

# THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

## DEUTERONOMY 31-34

The 2004 America women's 4X100 relay team was the fastest collection of female sprinters in history. It was assumed that if they just showed up they would win the gold medal. A new world record was definitely in sight. *But not so fast...*

In the second leg of the relay the impossible happened. Marion Jones and Lauryn Williams botched the baton pass. Marion failed to get the baton to Lauryn within the 20 meter handoff zone. America was disqualified.

With the Americans out of the race, the Jamaican team won the gold medal.

Hey, life is *not* a sprint – it's a relay...

It's not just how fast you run that matters. It's the ability to pass the baton of faith and holiness to the next generation that makes a person successful.

This is what Moses does in tonight's chapters. His leg of the race is nearly over, and he makes a clean pass to Joshua and the succeeding generation.

Chapter 31, "Then Moses went and spoke these words to all Israel.

And he said to them: "I am 120 years old today. I can no longer go out and come in. Also the LORD has said to me, 'You shall not cross over this Jordan.'

Years earlier Israel had whined about no water. God instructed Moses to strike the rock with his staff, and a

miracle occurred. Water flowed from the rock.

God had proven He would meet their needs. *Why whine and complain again?*

The next time Moses became frustrated with Israel. He misrepresented God.

God wasn't angry with the people. God is patient and merciful. He expects less from us than we do. God told Moses to speak to the rock – instead, Moses struck it in anger. Water still flowed, but his rashness cost Moses the Promised Land.

Remember God was painting a picture. The rock was Jesus. And Jesus needs to be struck but once, for the life-giving water of the Holy Spirit to flow to us.

Jesus was crucified. Now all we do is speak to the rock, and we receive the Spirit's living water... But Moses marred the picture and it cost him plenty.

And here's the lesson for us. Just because we lose patience, and get frustrated with the people around us - that doesn't mean God does. Rather than *vent* we need to *repent* - and ask God for a greater measure of His love and grace.

There's another reason God may've prohibited Moses from leading Israel into the land of Canaan... Israel already had an unhealthy allegiance to their leader. They put Moses on a pedestal... And God is concerned that when Moses dies, the Israelites might want to dig up his body and turn it into some idol.

This may be why God decides to hide Moses' burial spot. God wanted to communicate to Israel that it was not Moses

who had delivered them from Egypt - and it was not any man who would lead them into Canaan. In verse 3 Moses says, "The LORD your God Himself crosses over before you; He will destroy these nations from before you, and you shall dispossess them."

Godly leaders are a blessing to the Church, but from time to time God reminds us that no man is indispensable. Leaders come and go, but God's work continues.

The old saying is true, "God buries the workman, but carries on the work..."

If I dropped dead tomorrow - or if the Lord called me to move on - my prayer is that this church wouldn't skip a beat. *I've taught you to look to God... not me.*

Moses continues, "Joshua himself crosses over before you, just as the LORD has said. And the LORD will do to them as He did to Sihon and Og, the kings of the Amorites and their land, when He destroyed them." These were the kings east of the Jordan. "The LORD will give them over to you, that you may do to them according to every commandment which I have commanded you."

Verse 6, "Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the LORD your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you." Moses was a mere servant. God is the leader they should trust.

Guys, always remember God is the One who goes with you! Human leaders come and go, but God is the One who never leaves you nor forsakes you.

“Then Moses called Joshua...” Joshua was God’s appointed successor to Moses. For years he had been trained and groomed by Moses.

And now Moses puts Joshua up in front of the people.

He passes the baton... “and (Moses) said to him in the sight of all Israel, "Be strong and of good courage, for you must go with this people to the land which the LORD has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall cause them to inherit it. And the LORD, He is the one who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed."

“So Moses wrote this law and delivered it to the priests, the sons of Levi, who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and to all the elders of Israel.”

Moses is passing the baton... but notice *the baton is the Bible*.

Moses writes down the words that God gave him. Just before he died, Moses wrote the first five books of your Bible and gave it to the Levites for safe keeping.

Guys, this is our job... not just to understand the Scriptures, but to pass on our knowledge to our kids. Don’t just be a smart corpse - leave a legacy for others.

“And Moses commanded them, saying: "At the end of every seven years, at the appointed time in the year of release, at the Feast of Tabernacles, when all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses, you shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing.” Every

seven years the priests of Israel are to gather the people for a public reading of the Law of Moses.

