

## Moses Speaks:

I really don't feel 120! My vision and hearing are as sharp as ever. The steep heights of Mount Nebo present no difficulty to my legs and lungs. How amazing to reread those words God recently told me to write: "Seventy years are given to us!" By his grace I've already exceeded my allotted time by half a century! (Deut. 34:1, 7; Ps. 90:10)

I've actually lived three lives: First there was Moses the student politician, learning all the wisdom in Egypt, preparing for a civil-service career. Then there was that terrible moment when these hands killed a man. That began my second life as a shepherd, less hectic and more reflective. And I would surely still be there today had not that bush started burning. (3:1–3, 12; Acts 7:22)

From that time on I lived "life number three"—Moses the deliverer and lawgiver. My simple nomadic existence suddenly gave way to almost continuous heartpounding, breathtaking action—sticks becoming snakes; rivers turning to blood; frogs, gnats, flies, and locusts filling the air; and all those other horrible plagues—and the most horrific of all: the death of Egypt's firstborn. (4:2–3; 7:14–11:10; 12:29–42)

Then, the dry path in the watery sea; a fiery sign in the sky; bread falling from heaven. And then the ultimate event—the giving of God's law and a brief glimpse of him in person. (13:21–22; 14; 16:14–15; 19–31; 33:18–23)

Even now, four decades later, it all seems more fiction than fact. As I stand here on the barren slopes of Nebo, looking westward toward the land of milk and honey, once again I regret that inexcusable sin for which God has forbidden me to enter Canaan. What a staggering price I paid for my raw, uncontrolled anger! (Num. 20:10–12; Deut. 31:20)

But on to more pleasant thoughts. My people's present victories crowd out the past defeats. I have just today completed a section of God's holy record, which I trust our future generations will read. I led the past generation out of Egypt. Now I have brought their children to the very threshold of freedom in the Promised Land. God's faithfulness has far exceeded all my failures.

Dear Lord, my work is done. Allow me now to see in fullness that which I have already seen in part—your gracious and glorious self. (3:10; Deut. 31:24–26)

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<sup>1</sup>H. L. Willmington, *Willmington's Bible Handbook* (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, 1997), 63.