

**Title: Unwilling**

**Passage: Dt 3:1-6, 9-10, Dt 34**

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**Speaker: Jason Hoet**

**Series: Willing Servants**

Read Dt 34 [slide]

**Deut 34 tells us what God can do with an unwilling servant.**

**Moses wasn't always unwilling.**

Because of the persecution of the Hebrews by the Pharaoh, and the cunning of his mother Moses

was raised in the household of Pharaoh, as a son of Pharaoh's daughter.

Moses ate at the best tables, learnt from the best teachers and mixed with the powerful people.

He mixed with the Egyptians, looked like an Egyptian, had the air of an Egyptian, but Moses never forgot he was not an Egyptian. It may have been because of his mother raising him when he was small.

**When Moses was 40 he saw an Hebrew being beaten by an Egyptian.** Moses fought the Egyptian, killed and buried him. But what he did was soon found out, so he fled for his life to Midian.

There he married and lived the quiet life of a shepherd, for another 40 years.

At 80 Moses sees a strange sight while he was leading the sheep – a bush on fire, but not being consumed.

From the bush God spoke to him and told him he was ready to go back to Egypt and set God's people free.

Here are Moses words. [slide]

3:11 11 But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"  
[God: I will be with you]

13 Moses said to God, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The

God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?"  
[God: I Am has sent you]

Moses answered, "What if they do not believe me or listen to me and say, 'The Lord did not appear to you?'"  
[God: what is that in your hand]

10 Moses said to the Lord, "Pardon your servant, Lord. I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue." [God: I will teach you what to say]

13 But Moses said, "Pardon your servant, Lord. Please send someone else."

Does this sound like a man ready to lead God's people to freedom? Would you have picked him?

Moses is unwilling. He believes he is unable. Sure Moses was willing at 40. He tried it at 40. He found himself afraid then and at 80, after 40 years of sideline, he is unwilling now.

**In Deut 34 we see Moses at the end of his life, aged 120. About to die, and looking out over the land of promise**

**Moses has become a great man of God.**

- one who had spent so much time face to face with God (v. 10),
- spoke for God almost interchangeably at times,
- one who had mediated the blessings and the judgments of God
- ... miracles...burden of leading Israel

**These last moments on Mount Nebo reminds us too, he is a flawed man of God.** Moses will not see the land and it's because of his own failure

Deut 32:48 – 52

48 On that same day the Lord told Moses, 49 “Go up into the Abarim Range to Mount Nebo in Moab, across from Jericho, and view Canaan, the land I am giving the Israelites as their own possession. 50 There on the mountain that you have climbed you will die and be gathered to your people, just as your brother Aaron died on Mount Hor and was gathered to his people. 51 This is because both of you broke faith with me in the presence of the Israelites at the waters of Meribah Kadesh in the Desert of Zin and because you did not uphold my holiness among the Israelites. 52 Therefore, you will see the land only from a distance; you will not enter the land I am giving to the people of Israel.”

- [the accountability of influencing others and leadership]
- be careful what you call others to because you will be called to account

**For all his greatness, and with his flaws 34:5 gives Moses a title which sums up his life**  
34:5 And Moses the servant of the Lord died there in Moab

“Moses is no more and no less than the servant of the LORD.’  
He was unwilling – but he went anyway. Moses grew under God’s hand into what God believed he could do.  
He served God. He worship God and loved God.  
In his final words Moses declared  
I will proclaim the name of the Lord.  
Oh, praise the greatness of our God!  
4 He is the Rock, his works are perfect,  
and all his ways are just.  
A faithful God who does no wrong,  
upright and just is he.

**Moses was willing God’s servant. The beautiful picture in Dt 34 is God is Moses’ willing servant.**

God shows him the land...

God offers care in the burial of his body

and God honours Moses [slide]

Christopher Wright “Deuteronomy, which has so stressed the incomparability of Yahweh, finally closes with an acknowledgment of the incomparability of Moses himself. Indeed, one Jewish tradition links the two rather beautifully by envisaging God declaring as a profoundly affectionate compliment, “Moses said of me, ‘There is none like Yahweh,’ and so I in turn bear witness that ‘There is none like Moses’”

**We learn from Moses at times we may be unwilling, but we are always God’s servants**  
[slide]

Moses did not believe in himself, God did. So in serving God, Moses discovered more about himself than following his own way.

**Finally , We learn from Moses where lasting significance is found as a servant of God.**  
When the greatest thing that is said about you is “You were a servant of the Lord” no more, no less.

**Does this remind you of what God does for all his servants?** In Jesus’ parables Jesus paints the picture of God speaking over his people, “Well done, good and faithful servant!”  
God gives you real responsibility and is pleased to honour you when your life matches his call.

I wonder  
What do you hope we will say about you?  
what do you hope God will say about you?

Response/Prayer/Care cards