

THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

DEUTERONOMY 31-34

In the 2025 Track and Field World Championships the country of Jamaica finished first and second in the 100 meters - an amazing show of sprinting dominance.

But Jamaica couldn't translate their speed into a victory in the 4 x 100 relay. They dropped the baton. The two fastest men in the world blew the exchange.

And so it is in life! Our lives are *not* just a race, but a relay race. It's not how well or fast we run that matters. It's the ability to pass the baton of faith and holiness to the next generation that makes a Christian successful.

This is what Moses does in today's chapters. Moses' leg of the race is almost over, and he makes a clean pass to Joshua and the Hebrew's second generation.

Chapter 31, "Then Moses went and spoke these words to all Israel. And he said to them: 'I am one hundred and twenty 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 whined over no water. God told Moses to strike a rock with his staff. Miraculously, water flowed from the rock.

God proved He would meet their needs. *Why would they ever complain again?* But they did, and Moses grew angry, frustrated. *God though wasn't angry.* God was patient and merciful toward these people. *And Moses misrepresented God.* This time God told Moses to speak to the rock, yet he angrily struck it a second time. Water flowed, but his temper and rashness cost Moses the Promised Land. *He'd see it, but not enter it.*

For God was painting a picture. That wilderness rock was Jesus. Our Lord was to be struck (or crucified) once, for the life-giving water of His Spirit to flow. Now we just speak to that rock, and we receive His living water. Moses marred the picture and it cost him dearly.

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

Now there's another possible reason God prohibited Moses from leading Israel into Canaan... Israel's tendency was to put Moses on a pedestal. They had an unhealthy allegiance. And God was concerned that when Moses died, the Israelites might want to dig up his body and turn it into some kind of an idol. This may be why God decided to hide Moses' burial site.

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, but from time to time God reminds us *no man is indispensable*. Leaders come and go, but God's work continues. It's true, "God buries the workman, but He carries on the work..."

If I dropped dead tomorrow - or if God called me to move on - my prayer is that this church wouldn't skip a beat. *I'm trying to teach 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. The LORD will give them over to you, that you may do to them according to every commandment which I have commanded you." God will give Israel victory over the Canaanites like he did the kings east of the Jordan. "*The LORD will give them over to you...*"

Thus 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 and Joshua are just servants. God was the source of their strength and courage.

"Then Moses called Joshua..." Joshua had been his apprentice. He was God's appointed successor. For years he'd been trained and groomed. Now Moses puts up his protege in front of the people. **And passes the baton...** "(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 passes the baton, and *the baton he actually passes is the Bible*. Moses writes the words God gave him. Before he dies, Moses writes the Bible's first five books, and gives them to the Levites for safe keeping.

And this is our job - *not to write Scripture*, but to pass on our knowledge of it... No one wants to die a smart corpse... pass on God's Word... Leave a life of legacy.

"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 Levitical priests

were to gather the nation to the Tabernacle for a public reading of these first five books.

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 will occur is in a few days, Joshua 8:30, shortly after they cross the Jordan River and the city of Jericho topples.

Yet sadly, there is no record of a **second public reading** of the Mosaic Law, until 500 years later, in the days of King Jehoshaphat, in 2 Chronicles 17:7.

The **third recorded public reading** of the Law doesn't occur for another 250 years after Jehoshaphat, in the days of King Josiah, in 2 Chronicles 34:30.

And finally, the **fourth public reading** of the Law doesn't take place until after the Jewish captivity in Babylon, 175 years later, in Nehemiah's day (in 8:1).

There may've been other readings, but it's more likely God's Word was neglected until Israel turned to it in a crisis. And we should learn, **read your Bible as a means of preparation not as an act of desperation.**

In verse 14 Moses comes to the end of his road, “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...” The phrase speaks of a life-after-death. The focus isn't on *who he's leaving*, but *who he's joining* - “*your fathers*” - *on the other side*.