Verse 12, “Gather the people together, men and women and little ones, and the stranger who is within your gates, that they may hear and that they may learn to fear the LORD your God and carefully observe all the words of this law, and that their children, who have not known it, may hear and learn to fear the LORD your God as long as you live in the land which you cross the Jordan to possess.”

The first time this is practiced is in Joshua 8:30.

We don't know the second time, but there's no record of another public reading of the Law until the days of King Jehoshaphat - 2 Chronicles 17:7, 500 years later.

The third recorded reading doesn't occur for another 250 years – in the days of Josiah – 2 Chronicles 34:30. And the fourth reading doesn't take place until after the captivity in Babylon – 175 years later - in the days of Nehemiah (8:1).

There may've been other readings of the Law, but more than likely it was neglected until the nation was in a crisis situation... I think Israel would agree it's best to use the Bible as a *means of prevention* than an *act of desperation*.

Verse 14, “Then the LORD said to Moses, “Behold, the days approach when you must die; call Joshua, and present yourselves in the tabernacle of meeting, that I may inaugurate him.” So Moses and Joshua went and presented themselves in the tabernacle of meeting. Now the LORD appeared at the tabernacle in a pillar of cloud, and the pillar of cloud stood above the door of the tabernacle.”

And the LORD said to Moses: "Behold, you will rest with your fathers..." This phrase testifies to the reality of life-after-death. The emphasis is not *who you're leaving behind*, but death allows you to join the people *who've gone before*.

But once Moses is gone trouble will start... "And this people will rise and play the harlot with the gods of the foreigners of the land, where they go to be among them, and they will forsake Me and break My covenant which I have made with them. Then My anger shall be aroused against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide My face from them, and they shall be devoured.

And many evils and troubles shall befall them, so that they will say in that day, 'Have not these evils come upon us because our God is not among us?' And I will surely hide My face in that day because of all the evil which they have done, in that they have turned to other gods." This is exactly what God said would happen to Israel in chapter 28. If they obey His Law they'll be blessed, but if they disobey, they'll be cursed. *Yet notice Israel's reaction?* They conclude there is no God.

This is exactly what's happened to the Jews today... Modern Israel is a secular state... Most Jews worldwide are atheist and agnostic... Rather than recall God's warnings in Deuteronomy, they ignore their sin, and blame God for their trouble.

Verse 19, "Now therefore, write down this song for yourselves, and teach it to the children of Israel; put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for Me against the

children of Israel. When I have brought them to the land flowing with milk and honey, of which I swore to their fathers, and they have eaten and filled themselves and grown fat, then they will turn to other gods and serve them; and they will provoke Me and break My covenant. Then it shall be, when many evils and troubles have come upon them, that this song will testify against them as a witness; for it will not be forgotten in the mouths of their descendants, for I know the inclination of their behavior today, even before I have brought them to the land of which I swore to give them." Moses' prediction of their rebellion was not just a *prophecy*, but a *projection*... He knew "the inclination of their behavior".

Moses knew Israel was prone to sin, and wander, and rebellion against God.

Moses understood man's sin nature... "It's not our sin that makes us a sinner. We sin because we are a sinner." This is why the new birth is so essential. It's when we're born of the Spirit that God plants in us a new and sinless nature.

Moses' swan song was a literal song... He wrote down a song that would be sung by future generations of Israelis. "Therefore Moses wrote this song the same day, and taught it to the children of Israel. Then He inaugurated Joshua the son of Nun, and said, "Be strong and of good courage; for you shall bring the children of Israel into the land of which I swore to them, and I will be with you."

So it was, when Moses had completed writing the words of this law in a book, when they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites, who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying: "Take this Book of the Law, and put it

beside the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there as a witness against you; for I know your rebellion and your stiff neck. If today, while I am yet alive with you, you have been rebellious against the LORD, then how much more after my death?" *If my presence didn't inhibit your rebellion, how will you behave in my absence?* When Moses was on the mountain top receiving the Law from God he was absent for 40 days... *And Israel went nuts worshipping a golden calf.*

Moses knows they'll be no more restrained after he's gone for good.

Verse 28 "Gather to me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers, that I may speak these words in their hearing and call heaven and earth to witness against them. For I know that after my death you will become utterly corrupt, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days, because you will do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger through the work of your hands." Then Moses spoke in the hearing of all the assembly of Israel the words of this song until they were ended:"

Chapter 32 is the song of Moses. It served as an Israeli national anthem.

"Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. Let my teaching drop as the rain, my speech distill as the dew, as raindrops on the tender herb, and as showers on the grass.

For I proclaim the name of the LORD: ascribe greatness to



our God.

He is the Rock, His work is perfect; for all His ways are justice, a God of truth and without injustice; righteous and upright is He.” Obviously, God left us with the lyrics of this song – *not the tune or the beat*. For all we know, it may’ve been a rock’n roll song. But one thing is for certain, it is about *a Rock that doesn’t roll*.

“Ascribe greatness to our God. He is the Rock...” Rather than shifty, or flakey, or mushy – God is solid. You can lean on God and not worry. He’ll hold up!

Verse 5, "They have corrupted themselves; they are not His children, because of their blemish: a perverse and crooked generation. Do you thus deal with the LORD, O foolish and unwise people? Is He not your Father, who bought you?

Has He not made you and established you?"

Think of the kid with the rich dad. The car he drives costs more than you’re paid in a year. He goes to an expensive college. When he graduates he won’t worry about finding a job. He’ll move into the office down the hall from dad.

*Yet does he say “thank you”? Does he appreciate his privileges? Absolutely not! He’s spoiled rotten. He thinks he’s entitled to all that’s been given...*

Hey, this was Israel. God will lavish His blessing on His people, but Israel has no sense of gratitude. Moses asks, “Has He not made you and established you?"

"Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations. Ask your father, and he will show you; your elders, and they will tell you: when the Most High divided their

inheritance to the nations, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the boundaries of the peoples according to the number of the children of Israel. For the LORD's portion is His people; Jacob is the place of His inheritance." From the outset of history, God chose Israel to be His people.

"He found him in a desert land and in the wasteland, a howling wilderness; He encircled him, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye." I love this description of God's care... He finds him - encircles him, instructs him, keeps him, and treasures him as the apple of His eye. This is what the Holy Spirit does for us.

"The apple of His eye" is another way of saying His "pupil".

Did you know that your eyelid moves at 1/50<sup>th</sup> of a second to protect your pupil? Your eye blinks 25 times each minute. Here's a scary statistic... If you drove 55 mph on a 10 hour trip your eyelids would be shut for 33 miles.

You would have driven 33 miles with your eyes closed!

Hey, you are God's treasure. He is as attentive to your care as your eyelid is to your eye. He finds and encircles, and instructs, and keeps, and treasures you!

"As an eagle stirs up its nest, hovers over its young, spreading out its wings, taking them up, carrying them on its wings, so the LORD alone led him, and there was no foreign god with him." Moses references how an eagle stirs up its nest.

When a mother eagle builds her nest she uses thorns, and stones, and sharp objects – then covers them with fur. When the baby eaglets mature the mother bird removes the soft

lining, and the nest prods them to grow up and move out.

In a similar manner God will use rough times to grow us.  
*He'll stir the nest.*

Verse 13, "He made him ride in the heights of the earth..."  
God prospered Israel. "That he might eat the produce of the fields; He made him to draw honey from the rock, and oil from the flinty rock; Curds from the cattle, and milk of the flock, with fat of lambs; and rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats, Bashan which lies east of the Jordan was renown for the quality of its livestock.

"With the choicest wheat; and you drank wine, the blood of the grapes."

"But Jeshurun" The word means "up right"... God is being sarcastic... Upright "grew fat and kicked; you grew fat, you grew thick, you are obese!"

Israel grew fat, and sassy, and lazy and unmanageable.

"Then he forsook God who made him, and scornfully esteemed the Rock of his salvation. They provoked Him to jealousy with foreign gods; with abominations they provoked Him to anger. They sacrificed to demons, not to God, to gods they did not know, to new gods, new arrivals that your fathers did not fear. Of the Rock who begot you, you are unmindful, and have forgotten the God who fathered you."

"And when the LORD saw it, He spurned them, because of the provocation of His sons and His daughters. And He said: 'I will hide My face from them, I will see what their end will be, for they are a perverse generation, children in whom is no faith.'"

And as we're told in Hebrews 11:6, "without faith it is impossible to please Him..."

Verse 21, "They have provoked Me to jealousy by what is not God..." Idols claim to gods, but they're imposters. There is only one true God.

