

Swan Song

I. Slide#1 **Announce:**

- A. Slide#2 The Nuts & Bolts of Expository Preaching Conf - Next Mon & Tues.
- B. Slide#3 Stir Night of Worship - Sat night, 7pm, Sanct.
- C. Slide#4 Children at risk meeting - 3-5pm. An expert, in the fight against HT. Sherri Harris, has been overseeing salvation army's fight against trafficking in O.C.
- D. Slide#5 Pray - Greg in Burma. [Rick M - b-day tomorrow] [Ebola] [ISIS]

II. Intro:

- A. Analogy of white sheet of paper, w/1 small black dot. What do you see? What else?
 1. You have completely overlooked the most important thing of all - the sheet of paper.
 2. In life we are often distracted by small, dot-like disappointments or painful experiences, and we are prone to forget the innumerable blessings we receive from the hand of the Lord.
 3. But like the sheet of paper, the good things are far more important than the adversities that monopolize our attention.
 - a) Someone gave some real good practical advice. It's deep. It's pithy. *"As you travel down life's pathway, may this ever be your goal, Keep your eye upon the doughnut, and not upon the hole."*
 4. Yes, rather than concentrating on the trials of life, we should fix our attention upon is blessings. Let us say with the psalmist, "Blessed be the Lord, Who daily loads us with benefits, The God of our salvation." Psalm 68:19 - R.W.D. Benefits?
 - a) An acceptance that can never be questioned. An inheritance that can never be lost. A deliverance that can never be excelled. A grace that can never be limited. A hope that can never be disappointed. A bounty that can never be withdrawn. A joy that need never be diminished. A nearness to God that can never be reversed. A peace that can never be disturbed. A righteousness that can never be tarnished. A salvation that can never be canceled. F. E. Marsh

B. Slide#6 Title: *Swan Song*

1. The Swan song is a metaphorical phrase for a final gesture, effort, or performance given just before death or retirement. An ancient belief that swans sing a beautiful song in the moment just before death, having been silent (or not so musical) during most of their lifetime.

III. Slide#7 **THE SONG OF THE DYING SWAN (32:44-47)**

- A. Ch.32 has been called, *"the Song of the Dying Swan"*.

B. Set your hearts on **all** the words...it is your life.

IV. Slide#8 **GO UP...AND DIE (48-52)**

A. Slide#9 The same happened to his brother (Aaron) earlier in Numb.20:12,28.

1. Near Petra, Jordan.

B. Slide#10 (51) How important to **Hallow** His name. *Hallowed be thine name.*

V. Slide#11 **BEGINNING PRAISES (33:1-5)**

A. Moses **began & ended** his **blessing** on Israel by offering *praise to God*.

B. **Bless** and **blessing** occur some 415 x's in the OT, showing the importance of this concept in biblical times.

1. Slide#12 To bless means "to endue with power for success, prosperity, fecundity/ fruitful, longevity, etc." The person who is "blessed" is given some gift which will lead to a rich and abundant life.

2. It was common for superiors to bless children or subordinates, as Moses here spoke God's blessing on the tribes of Israel.

C. (2) His praise of God began with a description of the Lord's appearance at Sinai when He gave the Law to the people through Moses. A major event in Israel's history.

1. To become a **nation** it was necessary to have: a common people (5); a common constitution (the Law, 4); and a common land.

2. He compared *God's revelation* at Mount Sinai to a brilliant desert sunrise. i.e. *dawned*

VI. Slide#13 **BLESSINGS (6-25)**

A. Slide#14 Intro: Jacob had blessed his sons, the ancestors of the 12 tribes, in Gen.49.

1. Yet, many of **Jacob's blessings** were more like *curse*s, where here, **all** of **Moses** were *favorable*.

2. *Earlier*, he was so mad at *this people* he **struck the rock**. *Now*, older, about to die, lessons learned, heart softer...It's about **Love**.