But once Moses *departs* trouble will *start*. For God says, “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.” Sadly, Moses' corpse doesn't get cold before Israel betrays their great God.

“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 what God said He would do in Deuteronomy 28. If Israel obeys His Law they’ll be blessed, but if they disobey they’ll be cursed. *Yet what is Israel’s reaction when the curses come?* Rather than repent of their sin they assume that there is no God.

This is exactly the reaction of Israel today. Modern Israel is a secular state. Jewish politicians are largely atheists and agnostics. Rather than smartly recalling God’s warnings in Deuteronomy, they ignore their sin, and say their troubles are because God doesn’t exist.

No, God hides His face, because He’s ashamed of “the evil they’ve done, and have turned to other gods.”

In Chapter 32 Moses writes a song. I call it **a sweet and sour song**. It recalls God’s faithfulness to Israel, yet despite His goodness it was their inclination to rebel against Him and follow other gods. Verse 21, **“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.”** God knew their **“inclination”** or nature.

This was the problem, not a once in a while rebellion, but their inborn inclination or nature was to sin. Here’s the truth for Israel, and all humans, **“It’s not our sin that makes us a sinner. We sin because we are a sinner.”**

And this Song of Moses will serve as a reminder. Verse 22, **“Therefore Moses wrote this song the same day, and taught it to the children of Israel.”** The final act before Moses died was to teach all Israel a song.

Verse 23, **“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 Moses’ presence had failed to inhibit their rebellion, how will they behave when he’s gone?* He was just forty days with God on Mount Sinai, *when Israel went nuts worshipping a gold calf*. Now that he’s leaving for good, He’s expecting the worst.

And in the rest of Chapter 32 he gathers the elders, and predicts Israel’s apostasy. In verse 29 he says, **“evil will befall you in the latter days...”** He speaks of **the last days, the end of the age**. Recall, sin was their **inclination** and it haunted them

throughout their history.

Verse 30, "Then Moses spoke in the hearing of all the assembly of Israel the words of this song until they were ended..." And Chapter 32 is *this song of Moses*. "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." Good, Spirit-filled teaching is like a gentle rain or dew that waters. It causes growth, not damage.

Verse 4, "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." God left us the lyrics of this song, but sadly *not the tune or beat*. But it may've been a rock'n roll song. At least Moses calls God *a Rock that doesn't roll*. He's saying *God isn't flakey... "His work is perfect... upright is He."*

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 rich kid. It's all been handed to him. The sports car he drives, the expensive college, his office is now right across the hall from dad.

Yet does he say "thanks"? Does he appreciate his privileges? No! This kid is spoiled rotten. And this was Israel - entitled Israel. God will lavish His blessing on His people, but Israel will have no gratitude. Moses asks, "Has (God) not made you and established you?"

Verse 7, "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..." From the outset of human history the Most High God chose Israel from "the sons of Adam." He set boundaries and separated Israel. He loved Israel. "The LORD's portion is His people; Jacob is the place of His inheritance."

Yet Israel fled to Egypt; then wandered in the desert. Verse 10, "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 metaphor, "the apple (or the pupil) of His eye." Your eyelid moves at 1/50th of a second to protect the pupil. It blinks 25 times each minute. Here's a scary stat... If you drive 55 mph on a ten hour road trip your eyelids are closed for 33 miles. *Drive for ten hours and you've actually driven 33 miles with your eyes closed!*

But God is as attentive and protective of you as your eye is to its pupil. He finds you, and encircles you, and guides you, and keeps you, and even 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.” Here’s another analogy, God is to us as a mama eagle is to her baby eaglets.

She “*stirs up (her) nest...*” When she builds the nest she uses thorns, and stones, and sharp objects; then covers them with a soft lining. When the eaglets are newborns they enjoy the softness, but as they mature mom “*stirs up the nest.*” She removes the fur lining, and exposes her eaglets to the thorns. It roughs them up and moves them out. This is how God matures us. He exposes us to hardship. It toughens up his babies!

