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Moshe Pleads

3: 23-29

Moshe pleads DIG: What does Moses' prayer reveal about his relationship with YHVH? Who do you think was responsible for Moshe's rebellion at Meribah? The Israelites who provoked him? Or Moshe himself? Why? How did Moses accept the sovereignty of ADONAI? Was his request appropriate? What do you think it was like for Moshe to look at the Promised Land and know he wasn't going to be able to enter in after all he had done to get the people there? What do you think it was like for Moshe to commission Joshua?

REFLECT: When have you, like Moses, been prevented from experiencing a much-awaited event? How did you feel? What did you do? At what stage of your walk with the LORD are you in: (a) On the outside looking in? (b) Waiting to cross over? (c) Newly arrived on the other side? (d) Taking possession of God's gift? What are you doing to prepare yourself to move on to the next stage? Who in your congregation is ADONAI encouraging you to assist along the way? What barriers will you have to overcome together? When have you paid a very high price when you failed to accept the "NO!" that God gave you?

Parashah 45: va'Et'chanan (I pleaded) 3:23-7:11
(to see link click [Af](#) - Parashah)

The Key Person is **Moshe**, continuing to speak to all **Isra'el**.

The Scene is **the wilderness east of the Promised Land**. The Israelites were in the land of Mo'av, just east of **the Jordan River**, waiting to enter **the Promised Land**.

The Main Events include **Moses'** pleading to enter **the Land** with **his people**. But **ADONAI** said, "No!" Other events were **God** warning against idolatry and intermarriage, establishing **cities of refuge**, repeating **the Ten Words** for the next generation, introducing the first and greatest **mitzvah** to **love God**, known as **the Sh'ma**, and reminding **the people** that **YHVH** would be faithful to keep **His covenant** with those who obey.⁹⁷

Moses fervently requested ADONAI's permission to enter the Land of Promise, but would only be allowed a panoramic view from the top of Mount Pisgah. YHVH commanded Moshe to invest his final energies in preparing Joshua for his leadership of the nation of Isra'el.



I pleaded (Hebrew *va'etchannan*, the verb is pluperfect, meaning *I had previously prayed*) **with ADONAI for His grace at that time.** Respectfully, **he** interlaced praise with a **plea**, saying: **O Lord ADONAI, You have begun to show Your servant Your greatness and Your strong hand - for what god is there in heaven or on earth who can do deeds and mighty acts like Yours? Please! Let me cross over and see the good land across the Jordan - that good hill country and Lebanon (3:23-25).** Here we see the tragedy of **Moses' position.** **He** had begun to see the marvelous works of **the LORD**, from **the Exodus** to the conquest of **the Transjordan.** But now, just when the climax was drawing near, **he** would be unable to see **YHVH's** fulfillment of the ancient promise. It was a promise to which **he** had devoted **his** whole life, and the thought that **he** would not see its fulfillment was too much for **him** to accept without question.⁹⁸ **Joshua**, who foreshadowed **Yeshua Messiah**, would be the one to bring **the people** into **the Promised Land.**

God did not show any favoritism to **Moses.** The Great **Moses, the deliverer** of **Isra'el** from Egyptian slavery, **the giver of the Torah**, pleaded with **Ha'Shem** to allow **him** one small favor, and just let **him** cross the Jordan river and step into **the Promised Land** that was promised to **Abraham** and **his descendants** forever. **But Moshe's tearful plea** for mercy fell short (**Hebrews 12:17**).

Moshe then declared to **the people**, "**ADONAI was angry with me because of you, so He would not listen to me.**" Once again (**1:37**), **Moses** pointed out to **the Israelites** that **because of them YHVH was angry with him** and would not allow **him** to enter **the Promised Land.** **Moshe** was not insisting that **he** was blameless and punished despite **his** innocence; rather, **Isra'el's** rebellious conduct at **Meribah (Numbers 20)** may have prompted **Moses' sin**, but **their** behavior did not excuse **his** rebellion from **God's** clear

instructions not to strike **the rock**. Although **Moshe** was affected by **Isra'el's** rebellious heart, **he, himself**, had sinned against **the LORD (Numbers 20:12; Deuteronomy 32:51)**. Whether **Isra'el** provoked **him** or not, **God** held **Moses** accountable for **his** own sin.⁹⁹

