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The Death of Moses

34: 1-12

The death of Moses DIG: What in Moshe's relationship with YHVH made Moses unique? What did it mean emotionally and spiritually to see the Promised Land? Why did God bury Moshe? Why do you think Jude wrote about it? How do you respond to the death of Moses compared to the death of Jacob (Genesis 50:3)?

REFLECT: What would it mean to you to see the fulfillment of your life's work before your very eyes? What does it mean to know God face-to-face? Do you know God, at least partially, this way? How did this happen? How can you receive the "spirit of wisdom" like Joshua? What would you like to do for ADONAI?

On the day Moses died, he delivered his final blessing and then ascended Mount Nebo to view the Land of Promise from afar.

This last chapter was probably written by **Joshua** under the inspiration of **the Ruach Ha'Kodesh**. It is especially touching to see how **God** takes special care of **Moses**. **Precious in the sight of ADONAI is the death of His kedoshim (Psalm 116:15)**. **He** allowed **Moshe to see the Promised Land**. It wasn't merely a token glimpse, but a panoramic miracle. It is here that **the LORD** performed the last miracle in **Deuteronomy**, and **He** performs it for **Moshe** personally. **God** had decreed that **Moses** would not enter **the Land**. But in this last chapter, **YHVH** gives **Moshe** a complete tour of the Land. The view of the entire **Land** could only be a miracle, because there was no way **Moshe** could have seen **the western sea** from **Mount Nebo**.



Dear Heavenly **Father**, Praise **You** that death is not something to be feared. Rather it is something to be looked forward to, as a child looks forward to a birthday party. It will be a time of great celebration with all tears and pains gone. **He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more. Nor shall there be mourning or crying or pain any longer, for the former things have passed away (Revelation 21:4)**. What rejoicing there will be! I love **You** and look forward to worshipping and praising **You** forever in heaven! In **Yeshua's** holy name and **His** power of resurrection. Amen

Moses viewing of the Promised Land (34:1-4): Then Moses went up from the plains of Mo'ab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, some 2,600 feet above sea level, which is opposite Jericho. **ADONAI** showed him all the Land - Gilead to Dan, and all of Naphtali, the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the western sea, the Negev and the plain of the valley of Jericho the city of palm trees, as far as Zoar. Then **ADONAI** said to him, "This is the land that I swore to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob saying, 'I will give it to your seed.' I let you see it with your eyes, but you will not cross over there" (33:1-4). **God** gave **Moshe** the supernatural ability to view the whole **Land**, from **Naphtali** to the north, **Ephraim** and **Manasseh** in the central area, and **Judah**, the Negev, and Zoar in the south. **ADONAI** assured **Moses** that **He** would keep **His** covenant with **Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**, and give **Isra'el** the Promised **Land**.⁷¹¹

The death of Moshe and the succession of Joshua (34:5-9): The reader has been well prepared for this final description of **the death of Moshe** by some seven references in advance (1:37, 3:23-29, 31:2, 14, 16, 27-29, 32:48-52). After viewing **the Land**, **Moses died** and **ADONAI**, and **Michael the archangel**, buried **him** on **Mount Nebo** in a grave no one could ever locate or identify (see the commentary on [Jude Ao - Michael Disputed with the Devil](#)). So, **Moses, the**

servant of ADONAI, died there in the land of Mo'ab, as was from the mouth of ADONAI. Then He buried him in the valley in the land of Mo'ab, opposite Beth-peor - but no one knows of his burial place to this day. Moses was 120 years old when he died. Moshe's death was in accordance with **YHVH's** intentions for **him**, but not the result of any health problems. **He** was still physically vigorous. **His eye was not dim nor his vigor gone**, which is a Near Eastern idiom to describe a person's physical condition.⁷¹² And as the **Bnei-Yisrael** had done for **Aaron (Numbers 20:29)**, they wept for **Moses in the plains of Mo'ab thirty days. Then the days of weeping and mourning for Moses were ended (34:5-8).**

Moshe died the servant of ADONAI, and that should be the goal of every believer. **Precious in the sight of ADONAI is the death of His kedoshim (Psalm 116:15)**, and therefore **He** will not permit **it** to happen by accident, unless the believer is rebelling against **God's** will. **All the days** that **YHVH** has **ordained for [us] were written in the book of Life** before we were even born (**Psalm 139:16 NIV**).⁷¹³ Therefore, we can rest easy that **the Lord** is in control.