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 (we’ll talk more about this in a few minutes); Curds from the cattle, and milk of the flock, with fat of lambs; and rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats...” Bashan was east of the Jordan River - a land renown for its quality livestock.

“With the choicest wheat; and you drank wine, the blood of the grapes. But Jeshurun...” This name for Israel means, “*up right...*” And by choosing this name God is being sarcastic, *like calling the biggest kid in the class, “Tiny.”* Israel “*grew fat and kicked; you grew fat, you grew thick, you are obese!*” Spiritually, Jeshurun or Israel, like a lazy cow grew fat, and sassy, and obese.

“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 of course, Hebrews 11:6 tells us, “*without faith it is impossible to please (God)...*”

Verse 21, “They have provoked Me to jealousy by what is not God...” Idols claim to be gods, but they’re imposters. There is only one true God. And He says Israel “*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.*”

And here is the foundation of Paul's theology in Romans 10:19... When the Jews rejected Jesus, God offered the Gospel to the Gentiles. Today His family, the Church, is made up of Gentiles from every tribe, tongue, and nation. And when Israel sees God shift His blessing from Jews to Gentiles it provokes them to jealousy. They're envious. And it's through this *jealousy evangelism* that God intends to reach Jews today.

In the next few verses we're told just how hot God's anger will be toward the Jews. He'll unleash a little hell-fire. Disasters will come. Hunger, pestilence, destruction, the teeth of beasts and the poison of serpents, the sword and the terror on young and old alike. God would've wiped out Israel, but it would've given their enemies a reason to deny His faithfulness.

We pick back up God's indictment in verse 28, "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 was short-sighted. The people failed to consider the longterm consequences of their sin.

When civil planners mapped out the streets of New York City they contemplated its future growth. They laid out streets from the city center out. These engineers let their imaginations run wild. They figured the most the city would ever need was 19 streets. So they called 19th Street, "Boundary Street." It would be the outer boundary. Yet, today New York City has a 284th Street. I'd say the city engineers were a little short-sighted.

And this is the problem with people today. They don't consider the long term consequences. As Moses puts it "*their latter end.*" Sin has a payday. You eventually reap what you sow. Maybe not today, but some day...

Verse 30, "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.

"For their rock is not like our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges." Throughout history Israel's enemies admitted they had no god to match Yahweh.

"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." Israel's vine will be short-lived, like the grapes of Sodom, who's vineyards were burned in the fire from heaven...

"Is this not laid up in store with Me, sealed up among My treasures?" Moses says God's judgments are sealed up with His treasures. Both *reward* and *revenge* come from the same hand - from the same storehouse.

Paul in Romans 12:19 quotes 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.” Please understand, the Lord - *not you and not me* - is in charge of payback. Don’t take that role upon yourself. God tells us, “*Vengeance is Mine.*” He judges in “*due time.*”

“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? When difficulties arise God will let Israel cry out for the false gods they followed. And they’ll learn an idol is no help in the day of trouble.

In verse 39 God declares, “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 over life and death, and no one can escape His judgment.

Verse 41, if Moses acts as God’s avenger, *with a sharpened “glittering sword,”* no one can stop him. And I like Moses’ “*glittering sword*” - it was like a light saber.

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.” He tells them “*set their hearts*” on all these words, verse 47, “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.” And what a message this is to us... *the study of God’s Word is not “a futile thing.”*

A *World Series, a Super Bowl, a Presidential election* is a futile, trivial thing, compared to the study of your Bible. *Setting your heart* on this book “*is your life.*”

A algebra textbook is not a futile thing, because you’ll be tested over its contents at the end of the course. And that’s exactly why the Bible is “*not a futile thing.*” You and I will be tested. This book is our final exam. And how we do will determine *the course* of our eternity. Moses says of God’s Word, “*it is your life.*”

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 gets to view the land, but he won’t enter the land.

God tells him, you’ll “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."