God says Israel has "moved Me to anger by their foolish idols. But I will provoke them to jealousy by those who are not a nation; I will move them to anger by a foolish nation." Here is the foundation of Paul's theology in Romans 11...

When the Jews rejected Jesus, God chose to bless the Gentiles. Today God's family is the Church – made up of Gentile believers from every tribe, tongue, and nation. And when the Jews see God shift His blessing to the Gentiles it will provoke the Jews to jealousy. They'll become envious of the Church.

Through *jealousy evangelism* God intends to reach the Jewish people.

"For a fire is kindled by my anger, and shall burn to the lowest hell; it shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains. I will heap disasters on them; I will spend My arrows upon them.

They shall be wasted with hunger, devoured by pestilence and bitter destruction; I will also send against them the teeth of beasts, with the poison of serpents of the dust. The sword shall destroy outside; there shall be terror within for the young man and virgin, the nursing child with the man of gray hairs."

Everyone will be impacted by God's judgment – old and young alike.

“I would have said, "I will dash them in pieces, I will make the memory of them to cease from among men," had I not feared the wrath of the enemy, lest their adversaries should misunderstand, lest they should say, "Our hand is high; and it is not the LORD who has done all this." God would've wiped out Israel, but His enemies would've taken credit for their annihilation, and boast against Him.

Again God speaks of Israel, "For they are a nation void of counsel, nor is there any understanding in them. Oh, that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!" Israel's chief problem was short-sightedness.

When the city planners drew up the streets of New York City they contemplated its future growth. They laid out streets from the center city outward.

These engineers let their imaginations run wild. They figured the most the city would ever need was 19 streets. So they called 19<sup>th</sup> Street "Boundary Street".

They were a little short-sighted. Today New York City has a 284<sup>th</sup> Street.

This is the problem with many people. They don't think before they act.

They don't consider the long term consequences of their actions - as Moses puts it... "their latter end". Whether its drugs or sex - alcohol or porn – meth or money... people tend to focus on the immediate thrill - not the "latter end".

“How could one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, unless their Rock had sold them, and the

**LORD had surrendered them?"** When God fights for Israel they overcome enormous odds to win battles. But when Israel fights alone they're so anemic one enemy soldier defeats 1000 Israelites.

Verse 31, **"For their rock is not like our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges."** The enemy admits they have no god to trust – no god to match Jehovah.

**"For their vine is of the vine of Sodom and of the fields of Gomorrah; their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter. Their wine is the poison of serpents, and the cruel venom of cobras."** Prosperity will lead to their downfall.

**"Is this not laid up in store with Me, sealed up among My treasures?"**

Notice, God's judgment is sealed up with His treasures. Both *reward* and *revenge* come from the same hand - distributed from the same storehouse.

Verse 35, **"Vengeance is Mine, and recompense; their foot shall slip in due time; for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things to come hasten upon them. For the LORD will judge His people and have compassion on His servants, when He sees that their power is gone, and there is no one remaining, bond or free. He will say: 'Where are their gods, the rock in which they sought refuge?"**

**"Who ate the fat of their sacrifices, and drank the wine of their drink offering? Let them rise and help you, and be your refuge."** An idol is no help in the day of trouble.

In verse 39 God says, **"Now see that I, even I, am He, and there is no God besides Me; I kill and I make alive; I wound**

and I heal; nor is there any who can deliver from My hand.”  
God is sovereign, and no one can escape His judgment.

“For I raise My hand to heaven, and say, "As I live forever, if I whet My glittering sword, and My hand takes hold on judgment, I will render vengeance to My enemies, and repay those who hate Me. I will make My arrows drunk with blood, and My sword shall devour flesh, with the blood of the slain and the captives, from the heads of the leaders of the enemy." '

"Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people; for He will avenge the blood of His servants, and render vengeance to His adversaries; He will provide atonement for His land and His people." What a combination... God brings judgment *and* provides atonement. He judges - but first, He makes a way for salvation.

Verse 44, “So Moses came with Joshua the son of Nun and spoke all the words of this song in the hearing of the people. Moses finished speaking all these words to all Israel, and He said to them: "Set your hearts on all the words which I testify among you today, which you shall command your children to be careful to observe - all the words of this law. For it is not a futile thing for you, because it is your life, and by this word you shall prolong your days in the land which you cross over the Jordan to possess."

