

C h a r l e s A . C l o u g h
D e u t e r o n o m y S e r i e s 2 0 0 9 - 2 0 1 2
Fellowship Chapel, Jarrettsville, MD

Lesson 73--Deut 34:1-12 The Death of Moses
7 February 2012

I. INTRODUCTION & REVIEW

1:1-5	Introduction to God's spokesman, the 1 st Prophet Moses
1:6-4:40	1st Exposition of the Torah = <i>motivation</i> to obey from (1) <u>past gracious actions</u> of Yahweh and (2) sovereign <u>destiny</u> of the nation (<u>future gracious actions</u> of Yahweh)
4:41-49	Editorial comment on context of 2 nd Exposition of the Torah
5:1-26:19	2nd Exposition of the Torah = <i>proper response</i> to Yahweh in heart and soul
27:1-29:1	3rd Exposition of the Torah = <i>inauguration of the covenant</i> in the land
29:2-30:20	4th Exposition of the Torah = prophetic fore view of <i>covenant performance</i>
	29:2-29:29 Israel's past, present and (near) future
	30:1-20 Moses' closing challenge
31:1-34:12	Handover procedures from Moses to Joshua and the new generation
	31:1- 29 Inauguration of Joshua
	32:1-43 The Prophetic Anthem of Israel--the investiture of the Covenant witnesses
	33:1-29 The Blessing of Moses on Tribes of Israel
34:1-12	The Death of Moses
	34:1-4 The End of Moses' ministry
	34:5-9 The Unique Death of Moses & the Spiritual Succession of Joshua
	34:10-12 The Epitaph of Moses

Again a reminder that this concluding session in chapters 31-34 is set within a cosmology and a philosophy of history that collides with all the speculations of unbelief. *No reconciliation possible without abandoning the authority of God's Word, or evoking a complete repentance from the perverted natural and anthropological histories of our secular education.*

1. In chapter 31 we have the observation of the [theophany] of God publicly appearing to Moses and Joshua and [dictating] the national anthem of Israel (31:14-21).
2. In chapter 32 we have that song's lawsuit content containing unique features such as the [investiture] of angelic agencies involved in the geophysical realm with a [witnessing] task to the Sinai Contract and revelation of the ultimate end of history for Israel and the nations of the world.
3. In chapter 33 we have Moses' supernatural blessing that includes specific tribal features and resulting behavior after Moses dies along with a description of the giving of the Law on Mt. Sinai that challenges [naturalistic] empiricism.

II. THE END OF MOSES' MINISTRY (34:1-4)
34:1 Moses went up. . .to Mount Nebo

Moses has completed his ministry obligations and does the last thing the Lord told him to do: visually survey the land promised to Israel (**Deut. 3:27; 32:48-50**).

34:2 Yahweh showed him all the land

Counterclockwise "scan" that most likely was supernaturally enabled.

Dan. . . western sea

34:3 Zoar

to Moses' south

34:4 land which I swore to give Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. . .

Abrahamic covenant is the foundation of Israel: _[land], _[seed], _[worldwide]_ blessing.

(1) Real historic geography, not a metaphor of "spiritual blessing"

(2) Large specific area involved, not a few cities here and there

(3) Faithfulness of Yahweh to this previous contract and the demand for loyalty to Him (**Deut. 1:8; 6:10; 9:5, 27; 29:13; 30:20**)

caused you to see it with your eyes, but you shall not cross over

Perhaps allusion to the supernaturalness of this experience.

Discipline of a believer central in this passage.

Num 20:1-13 the Meribah incident involved a typology (analog) of Jesus Christ providing the water of eternal life that Moses messed up in a moment of anger. Lord told Moses to speak to the rock, not hit it.

Neh. 9:15 divine logistical supernatural grace

Num 20:10,12 rebels. . . we bring water. . . did not believe Me

Moses uses his discipline as a lesson for Israel

- **Deut. 1:35-27** Moses includes himself in the rebellious 1st generation.
- **Deut 3:23-28** Moses reveals his pleading with the Lord about this discipline in his life.
- **Deut. 4:21-24** If Yahweh did this to Moses, He could do the _[same]_ to the rest of the nation.

But even here the Lord is gracious to Moses to give him a special "guided tour" to see what he was missing out on.

Principle: God can prematurely end a believer's life due to discipline, but that believer does NOT lose his or her salvation.

III. THE UNIQUE DEATH OF MOSES AND THE SPIRITUAL SUCCESSION OF JOSHUA (34:5-9)

34:5 died. . . according to the word of Yahweh

Moses death was unique in human history

(1) fulfillment of Bible prophecy

34:6 He buried him in a valley in the land of Moab. . . but no one knows his grave. . .

(2) divinely-conducted burial (cf. **Jude 1:9** -- a high-order angelic conflict occurred between Michael an archangel and Satan!!)

NIV interprets this verse as merely referring to a human buried as the NIV translators tend to think more like contemporary scholars than the straightforward interpretation of the text.

Clearly if humans buried him, why isn't the grave site known?

34:7 120 years old. . . eyes not dim. . . natural vigor diminished . . .

(3) Moses didn't die of "old age"

Moses like Elijah (cf. **2 Kings 2:9-11**) had special deaths and reappear in **Matt. 17:1-4** . Some think the two witnesses in **Rev. 11:3-13** are Moses and Elijah.

Here again we encounter a view of reality utterly unlike that imagined by post-Enlightenment unbelief. But notice the inter-testament] consistency, and remember the two points about the uniqueness of Israel

(1) [Albright] [Israel unique in human history because of its contract with God]

(2) [Kaufmann] [Israel unique in human history because of its coherent line of prophets stretching over a millennium of time]

There is consistency in the Bible from early Old Testament to the last of the New Testament on even fine details like the burial of Moses!

34:8 wept for Moses. . .thirty days

Normal mourning was for a week.

34:9 Joshua. . .full of the spirit of wisdom. . .laid hands. . .children of Israel heeded him

Work of the Holy Spirit in the OT was different than in the Church age.

His "indwelling" was neither permanent nor universal.

His "indwelling" was involved with natural skills like carpentry, metal working, and political skills.

Moses prophetically identified Joshua's giftedness:

Deut 31:7-8 Moses commissioned Joshua publicly

Deut 31:14-15 Theophany at the Tabernacle

IV. THE EPITAPH OF MOSES (34:10-12)

34:10 since then. . .

Words of last editor of this book--not a thousand years later because other notices clearly were far closer to the events of Deuteronomy (e.g., **3:11**).

a prophet like Moses. . .face-to-face

Cf **Exod. 33:9-23 !!**

34:11 in the land of Egypt

This has to be a time of national upheaval in ancient Egypt so there have been major debates on synchronizing Egyptian and Israelite chronologies.

34:12 in the sight of all Israel

Public miracles, not magic tricks done before one or two people.

Looking forward to the prophet like Moses (18:18-19):

from your brethren. . .

Jewish line of descent, not Gentile.

put words in his mouth

Doctrines of [revelation] and [inspiration] implied here which clash with the entire Enlightenment neo-pagan tradition that ideas originate only in [human minds] and that all literature suffers from corrupted textual transmission [equally].

whoever will not hear My words which he speaks in My name

Prophet's words = God's words

Here is background for New Testament claims like those of John: **1 John 2:3-5**.

I will require it of him

Background for passages like **John 3:16-21,36**.

V. CONCLUSION

Our lives end according to God's design, but His work continues!