Deuteronomy 34.1-12. Wednesday (28/10/2000)

**Death of Moses and a** “**Mountain-top Experience”**

Last week we were looking at the appeal of Moses following the “Golden Calf” incident and how God responded to Moses’ prayer. Not only did he agree to continue with the People of Israel, but he allowed Moses to actually see Him – but only his back.

Now we reach the point where they have arrived opposite their destination. But Moses will not be the one to lead them from now. His time as leader has come to the end. He is though allowed to see the “Promised Land” and so he climbs Mt Nebo.

Some years ago, we went on a Diocesan pilgrimage to Jordan and to the Sinai desert. While in Jordan, we visited the place that has always been linked to this story. It’s a place called “*Khirbet al Mukhayyat”* which has for centuries been linked to the last dwelling of Moses. From there one could see over the Jordan valley to the ruins of Jericho and, far in the distance, the tall buildings of Jerusalem were just visible. Reading this part of Deuteronomy always brings back that picture.

This story about the last days of Moses is of course the allusion that Martin Luther King used in his great speech on the equality of all in the USA irrespective of the colour of their skin,

“***I just want to do God's will. And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you”*** (1968 in Memphis).

To me, the story of Moses serves to underline the faithfulness of God to those who follow him as God. It also seems to underline the power of heartfelt prayer. Moses is always seen as the key, and perhaps the greatest, figure in the history of Israel as he combines that dedication with the deep love for the people whom God has put under his care. He knows that he is dependent upon the power of God and only in that power can he succeed in the task he has been given.

What can each of us draw from that picture of Moses in our own faith Journey? It’s easy to just dismiss some of the people of the Old Testament as not particularly relevant to us today. But that would be a mistake. God is still the same God who cares for you as he did for Moses and his people.

We are each a part of the People of God and each given a job to do within that fellowship. We are also each suitably empowered to do it. What’s yours? And how are you getting on?