And in Chapter 33 Moses says his good-byes - a final blessing on each of the twelve tribes of Israel...

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 hundreds of miles north to Mount Seir and Mount Paran. It illuminated an entire wilderness.

"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 Mount Sinai, God was not alone. He was accompanied by 10,000 saints, *or angels*. Angels evidently played a role in the giving of the Law. This is one reason the Hebrews highly revered the angels. Some Jews even mistakenly worshipped them.

Verse 5 says that practically speaking Moses was a king to Israel, the "*King in Jeshurun...*" And his words in Chapter 33 were not just blessings, but prophecies. God's predictions of the future for each of the tribes.

For time sake I'm going to fly through this chapter. Moses blesses **Reuben, Judah, Levi...** And the tribe of Levi was an odd child. Verse 9 tells us, "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." Levi was separate from his brothers - set apart for the sacrificial service of the Tabernacle.

And the Levites had a special role in teaching God's people God's Word, "**They shall teach Jacob Your judgments, and Israel Your law...**" And for anyone who interferes, we're told, "**strike the loins of those who rise against him...**" Wow, interfere with the teaching of God's Word and you should be kicked where it hurts. *I bet you didn't know that verse was in the Bible.*

Verse 12, "**Of Benjamin he said.. he shall dwell between His shoulders.**" I love the backpack carriers parents use these days. *They weren't available when my kids were that age.* You just put your kid between your shoulders, and carry them with you wherever you go. And this is how God blesses the tribe of Benjamin.

Verse 13, "**And of Joseph he said: "Blessed of the LORD is his land, with the precious things..."** The land God gave Joseph was full of precious things... In verse 16 Joseph is also blessed with, "**the favor of Him who dwelt in the bush.**" *And who dwelt*

in the bush? It was Yahweh! The **I AM THAT I AM** dwelt in a burning bush on the summit of Mount Sinai. The tribe of Joseph was blessed with precious things and the Lord's favor.

He goes on to say in verse 16, **"Let the blessing come on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him who was separate from his brothers."** Joseph was thrown into a pit and sold as a slave to a caravan headed to Egypt. Yet he rose from that pit to the palace, and had two sons, verse 17, **"the ten thousands of Ephraim, and thousands of Manasseh."**

Moses continues blessing **Zebulun, Issachar, and Gad**. The Gadites were like a **"lion"** - ferocious fighters. They were God's enforcers - dealing out His judgment.

Verse 22, **"Of Dan he said: "Dan is a lion's whelp; (or young lion) He shall leap from Bashan."** Dan started with coastal territory in southwest Israel, but migrated northeast to Bashan, or what is today the Golan Heights. Judges 18 tells us Dan was the first tribe to introduce idolatry into Israel. Later, Jeroboam set up his rival religion, or golden calves, in Bethel and Dan. Amos 8:14 refers to Dan as Israel's center of idolatry.

He also blesses **Naphtali** which stretched northwest from the Sea of Galilee. Most of Jesus' ministry in the Galilee occurred in Naphtali. No wonder Moses says, **"Naphtali, satisfied with favor and full of blessing."**

Then in verse 24, Moses blesses **"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 is the verse that sent numerous oil exploration companies in search for petroleum in what was Asher. The territory of Asher looks like a boot, and its toe, Mount Carmel, is where rock oil has been discovered. **"Asher dips his foot in oil."** *Don't forget what occurred on Mount Carmel, in Elijah's day.* This is where fire descended and burned up the altar and priests of Baal. *Could petroleum seepage have aided in the burning?*

It's interesting this year, March 2026, Zion Oil And Gas Company will begin drilling for oil in Asher. How much they extract, *we'll see...* They have a website.

Of course, the more literal interpretation of this verse is olive oil. And in biblical times Asher was certainly known as a producer of olives. In a few years we'll probably learn what kind of oil Asher will dip its foot in.

