



Message 10-7-17
Vezot Haberachah-And This is the Blessing
Deuteronomy 33:1-34:12
Joshua 1:1-18
Jude 1:9

Introduction

After concluding his final blessing on Israel, Moses ascends Mount Nebo. Before dying, he gazes on the Promised Land as the Lord shows Him the land He had promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In it he sees Israel and the way it will shape the history of all humanity. Then he dies by the hand of God, at the age of 120 years, "his eyes...undimmed and his vigor unabated." A true man of God, whom God knew face to face.

Deuteronomy 34:5-12

5 So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the **word** of the LORD. ⁶ And He buried him in the valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth-peor; but no man knows his burial place to this day. ⁷ Although Moses was one hundred and twenty years old when he died, his eye was not dim, nor his vigor abated. ⁸ So the sons of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days; then the days of weeping *and* mourning for Moses came to an end. ⁹ Now Joshua the son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him; and the sons of Israel listened to him and did as the LORD had commanded Moses. ¹⁰ Since that time no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, ¹¹ for all the signs and wonders which the LORD sent him to perform in the land of Egypt against Pharaoh, all his servants, and all his land, ¹² and for all the mighty power and for all the great terror which Moses performed in the sight of all Israel. (NAU)

<06310> פֶּה *peh* (804d)

Meaning: *mouth*

In many ways, this is a sad ending to the life of a servant of God. Perhaps, even more so, a friend of God with whom God spoke face to face meaning He spoke clearly to Moses unlike how He spoke to others through prophecy, parables, etc. There is always disagreement over whether Moses really died because he, along with Elijah, appear of the Mount of Transfiguration to talk to Yeshua. It is well known that Elijah was taken alive to heaven and many believe that Moses may also have gone through the same thing. Yet, in reading this passage of Scripture which describes the death of Moses by God, it is very clear that according to the word of God, which in this passage is the Hebrew word

peh, which translates as mouth. So, could the assumption be made that God took Moses' life or simply confirmed that Moses' time had come because he was the last of the generation that had come out of Egypt that had to die before the Children of Israel could enter the Promised Land. Moses disobeyed God one time when he was told to speak to the rock to bring water forth for the complaining Children of Israel. Instead, he became angry with the people and in a fit of anger struck the rock at least twice. For this he was forbidden to enter the Promised Land and while we might think this was a harsh penalty it was consistent with the level God holds leaders to.

Moses is buried by God Himself and no one knows where he was buried. I believe it was because the people may have tried to turn the grave of Moses into a shrine where they would have worshipped Moses instead of the Creator. Many do this with famous rabbis in Ultra-Orthodox Judaism. They practice a form of kabbalah, Jewish Mysticism, where they go to the grave of a well-known rabbi and lay on the grave trying to connect with that rabbi's spirit. The same can be seen in some forms of Christianity where the worship of those called saints are worshipped. If God's angels refused to allow men to bow down to them and worship them why would God permit us to worship dead human beings rather than having a direct relationship with the Living God?

How many times do we see in one of the largest Christian denominations where the mother of our Messiah is given more honor than the Son of God? Try to justify anything that goes against the Torah and you are walking on very thin ice. There are some very obvious and distinct teachings in the Torah that one can try to justify transgressing but the end result is we need to keep in mind that one day we will be held accountable before the Almighty for what we have done in this life before we are allowed to enter into the next life. We are one bunch of confused people. Even when Moses walked with Israel and taught them the Torah first-hand just as the Lord had taught it to him, the people still came against Moses and the covenant. Remember, this is the nation that cried out to God to rescue them from slavery in Egypt and then they are given their freedom and they squander the opportunity because of their lack of faith. Are we any different? We would like to think we are but the truth is we are not and we are so similar it is uncanny but the old saying is: *"There is nothing new under the sun."*

Joshua 1:16-18

16 And they answered Joshua, "All that you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. ¹⁷ Just as we obeyed Moses in all things, so we will obey you. Only may the LORD your God be with you, as he was with Moses! ¹⁸ Whoever rebels against your commandment and disobeys your words, whatever you command him, shall be put to death. Only be strong and courageous." (ESV)

Here we are after the passing of Moses. Moses had finally reached the border of the Promised Land leading Israel there. He had fulfilled the promise God had made with Israel and his time was ending. We are in the final Torah Portion of this cycle and it is here that we now see a new leader taking over for Moses. We are told that despite his age he did not show any of the signs that go with someone who has reached this time in his life. While Moses did not live as long as others who came before him he had reached the age

of one hundred and twenty years old. Even in our day and age with all the miracle drugs and treatments we have the one thing we cannot beat is death. Though Moses was as healthy as a horse his time was at an end. It was time for him to move off stage and let someone else step in.