What a message to us... the study of God’s Word is not “a futile thing”.

The Final Four, or World Series, or Super Bowl is a futile, trivial, insignificant thing – but not God’s Word. You cannot exalt it too highly - or become too preoccupied with your

Bible. It's the one positive, healthy addiction.

It reminds me of the ad that appeared for the South Central Bell Yellow Pages, “Born to be battered...the loving phone book. Underline it, circle things, write in the margins, turn down page corners, the more you use it, the more valuable it gets to be.” But that could just as easily be said of the Bible. You never wear it out.

Your algebra textbook is not a futile thing... because you're going to be tested over it at the end of the semester. Well, if that's the criteria of a book's importance, then every other book takes a backseat to the Bible. For there is also a major test coming over this book... *the results will determine the course of your eternity.*

As Moses says the Bible is not “a futile thing” – it's “your life”. It will prolong and prosper your days both for now and forever. It helps us possess God's blessings.

Verse 48, “Then the LORD spoke to Moses that very same day, saying: “Go up this mountain of the Abarim, Mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, across from Jericho; view the land of Canaan, which I give to the children of Israel as a possession... “ Moses was allowed to see *the land* - but not enter what he saw.

Moses will “die on the mountain which you ascend, and be gathered to your people, just as Aaron your brother died on Mount Hor and was gathered to his people; because you trespassed against Me among the children of Israel at the waters of Meribah Kadesh, in the Wilderness of Zin, because you did not hallow Me in the midst of the children of Israel. Yet



you shall see the land before you, though you shall not go there, into the land which I am giving to the children of Israel."

This is the end of the road for Moses, so in chapter 33 he says his goodbyes. He speaks a final blessing to each of the twelve tribes he has loved and guided.

Verse 1, "Now this is the blessing with which Moses the man of God blessed the children of Israel before his death. And he said: "The LORD came from Sinai, and dawned on them from Seir; He shone forth from Mount Paran..." When God's glory shone from Mount Sinai it was seen from Mount Paran 200 miles northward.

"And He came with ten thousands of saints; from His right hand came a fiery law for them." When the glory of God appeared on the top of Mount Sinai – God was not alone. He was escorted by 10,000 saints, or angels.

Apparently, angels played a role in the giving of the Law to Moses. This is one of the reasons Hebrews highly revered the angels. Some Jews worshipped them.

Verse 3 says of God, "Yes, He loves the people; all His saints are in Your hand; they sit down at Your feet; everyone receives Your words.

Moses commanded a law for us, a heritage of the congregation of Jacob.

And He was King in Jeshurun, when the leaders of the people were gathered, all the tribes of Israel together." Now he blesses each tribe individually...

This is Moses' Last Will and Testament.... I believe many – if not all – of these blessings were also prophecies. They are

predictions of the future of each tribe.

"Let Reuben live, and not die, nor let his men be few."

"And this he said of Judah: "Hear, LORD, the voice of Judah..." Recall, "Judah" means "*praise*". God always hears the voice of praise! "And bring him to his people; let his hands be sufficient for him, and may You be a help against his enemies."

And of Levi he said: "Let Your Thummim and Your Urim be with Your holy one... The priests were from the tribe of Levi. They used the Urim and Thummin – which were two stones used to cast lots, and discern the will of God.

"Whom You tested at Massah, and with whom You contended at the waters of Meribah, (Moses was from the tribe of Levi.) Who says of his father and mother, 'I have not seen them'; nor did he acknowledge his brothers, or know his own children; for they have observed Your word and kept Your covenant.

They shall teach Jacob Your judgments, and Israel Your law. They shall put incense before You, and a whole burnt sacrifice on Your altar." The Levites and priests administered the sacrifices. They were both teachers and butchers.

"Bless his substance, LORD, and accept the work of his hands; strike the loins of those who rise against him, and of those who hate him, that they rise not again."

Verse 12, "Of Benjamin he said: "The beloved of the LORD shall dwell in safety by Him, Who shelters him all the day long; and he shall dwell between His shoulders.'

I love the back pack carriers available to moms and dads these days. You can put your baby or toddler in the harness, strap them to your back, and carry them.

This is what God says He will do with Benjamin. He'll load them in His pack and carry them. Obviously, Benjamin had a place near to God's heart.