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."** I love this, you don't usually think of God as a NASCAR driver, but that's not far off. Here He revs up His throne and rides 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 of the Covenant, God's throne, as a chariot. Psalm 18:10 depicts God flying through the heavens... Again, Elijah was taken to heaven in a fiery chariot. Could it be, God swooped down in His throne to pick up a prophet? Here, God cranks up His throne-chariot and flies to help Israel. *God takes a joy ride!*

"The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms..." Remember the hymn, **"What a fellowship, what a joy divine... what a blessedness, what a peace is mine... What have I to dread? What have I to fear?... leaning on the everlasting arms."**

Is the eternal God your refuge? Are you *underneath the everlasting arms?* On what are you leaning?

The last verses, Chapter 33, were certainly a comfort at the time. God will thrust out their enemies and Israel will dwell safely in the land. God is a shield and sword.

Chapter 34 is sort of an appendix to Deuteronomy. It was probably added later by Joshua to finish Moses' story. **"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 Mediterranean), the South, and the plain of the Valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, as far as Zoar."** Mount Nebo rises 2,631 feet. From the top you can see 120 miles north to Mount Hermon. On a clear day you can even see the Mediterranean Sea.

Verse 4, **"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.' (And now that's 2 1/2 million) 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." And notice, his epithet... It's not **"Moses, prince of Egypt, or shepherd, or Lawgiver, or man who saw God's glory, or Yul Bryner's worst nightmare, or the miracle worker..."**

When this man's amazing life of 120 years gets summed up, it's simply, **"Moses, servant of the LORD."**

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

The Medieval rabbi, Moses Maimonides, counted 903 ways for a man to die. He said if you have to die this way is 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. It was a private funeral. Not even relatives were invited.

In 1989 when the Iranian Ayotollah Khomeini died, muslim crowds ripped open his flimsy wooden coffin and pulled out the corpse. Men were kissing the cadaver and trying to touch the shroud. It was gross.

But I can picture the Hebrews treating Moses' body similarly. He was a hero, idolized by a nation. He may've easily been worshipped. This is why God buried Moses where the body could never be retrieved.

Satan also knew of the Hebrews' tendency, and he wanted to exploit this inclination. Jude 9 tells us Satan wrestled with the archangel, Michael, over the corpse of Moses. Michael prevailed, but if Satan had gotten hold of the body, I'm sure he was planning to turn Moses into a shrine. God made sure his plan failed!

There are two more reasons *God wanted to preserve* and *Satan wanted to desecrate* Moses' body. Later Moses, Elijah, and Jesus are transfigured in glory on Mount Hermon. Moses represented the Law. Elijah the Prophets. And both testified of Jesus as God's Son. In the end Moses did make it to the Promise Land. He appeared with Jesus... And it's possible in the last days, Moses will be one of the witnesses discussed in Revelation 11. If so, he'll again need his physical body.

Verse 7, "Moses was 120 years old when he died. His eyes were not dim nor his natural vigor diminished."

He'd just climbed Mount Nebo. Moses was 120, but could see clearly, and had the energy to do God's will. Rather than die of old age, God just took His servant. *We should all pray that's how we go when it's our time.*

"And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days (a whole month). So the days of weeping and mourning for Moses ended."

There's a time to weep and mourn. They mourned Moses for thirty days. You shouldn't rush your grief. But then there comes a time to stop grieving and move on! God buries the dead, but He has plans for the living...

“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 provocative that a man named *Joshua* will lead the people into a place - not even a man like Moses could take them. Translate the name “*Joshua*” into Greek, and you get “*Jesus*.” Moses took Israel only so far. Moses couldn’t lead them into God’s rest, and blessing... *it’ll take Jesus to do that!*

The Law of Moses exposes our sin, but can’t cleanse us. It tells us how to do good, but can’t empower us to do it. It’s the sacrificial blood of Jesus that permanently covers our sin and elevates our living to do God’s will. Through Jesus, **our Joshua**, we can enter God’s rest.

Well, finally verse 10, “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.”