Joshua 5:13 One day, when Y'hoshua was there by Yericho, he raised his eyes and looked; and in front of him stood a man with his drawn sword in his hand. Y'hoshua went over to him and asked him, "Are you on our side or on the side of our enemies?" ¹⁴ "No," he replied, "but I am the commander of *ADONAI's* army; I have come just now." Y'hoshua fell down with his face to the ground and worshipped him, then asked, "What does my lord have to say to his servant?" ¹⁵ The commander of *ADONAI's* army answered Y'hoshua, "Take your sandals off your feet, because the place where you are standing is holy." And Y'hoshua did so. (CJB)

Now, it was Joshua's turn to lead Israel and take them into the Promised Land so they could conquer it and drive out the nations the Lord wanted out of there. Joshua was the leader of the army of Israel and was Moses' assistant, a place where he would learn what it would take to lead a nation. Joshua was by Jericho and saw before him a man with a drawn sword in His hand and Joshua wanted to know what side He was on. I am the commander of the Lord's army and when Joshua heard these words he fell down with his face to the ground and worshipped him. There was no correction on the part of this heavenly being to stop Joshua from what he was doing. In fact, many believe that was an appearance by Yeshua. It was not an angelic being because as we discussed before angels do not accept worship that belongs to God.

Reminiscent of Moses's encounter with God is the meeting between the commander of the Lord's army and Moses' encounter with God at the Burning Bush. The Spirit of God was moving in those days, much more than it is today. Today there are too many things that take a man's mind off the things of God. But when God wants someone to join Him He has His ways of accomplishing what it is He desires from His people.

Exodus 3:5 Then he said, "Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." (ESV)

As it was for Moses at the burning bush forty years earlier so it would be for Joshua as the Son of God, Yeshua, was meeting with Him as He had met with Moses. The eternal God, the Almighty God, the Son as commander of the Lord's Host. Joshua knew he was in the presence of the Holy One, come as the Son – Yeshua! As Moses' student, he would know all about Moses' encounter with God at the burning bush and see in the request of the Son of God the same holy encounter that his teacher Moses had. This was another confirmation that Joshua was the chosen one to follow Moses as the new leader of Israel who would take them into the Promised Land. Interestingly, Joshua's Hebrew name Yehoshua, would be the same as the Messiah Yeshua. Another link in the chain giving us some insight into why God chose Joshua as the successor to Moses. Who better than one of the two spies who went into the land and came back and encouraged the people to stand by Moses and trust in God. Who better to lead the people than the man who

served Moses for forty years and was there as he write the Torah down and knew what the covenant meant for Israel and its people.

Joshua 4:14 On that day the LORD exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel, and they stood in awe of him just as they had stood in awe of Moses, all the days of his life. (ESV)

On the day Moses, laid hands on Joshua and anointed him as the next leader of Israel he gave Joshua some of the spirit that was on him thereby showing Israel that this was the man God had chosen, not Moses. Moses had asked God to choose the next leader of Israel because he knew it was not his right to choose the leader and this is the proper way for the leader of God's people to be chosen. It should be God who chooses the leaders not people because we tend to make choices for the wrong reasons where God makes the right choices because he is, simply, right. That's all that needs to be said as because Moses had passed on some of his spirit to Joshua as the Lord had instructed him to the people respected Joshua as they had respected Moses. God had chosen Moses to bring the Torah to Israel and to teach them and guide them on their journey to the Promised Land. Joshua would bring the people into the Promised Land and help them to take possession of their inheritance that had been given to them before they had ever been created. God's promises transcend time and space and stand as an eternal covenant throughout the ages.

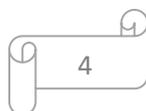
Jude 1:9

9 But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, "The Lord rebuke you." (ESV)

The archangel Michael fought against Satan, a former archangel over the body of Moses. His body belonged to God as he had come from God, brought forth for a purpose he had been given from the beginning. We all have a purpose in life if we submit ourselves to the will of our Creator and allow Him to lead us by His *Ruach HaKodesh* and our faith in the redemption given to us by His Son the Messiah Yeshua. Moses' body did not belong to Satan. It belonged to God. Moses was meant to rest with his Creator who had guided him throughout his life. I wonder if Moses ever came to understand why he spent 40 years in the home of Pharaoh being taught the things he would need to be part of the royal family but in reality, he was being trained for the task God would lay before him at the burning bush.

At first Moses argued with God against the calling but finally had to accept the task being laid before him because you cannot win an argument with God. He was the man for that time and place and Israel was the better because of him and even though he was barred from going into the Promised Land because he had disobeyed God we know the Almighty relented and many years later he would stand before Yeshua with Elijah, two great servants of the Holy One of Israel. They would stand before their King as we will also do one day. Is there any better company we can keep?

I will close the last Torah Parashah with this:



Torah Man says: “There has never been a statue erected to the memory of someone who left well enough alone.”

Blessings in Messiah Yeshua,

Mordecai Silver
Rabbi, Etz Chayim-Tree of Life Messianic Congregation

TORAH: LEARN IT, LOVE IT, LIVE IT AS YESHUA DID! PSALM 119. If you are not learning Torah, we invite you to attend Judaic Studies Institute, a Distance Learning Institute for Yeshua based Judaic Studies. Drop us a line at student.support@isi-edu.org for more information. You can earn a certificate or diploma and take courses to help you grow in your understanding.



**etZ
chayim**
Tree of Life Messianic Ministries

Rabbi Mordecai Silver, Ph.D.

Tel: (866) 874-7250
Fax: (866) 800-2390
www.etz-chayim.org
tolmm@etz-chayim.org

P.O.Box 467, Organ, New Mexico, 88052

