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The Last Days of Moses

by Harold L. Willmington

Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth (Num. 12:3).

Never had they heard him speak with such unction and urgency. There he stood in their midst, the Jordan River flowing in the valley below. What a man he was. What a message he now delivered. Yet there was a note of sadness in his voice. Most in the crowd knew the reason for this. It was certainly no secret. In fact, he would mention it himself, explaining the reason behind it. Yes, it was true. Moses would not be allowed to enter the Promised Land. And the reason? Simply speaking, a previous hour marked by anger and unbelief had caused it all! He would soon join the old generation whose graves already dotted the desert area to the south and east of Canaan. While this was the source of his sadness, his urgency came from merely viewing his audi-

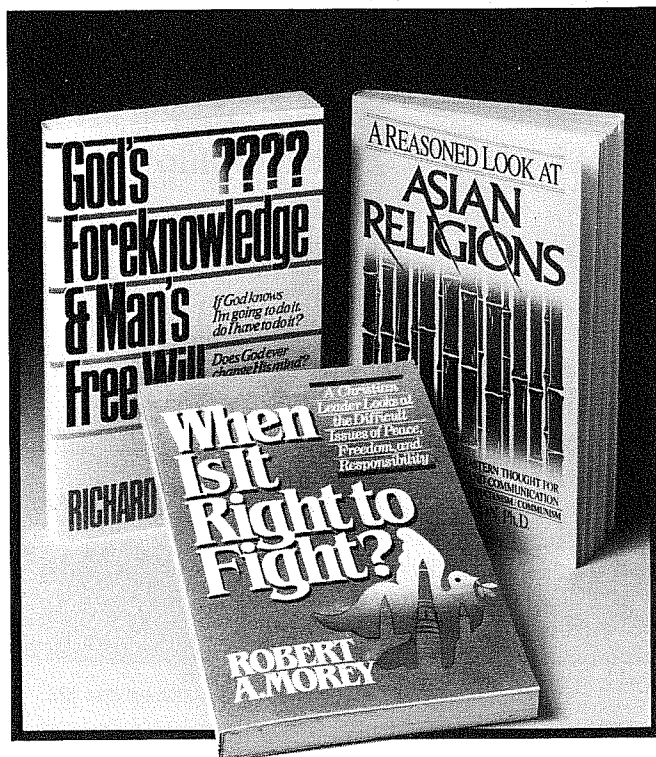
ence—a new generation, unspotted by the failures of their fathers and untested by their foes! How would they fare? Were these sons and daughters made of better stuff than their parents? One thing was certain—their awareness of and obedience to the Word of God was absolutely vital to all future victories. He could only preach to and pray for them.

How much remained to be done, and how little time in which to do it! Joshua needed to be challenged, the tribes had to be blessed, and Moses' writings, begun some 40 years prior, must be completed. For some reason, God had selected him to write down that material. Others would no doubt add to the divine account after his death here on Mount Nebo. But above all else Moses simply had to clearly communicate the greatness and glory of the Lord to that new generation. With determination that overpowered his devastating grief, Moses presented three moving sermons on the majesty of God, particularly emphasizing His

faithfulness, love, glory, and grace. But he concluded on the sober note that God's terrible judgment would fall upon them like an angry rainstorm if they rebelled against Him. He could tell that the message had been favorably received. Then after one final glimpse at Canaan's fair land from Mount Pisgah's lofty heights, he was gone. God had taken him to a greener and fairer land. The Book of Deuteronomy offers this final postscript, in reality a funeral tribute from God Himself.

So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face, in all the signs and the wonders, which the Lord sent him to do in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all his land, and in all that mighty hand, and in all the great terror which Moses shewed in the sight of all Israel (Deut. 34:5,10-12). ■

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