

Deuteronomy 31:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he said unto them, I am an 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.

Analysis

I am an hundred and twenty years old this day—Moses' age divides into three perfect forty-year periods: Egypt (Acts 7:23), Midian (Acts 7:30), and wilderness leadership. Despite living to this remarkable age, he acknowledges his limitation: **I can no more go out and come in** (לא-אוכל עד ליצאת ללבוא) lo-ukhal od latset velavo). This idiom describes military leadership and active service (Numbers 27:17; 1 Samuel 18:13), not mere physical mobility—Deuteronomy 34:7 says "his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated."

Moses' inability stems from divine decree, not physical decline: **also the LORD hath said unto me, Thou shalt not go over this Jordan**. This references Numbers 20:12 where Moses struck the rock instead of speaking to it, failing to sanctify God before Israel. The consequence? Exclusion from Canaan despite forty years of faithful leadership. This sobering reality demonstrates that even forgiven sin carries temporal consequences, and leadership requires higher accountability. Moses accepts God's judgment without bitterness, modeling submission to divine sovereignty.

Historical Context

Moses was born in Egypt circa 1526 BC during Pharaoh's infanticide (Exodus 2). After forty years as Egyptian royalty and forty years as Midianite shepherd, he led Israel for forty years (1446-1406 BC, traditional dating). His exclusion from

Canaan occurred at Kadesh in the fortieth year due to striking the rock at Meribah (Numbers 20:1-13). This speech comes just weeks before his death on Mount Nebo, where God showed him the Promised Land before he died (Deuteronomy 34:1-5).

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does Moses' acceptance of divine discipline without entering Canaan challenge your response to God's correction?
2. What does Moses' honest acknowledgment of limitations teach about leadership transition and humility?

Interlinear Text

And he said	H559	וַיֹּאמֶר	H413	אֵלֶיךָ	H1121	בְּנֵי	H3967	מֵאָה	H3201	לֹא	H595	יָמִין	H6242	שְׁנָה	H8141	וְעֶשֶׂר	H853	שָׁנָה	
this day	H3117	הַיּוֹם	H3808	I can	H3201	לֹא	H5750	אַתָּה	H3318	לֹא	H5674	אַתָּה	H3201	אַתָּה	H935	אַתָּה	H853	אַתָּה	
also the LORD	H3068	וְאֵלֶיךָ	H413	אַתָּה	H3808	לֹא	H5674	תַּעֲבֹר	H5674	לֹא	H5674	תַּעֲבֹר	H5674	אַתָּה	H853	אַתָּה	H853	אַתָּה	
this Jordan	H3383	בָּרֶק	H2088																

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 34:7 (Parallel theme): And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.

Numbers 27:17 (References Lord): Which may go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the LORD be not as sheep which have no shepherd.

1 Kings 3:7 (References Lord): And now, O LORD my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in.

Exodus 7:7 (Parallel theme): And Moses was fourscore years old, and Aaron fourscore and three years old, when they spake unto Pharaoh.

Numbers 20:12 (References Lord): And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.