ADONAI said to me, “(Hebrew: *rav-lach*) **Enough** (implying **he** had been making a persistent request)! **Do not speak to Me anymore about this matter” (3:26)**. How ironic that **YHVH's** (Hebrew: *rav-lachem*) to the younger generation commanded entry **(1:6)**, whereas **God's rav-lach** to **Moshe** barred entry into the very same **Land**. This conversation reveals the deep relationship between **God** and **a man** that is rarely seen in all the Bible except perhaps between **Jeremiah** and **Ha'Shem**. It also heightens the feeling of tragedy in the life of **a man** who devoted **his** life to fulfilling **God's** promise for **Isra'el**, but knew **he** would never see its completion.¹⁰⁰ The depth of the pain and disappointment that the **divine** refusal caused **Moses** can be seen in the number of times **he** refers to it **(1:37, 3:26, 4:21, 31:2, 32:48-52, 34:4)**. So, even if **he** stopped talking to **YHVH** about it, **he** didn't stop reminding **the Israelites** about it.¹⁰¹

It's hard for us to accept the answer “no,” especially today. We live in a generation in which we think we deserve everything. No matter what, if we make an effort and work hard enough, we can receive all of our heart's desires. This is a tremendous lesson for all of us. We should be prepared to accept the answer “no” from **ADONAI**. For instance, no to healing, no to success, no to our various requests and pleas. It is not pleasant, but in our prayer, there must be a willingness to accept the refusal of **YHVH**. We can, and should, continue to plead for the members of our community, our family, and our health, but in the end, our prayer should be: **Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven (Matthew 6:10)**. We continue to serve **ADONAI** in sickness and in health. We are vessels in the hands of **God**. We are faithful servants, instruments of blessing, vessels of honor in the hands of **Ha'Shem**. If **God** wants us to continue to serve **Him** in sickness, so be it. We will serve **Him** to the best of our ability.¹⁰²

Moses' generation did not see the Land before dying (1:35-36), but Moses got the chance to see it from afar (see [Gj - The Death of Moses](#)). Go up to the top of Mount Pisgah, look around to the west and the north and the south and the east, and see with your eyes - for you will not cross over this Jordan” (3:27). In fact, **Moses' death** is not recorded until **Chapter 34**, so that the whole book of **Deuteronomy**, like book-ends, is framed between the announcement of **Moshe's** impending death and the announcement of **his** actual death.¹⁰³

Also, and almost incredibly, **the LORD** will redeem **His** words to **Moses**. Following **his** death, **Moshe**, with **his** glorified body, will awaken inside **the Land** of Promise, next to **Elijah** and **Messiah**, in full view of **Yeshua's** closest **apostles** (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ, to see link click Gb - Jesus took Peter, James and John Up a High Mountain where He was Transfigured**).¹⁰⁴

With all possibility of **Moshe** crossing **the Jordan** removed, the words of **the LORD** returned to **Joshua**. **But commission Joshua, and encourage and strengthen him**, a task for which **Moses himself** would require great strength and graciousness, for it was not easy to pass on the office of command to a younger and less experienced man. **For he will cross over before this people, and he will enable them to inherit the land that you will see. So, we stayed in the valley opposite Beth-peor, and from there they** proceeded to the plains of Mo'ab (**3:28-29**).

At the end of this historical overview, everything was in place for the conquest of Canaan. **Moshe** had commissioned **Joshua**, **the people** were located at **Beth Peor** (about a day's journey from **the Promised Land**), and **Moses** had stirred up **the people's** remembrance of **their** failures, and **God's** rich blessing on **them**. Now, **Isra'el** needed to look ahead, taking to heart **ADONAI's** surpassing character and abundant intervention on **her** behalf.¹⁰⁵

*Dear Great and Awesome **Father**, **You** are so merciful and forgiving - yet also just when **You discipline Your** children. We are humbled that **Your discipline** is always fair, never harsh. **Because ADONAI disciplines the one He loves and punishes every son He accepts" (Hebrews 12:6)**. Praise **You** that **You** use **discipline** in a positive way for our good, to train us to be purer. **Now all discipline seems painful at the moment - not joyful. But later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it (Hebrews 12:11)**. We love **You** and want to learn by **Your discipline** so that we please **You** more. **Your** love for us is Awesome! In **Your** holy **Son's** name and power of resurrection. Amen.*