B. Slide#15 **Reuben** (6) Let the tribe of Reuben *live and not die out*, even though their tribe is small.

C. **Judah** (7) Give them **strength** to defend their cause; **help them** against their enemies.

D. **Levi** (8-11) Now let them **teach your regulations** to Jacob/Israel. *Bless their spiritual ministry to the nation*.

E. **Benjamin** (12) The people of Benjamin are **loved** by the Lord and **live in safety** beside him.

1. **Between his shoulders** - that is, on His sides or borders.

2. **Mount Zion**, on which stood the city of Jerusalem, belonged to **Judah**; **but Mount Moriah**, the site of the sacred Tabernacle, would be in **Benjamin's** borders.
- F. **Joseph** (*Ephraim & Manasseh*) (13-17) May their land be blessed by the Lord with the choice gift of rain from the heavens...with the finest crops of the ancient mountains.
- G. **Zebulun** (18-19) May the people of Zebulun prosper in their expeditions abroad.
- H. **Issachar** (18-19) May the people of Issachar prosper at home in their tents.
- I. **Gad** (20–21) Blessed is the one who enlarges Gad's territory.
- J. **Dan** (22) Dan is a lion's cub, leaping out from Bashan.
- K. **Naphtali** (23) You are rich in favor and full of the Lord's blessings; may you possess the west and the south.
- L. **Asher** (24-25) May he be esteemed by his brothers; may he bathe his feet in olive oil. May the bolts of your gates be of iron and bronze; may your strength match the length of your days.
- M. **Slide#16** (25) **As your days, so shall your strength be -**
 1. God never gives His **strength** in advance.
 2. D.L.Moody said, "A man can no more take a supply of **grace** for the **future** than he can **eat** enough today to last him for the next 6 months, **nor** can he **inhale** sufficient air into his lungs with one breath to sustain life for a week to come. We are permitted to draw upon God's store of **grace**(or strength) from day to day **as we need it.**"
 3. Don't try to bear **tomorrow's burdens** with **today's grace**.

VII. **Slide#17 ENDING PRAISE (26-29)**

- A. (26) **Jeshurun** - a poetical name for **the people of Israel**, used in token of affection, meaning, "*the dear upright people*".
- B. **Slide#18 Who rides the heavens to help you** - Instant responses anywhere!
- C. **Slide#19** (27) **And underneath are the everlasting arms** - An old song written by *Ada Habershon* said, "**When I fear my faith will fail, Christ will hold me fast; when the tempter would prevail, He can hold me fast.**"
 1. **Why are we as children of God afraid to fall? Where would we fall to?...but into His everlasting arms. Fall to them but you can never fall through them.**
- D. (29) **Thrice happy** is the people whose God is the Lord:
 1. **Slide#20** They are **in His hand** (3); **at His feet**(3); **at His side**(12); **between His shoulders** (12); **in His arms** (27); **behind His shield** (29), **and fitted with His sword** (29).
 - a) **What a privilege it is to be a child of God.**
- E. **Slide#21 End:** At age 16 **Andor Foldes** was already a skilled pianist, but he was experiencing a troubled year. In the midst of the young Hungarian's personal struggles, one of the most

renowned pianists of the day came to Budapest. **Emil von Sauer** was famous not only for his abilities; he was also the last surviving pupil of the great **Franz Liszt**. Von Sauer requested that Foldes play for him. Foldes obliged with some of the most difficult works of Bach, Beethoven, and Schumann.

1. When he finished, **von Sauer** walked over to him and kissed him on the forehead. "My son," he said, "when I was your age I became a student of **Liszt**. He kissed me on the forehead after my first lesson, saying, 'Take good care of this kiss - it comes from **Beethoven**, who gave it to me after hearing me play. ' I have waited for years to pass on this sacred heritage, **but now I feel you deserve it.**'"
2. Is there someone you can kiss on the forehead? Bless? Encourage? Disciple? Challenge? Cheer? Inspire? Motivate?