**A Call for Commitment to God**

In 1937, Walt Disney Studios released Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs which was the first feature length animated movie.  Disney had already achieved success in animated films, most notably with his Mickey Mouse character introduced in 1928 but Snow White propelled Disney’s company to greater heights.  A string of highly successful films followed and Disney opened his first theme park in California in 1955, capitalizing on the popularity of his film characters.  Non animated films and television contributed to the companies revenues as they created a brand that delivered wholesome entertainment that appealed to families.  Disney left a remarkable legacy winning 22 Academy Awards (twice that of anyone else).   He died at age 65 but set in motion many initiatives that continued after his death and his brother Roy ably managed the company until 1971.  While the company has grown into a massive entertainment behemoth, I am not sure that its evolution was what the Disneys envisioned.  Since Roy Disney’s retirement, the company known for children friendly films has branched into different genres as they acquired other studios known for violent or sexually explicit films.  Most disturbing is the introduction of lgbtq characters in movies targeted to children.  The company lost over $400 million on 3 films in 2022 that promoted such themes, perhaps an indication that the viewing public has lost confidence in a company that has strayed far away from the core values of its founders.  In our study of chapters 30 and 31 of Deuteronomy, we see the final messages of Moses before he blessed the tribes just prior to his death.  As we will soon see in our study of the book of Joshua, Moses and God prepared Joshua to take over as the leader of the Israelites and God continued to bless them.

Chapter 31 begins with Moses announcing that he would not accompany the people into Canaan and that he would be succeeded by Joshua.  He told the Israelites to be strong and courageous, that God would go with them and never leave them and he repeated those words to Joshua.  Moses wrote down the law, gave it to the priests and then instructed that the law was to be read to the people every 7 years during the Feast of Tabernacles.  This was to be done so that the children would learn to fear God as their parents had.

God then instructed Moses and Joshua to come before Him at the Tent of Meeting where God appeared in a pillar of cloud.  God foretold how the Israelites would forsake Him and break the covenant after which He would forsake them.  God then instructed Moses to write down a song that God had given him that is recorded in chapter 33.  Moses then told the priests to place the law beside the ark after which he ordered the people to assemble before him.  Moses told them that they had been rebellious and stiff-necked against God during his tenure as leader and how much more they would rebel after his death.

In chapter 32, Moses recited to the people the words of the song God had prepared for him.  As David Guzik noted in his commentary, it can be divided into sections as follows:

Introduction, verses 1-4.  Moses declares the glory, greatness and perfection of God.

The accusation, verses 5-6.  Here Moses tells how the people had acted toward God, asking if they had forgotten that God was their father.

God’s faithfulness to Israel, verses 7-14.  Moses went back to the years following the flood when God scattered the nations after they built the Tower of Babel (see Gen. chapter 11).  God resolved then to establish the future boundaries of Canaan that would be the inheritance of Israel.  This section tells how God had protected His people and provided for them.

Israel’s apostasy, verses 15-18.  Jeshurun (Israel) forsook God, worshipped false gods and sacrificed to demons.

God’s reaction, verses 19-27.  God stated how He would punish Israel for idol worship.  He would first hide His face from them then inflict them with various physical disasters.

God’s lament and promise of restoration, verses 28-43.  He wishes they were wise and would consider their fate if they did not repent.  He asks How could 1 Israelite chase a thousand enemies unless it was by God’s intervention?  He points out that any appeal to false gods in the future will be fruitless as there is no God beside Him.  He vows to repay those who war against Israel and promises to provide atonement for His people.

The chapter ends with God telling Moses to go to the top of Mt. Nebo where he would see the land that God was giving to the children of Israel.

As God promised, He was with Joshua as he led the people into Canaan.  Joshua obeyed God and oversaw the division of their inheritance.  He led Israel until he was 110 years old and what is missing in the book of Joshua is any mention of a successor.  In Judges chapter 2 verse 10 we read “After that whole generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation grew up who knew neither the Lord nor what He had done for Israel.”  Ronald Reagan said that freedom is never more than one generation from extinction.  The same can be said of the church.