“And of Joseph he said: "Blessed of the LORD is his land, with the precious things of heaven, with the dew, and the deep lying beneath, with the precious fruits of the sun, with the precious produce of the months, with the best things of the ancient mountains, with the precious things of the everlasting hills, with the precious things of the earth and its fullness, and the favor of Him who dwelt in the bush.

Let the blessing come 'on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him who was separate from his brothers.' His glory is like a firstborn bull, and his horns like the horns of the wild ox; together with them He shall push the peoples to the ends of the earth; they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh." Ephraim and Manasseh were Joseph's two sons.

Verse 18, “And of Zebulun he said: "Rejoice, Zebulun, in your going out, and Issachar in your tents! They shall call the peoples to the mountain; there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness; for they shall partake of the abundance of the seas and of treasures hidden in the sand." The tribe of Zebulun settled near the Mediterranean Sea. While Issachar's territory bordered on the Sea of Galilee.

“And of Gad he said: "Blessed is he who enlarges Gad; he dwells as a lion, (the Gadites were ferocious fighters) and tears the arm and the crown of his head.

He provided the first part for himself, because a lawgiver's portion was reserved there. He came with the heads of the people; He administered the justice of the LORD, and His judgments with Israel." The Gadite army was God's enforcer.

“And of Dan he said: "Dan is a lion's whelp; (or a young lion). In Genesis 49:9 Judah is called a lion's whelp. Dan was an influential tribe- yet sadly, Dan misused his sway. Judges 18 tells us Dan was the first tribe to introduce idolatry into Israel.

1 Kings 12 tells us that Jeroboam set up his golden calf in Dan.

Amos 8:14 refers to the tribe of Dan as the center of idolatry in Israel.

“He shall leap from Bashan." Dan started out with territory in southwest Israel. Years later Dan migrated to the northernmost part of Israel – near Bashan.

“Of Naphtali he said: "O Naphtali, satisfied with favor, and full of the blessing of the LORD, possess the west and the south." Naphtali's territory was north and west of the Sea of Galilee. His southern border was south toward the sea.

Naphtali occupied a strategic piece of real estate...

Most of Jesus' ministry along the Sea of Galilee occurred in Naphtali. No wonder Moses says, “Naphtali, satisfied with favor and full of blessing.”

Verse 24, "And of Asher he said: "Asher is most blessed of sons; let him be favored by his brothers, and let him dip his foot in oil. Your sandals shall be iron and bronze; as your days, so shall your strength be." This was the verse that caught the attention of Texas oilman, Andy Sorelle – a born again Christian.

Sorelle is co-owner of Energy Exploration. At the time he was waiting on permission to drill for oil in the Sinai - when a friend showed him this verse...

After surveying a map it appeared as if the territory of Asher was shaped like a leg - the toe setting over Mount Carmel in northern Israel. The last I read Andy had drilled to 21,000 feet, and found a little petro. If it hits a gusher it'll be big news.

Or if the prophecy refers to olive oil...Andy Sorelle is just wasting his time.

Verse 26, "There is no one like the God of Jeshurun, Who rides the heavens to help you, and in His excellency on the clouds." You don't usually think of God as a NASCAR driver, but here he revs up His throne and is riding across the heavens.

When Ezekiel saw God's throne He described it as a chariot – *wheels within a wheel*. 1 Chronicles 28:18 refers to the Ark as a chariot. Psalm 18:10 refers to God flying through the heavens... Remember Elijah was taken to heaven in a fiery chariot. Could it be, God Himself swooped down to pick up his prophet?

Here, God cranks up and flies to help His people. *It's a joy ride for Him.*

“The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms...”

I love the old hymn, “What a fellowship, what a joy divine... what a blessedness, what a peace is mine... leaning on the everlasting arms...”

Then the last stanza, “What have I to dread? What have I to fear?... I have blessed peace with my Lord so near... leaning on the everlasting arms.”

I hope you are seeking refuge in God, and leaning on His everlasting arms.

“He will thrust out the enemy from before you, and will say, 'Destroy!'

Then Israel shall dwell in safety, the fountain of Jacob alone, in a land of grain and new wine; His Heavens shall also drop dew. Happy are you, O Israel!

Who is like you, a people saved by the LORD, the shield of your help And the sword of your majesty! Your enemies shall submit to you, and you shall tread down their high places." God will thrust out our enemies, and win the victory.

Chapter 34 is sort of an appendix to the book. Rather than written by Moses it was probably added later by Joshua.