Now Joshua son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom (Isaiah 11:2), for Moses had laid his hands on him. So Bnei-Yisrael listened to him and did just as ADONAI had commanded Moses (34:9). Years earlier, when **Moshe laid hands on Joshua (Numbers 27:15-23)**, his actions symbolized the transferal of covenantal authority to **Joshua**, even though **Joshua** would not exercise that authority for a long time. Now, with **the death of Moses, the Israelites** would look to **Joshua** as **their new, God** ordained, leader.⁷¹⁴

The Epitaph of Moses (34:10-12): The book of **Deuteronomy** closes with an affirmation of **Moshe's** uniqueness. **There has not risen again a prophet in Isra'el like Moses, whom ADONAI knew face to face, with all the signs and wonders God sent him to do in the land of Egypt - to Pharaoh, all his servants, and all his land - by the strong hand and great awe that Moses did in the sight of all Isra'el (33:10-12).** This statement does not mean that no true **prophet** or powerful prophets had arisen since **Moshe's death**; rather, no prophet had arisen since the time of **Moses** who had enjoyed the intimacy with **YHVH** that **Moshe** experienced.

Nevertheless, **the Israelites** waited for **God** to raise up **a prophet like Moses** (see **Dk - A Prophet Like Moses**). Thus, the book ends on a prophetic note, looking forward to the day when **ADONAI will raise up for you a prophet like**

Moses from among the Israelites, from their own kinsmen. They were to pay attention to him (18:15). That day finally arrived when **Yeshua Messiah** came as a **Servant**, but also as the very **Son of God**, surpassing even **Moses himself** (see the commentary on **Hebrews Ao - The Superiority of Messiah to Moses**). **He** offered to take **Isra'el** into a new era, fulfilling the prophecy of **Jeremiah** (see the commentary on **Jeremiah Eo - I Will Make a New Covenant with the People of Isra'el**). **The Israelites** culminated centuries of rebellion by rejecting that gracious offer. But **the Song of Moses** still points forward to the day when that offer will be accepted and **YHVH** will **heal** and **avenge His people** (see **Fw - The Song of Moses: The vengeance of ADONAI against His adversaries**).⁷¹⁵

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 Gb - Jesus took Peter, James and John Up a High Mountain where He was Transfigured**).

Though the grace of **God** is evident throughout our whole lives as believers, it is especially so when we come to **die**. Faith has its great work to do at the last, to help believers finish well, to **die to the Lord**, so as to honor **Him**, by patience, hope and joy - so as to leave a witness behind them of the truth of **God's** Word and the excellency of **His** ways. **God** is greatly glorified when **His people** leave this world with **their** flag flying at full mast. If anyone should **die** triumphantly it should be the believer. When **the Ruach** triumphs over the flesh, when this world is consciously and gladly left behind for heaven, when there's anticipation in the soul and the glory in the eyes as we enter into the presence of **the Lord** - then we're **dying** as a pleasing aroma unto **Him**.

Haftarah v'Zot haB'rachah: Y'hoshua (Joshua) 1:1-18 (A); 1:1-9 (S)
(see Af - Parashah)

This chapter breaks up into three sections: First, **ADONAI** speaks to **Joshua (1:1-9)**, **Joshua** then turns around and speaks to **the nation (1:10-15)**. We can see here a solid principle of leadership: to lead others you must first be *following God*. Thus, effective leadership is *following God and leading others in doing the same*. **Joshua** was following **God** and leading the nation to follow **Him**. Are you

primarily a leader or a follower? Who do you follow? Where are you going? Who do you lead and where are you leading them? In the last section, **Isra'el** responds to **Joshua** by committing to follow **him** as the way of following **God (1:16-18)**. How do **the people's** assessment of **their** own degree of obedience compare to reality (**Joshua 1:7** and **Deuteronomy 31:27**). What is your assessment of **your** own degree of obedience in being committed to follow **Messiah Yeshua** as **the Way (Acts 9:2)** of following **YHVH**? How does that assessment compare to reality? Ask **Yeshua** to show you one area where **He** wants you to follow **Him** more obediently for the glory of **the Father** . . . and the good of you!

B'rit Chadashah suggested readings for Parashah v'Zot haB'rachah:

Mattityahu (Matthew) 17:1-9; Mark 9:2-10; Luke 9:28-36;
Y'hudah (Jude) 3-4, 8-10; and Revelation 21:9 to 22:5.

The message of Torah expands to TaNaKh and its renewal in the B'rit Chadashah. **Joshua** continues **Moshe's** journey to inherit the Promised Land. In this passage, the faithful behold **the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God (Revelation 21:9-10)**. **Moses'** forty-day experience on the Mountain becomes the holy **City's** thousand-year reign as one unending, glory-filled, Shabbat. With the Adversary bound, **the curse** and the night end (**Revelation 21:25, 22:3** and **5**). **The City's** inhabitants require neither **lamp** by night or **sun** by day, because The Sh'khinah glory will provide all **the light** necessary for all eternity. **They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for ADONAI Elohim will shine on them. And they shall reign forever and ever (Revelation 22:5a)!** Most incredibly, **no longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in the City and His servants shall serve Him. They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads (Revelation 22:4)**. Thus, those in **Yerushalayim** will live in glorious, luminous, proximity to **the Presence** of our holy **God**.⁷¹⁶

At the end of the five books of Moshe,
the rabbis have inserted the following words at the end of the text:

Hazak, hazak, v'nit'chazek!
Be strong, be strong, and let us be strengthened!