israel had more reason to love, or whom the enemies of Israel had more reason to fear."

Exodus 33:11 "Thus the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend."

There was an intimacy with Yahweh that no other prophet was permitted. Moses's face shone with the glory of Yahweh after he met with him. Moses performed signs and wonders to Egypt and to Pharaoh. Moses displayed mighty power and great deeds of terror to Israel:

K. DeYoung: "*This language here, signs and wonders and mighty power, this is the language typically used of the Lord Himself, that the Lord is the One who did these things. But now, as the instrument, as the Lord's servant, we read here that Moses in a way did them.*"

Moses is not considered great because of anything inherent in himself, but in the fact that Yahweh did great works through him. Moses was great, but only to the degree that he obeyed and was an instrument of Yahweh.

Greatness is measured not by accomplishment, status, acquisition of power or wealth. ***Greatness is measured by obedience to Yahweh.***

The death of Moses

Great men, even great men of God, still die, and so Moses, the great OT prophet and the servant of Yahweh, died: (34:5): "*Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord.*"

YAHWEH'S KINDNESS TO MOSES:

- permitted him to see the land of promise.
- sustained him physically; sight and strength were undiminished by age (v7).
- He permitted him to witness the commissioning of his successor and to lay hands on him (v9)
- He buried him in an undisclosed location "in the valley in the land of Moab... (v6)
- Moses, the servant of the Lord, died and was buried in Moab ... led the children of Israel out of Egypt ... interceded before Yahweh on behalf of the people and mediated the covenant between Yahweh and Israel ... performed great signs and wonders that humbled kings, exalted Yahweh. He taught the people the commandments of Yahweh and charged them to obey. Still, he died and was buried, as it the lot of every man.

Moses, though great, wasn't sufficient. The story isn't ultimately about Moses. He was a type, a shadow, a precursor of someone greater and more glorious.

One greater than Moses

Moses's sin made him unfit for the Promised Land:

Deuteronomy 32:51 "*you broke faith with me in the midst of the people of Israel at the waters of Meribah-kadesh ... you did not treat me as holy ...*"

Numbers 20:7-12 – Moses disobeyed God, "you did not believe in me, to uphold me as holy in the eyes of the people of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly to the land I have given them."

Sin is the great conqueror of souls, and as great as Moses was, this servant of Yahweh was insufficient to accomplish complete deliverance; though he led them out of Egypt, he could not deliver them into the land of promise.

Deuteronomy 18:15 -- "*The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen.*"