“Then Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is across from Jericho.

And the LORD showed him all the land of Gilead as far as Dan, all Naphtali and the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the Western Sea, the South, and the plain of the Valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, as far as Zoar.” Mount Nebo rises 2631 feet. From its pinnacle you

can see 120 miles north to Mount Hermon. On a clear day you can see the Mediterranean Sea.

“Then the LORD said to him, “This is the land of which I swore to give Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, ‘I will give it to your descendants.’

I have caused you to see it with your eyes, but you shall not cross over there.”

“So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD.” Notice, Moses’ epithet... It’s not “Moses, the prince of Egypt... the shepherd... the Lawgiver... the man who saw God’s glory... Moses, Yul Bryner’s worst nightmare... or Moses, the miracle worker...”

When it’s all said and done. It was simply, “Moses the servant of the Lord.”

Hey, the greatest pronouncement a man will ever receive is to hear Jesus say, “Well done, good and faithful servant.” That’s exactly what happened to Moses.

And notice we’re told, Moses died, “according to the word of the LORD”. The Hebrew expression literally means “upon the mouth of the LORD.” There’s a Jewish legend that says Moses died as God took away his soul with a kiss.

The Medieval rabbi, Moses Maimonides, counted 903 different ways for a human being to die. He said if you’ve got to die this way was the best.

Surgeon drew on this legend when he wrote, “As a mother takes her child and kisses it, and then lays it down to sleep in its own bed; so did the Lord kiss the soul of Moses away to

be with Him forever, and then hid his body we know not where.”

Verse 6, “**And He (God) buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth Peor; but no one knows his grave to this day.**” God Himself buried Moses, and it was a private ceremony. Not even relatives were invited to the funeral.

Years ago when the Ayotollah Khomeini died in Iran, I saw a few news clips of his funeral. Men jumped on the cart that carried his corpse – pulled his body out of its coffin - and started kissing the cadaver. It was a gross and disgusting scene.

I can imagine the Hebrews treating Moses’ body similarly. They had a tendency toward idols. And Moses was such a hero – he might’ve easily been worshipped.

This is why God buried Moses where the body could never be retrieved.

Evidently, Satan also knew of the Hebrews’ tendency, and it was an inclination he wanted to exploit. He tried to confiscate the body of Moses, but was stopped.

Jude 9 tells us Satan wrestled with the archangel, Michael, over the corpse of Moses. Michael prevailed, but if Satan had gotten the body, I’m sure he was planning to turn Moses into a shrine. God saw to it that it never happened.

There are two more reasons *God wanted to preserve - and Satan wanted to desecrate* - Moses’ body... Later Moses, Elijah, and Jesus - appear transfigured in glory - on top of Mount Hermon. Moses does make it into the Promise Land.



Moses appeared with Jesus in physical form. His body was held in reserve.

It's also possible that in the Great Tribulation of the last days, Moses will be one of the two witnesses discussed in Revelation 11. If so he'll need his body.

Verse 7, **“Moses was 120 years old when he died. His eyes were not dim nor his natural vigor diminished.”** The elderly Moses could still see God's will. He had energy to do God's work. Rather than die of old age, God just took His servant.

**“And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab 30 days. So the days of weeping and mourning for Moses ended.”** It's time to move on!

**“Now Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him; so the children of Israel heeded him, and did as the LORD had commanded Moses.”** It's interesting and provocative that a man named *Joshua* will lead the people into a place – not even a man like Moses - could take them.

If you were to translate the name *“Joshua”* into Greek, you'd have *“Jesus”*.

Moses could take them only so far. He taught Israel right from wrong, but he couldn't lead them into God's rest, and blessing, and abundance – but Jesus can!

The Law of Moses exposed man's sin, but it didn't cleanse us. It told us to do good, but didn't empower us. It takes the blood of Jesus to permanently cover sin, and empower us to do God's will. Only Jesus can bring us into a spiritual land

flowing with milk and honey – a land of blessing, and fruitfulness, and peace.

Only through our Joshua can we enter God's wonderful rest.

But Moses was a godly man. In verse 10 he gets his props, "But since then there has not arisen in Israel a prophet like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, in all the signs and wonders which the LORD sent him to do in the land of Egypt, before Pharaoh, before all his servants, and in all his land, and by all that mighty power and all the great terror which Moses performed in the sight of all Israel."