

Text: Dt 34.1-16**THEOLOGICAL OUTLINE OF DEUTERONOMY¹**

1. **Consider:** a review of God's faithfulness (1.6–4.40)
2. **Covenant:** an exposition of the law (5–26)
3. **Commence:** preparations for renewing the covenant (27.1–28.68)
4. **Commit:** an exhortation to obedience (29.2–30.20)

We've concluded the major addresses of Moses. Here is an outline of the rest of the book:

1. Leadership Transition (31)
2. The Song of Moses (32)
3. The Blessing of Moses (33) [Last Week]
4. **The Death of Moses (34)**

We come at last the conclusion of Deuteronomy. The last chapter is an epitaph. Most conservatives think this section was written by Joshua.

I. The circumstances of Moses' death (1-8)

- Obedience to God's command (1a, see 32.48-52)

"Moses knew what was coming, for death is an appointment (Heb. 9:27), not an accident."²

- Vision of the promised land (1b-3)

"The vista before him is described in a counterclockwise direction (vv. 1b–3)—Gilead, just to the north; Dan, a hundred miles to the north; Naphtali, eighty to a hundred miles to the northwest; Ephraim and Manasseh, to the northwest; Judah to the west and southwest as far as the western (that is, Mediterranean) sea; the Negev desert to the southwest; and everything from Jericho to Zoar (that is, the entire length of the Dead Sea), to the immediate southwest and south. It is obvious that some of these place names are latter additions to the text

¹ Adapted from an outline in Lawrence O Richards, *The Bible Readers Companion*, electronic ed. (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1991), 117.

² Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Equipped: Acquiring the Tools for Spiritual Success*, BE Commentary Series (Colorado Springs, CO: Chariot Victor Pub., 1999), 196.

(e.g., Dan, Naphtali, Ephraim, Manasseh, Judah) inasmuch as they would not have been assigned to these sites until after the conquest, some years following Moses' death."³

- Reaffirmation of the Abrahamic covenant (4)

"In line with the original geographical parameters of the land as described to Abraham — 'from the river of Egypt [i.e., the Wadi el-Arish] to the great river, the Euphrates' (Gen 15:18)—the reaffirmation to Moses included a territory of more than four hundred miles from southwest to northeast and on both sides of the Jordan. The only time in Old Testament history that this ideal ever reached realization was in the heyday of the United Monarchy under David and Solomon (cf. 2 Sam 10:19; 1 Kgs 4:24). Ezekiel's eschatological vision also anticipated a day when the promise to Abraham would find a geographical fulfillment of such a vast extent (Ezek 47:13–48:29)."⁴

- Moses' death and burial (5-6)

Note: Moses is one of only a few men designated "servant of the Lord" in the Bible.

Moses' burial by the Lord is hidden from the nation:

1. To prevent Israel from taking his body into the land
2. To prevent Israel from making a shrine of his burial place

Jude 9 relates that Satan disputed over the body of Moses with Michael, no doubt attempting to thwart God's purposes in the secret burial.

- Moses' vigour (7)

Moses died at 120 years old. In 1 Chr 6.1-3, Moses lineage is denoted

1. Levi
2. Kohath
3. Amram
4. Moses

³ Eugene H. Merrill, *Deuteronomy*, The New American Commentary, v. 4 (Nashville, Tenn.: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 452.

⁴ Merrill, 452.

Amram lived to be 137 years old (Ex 6.20)

Just 400 years marked the sojourn of Israel in Egypt. This means that all the people of Moses' line lived exceptionally long lives (unless there are names missing from the genealogy [unlikely]).

In other words, Moses could have led Israel for many more years according to physical ability.

“he did not fail to enter Canaan because he died, but he died because he failed to enter Canaan.”⁵

- Israel mourns thirty days (8)

II. The commencement of Joshua's leadership (9)

- Joshua apparently did not accompany Moses on the climb up Mt. Nebo
- Joshua assumed the mantle of leadership when Moses departed, and Israel followed him (laying on of hands – Num 27.18)

III. The evaluation of Moses' ministry (10-12)

- No prophet like Moses (10)
- No one with signs like Moses (11-12 – date uncertain, but not eclipsed by Elijah and Elisha)

Conclusion:

Moses finally did arrive in the land on the Mount of Transfiguration (Mt 17.1-3; Lk 9.28-31). Interestingly, the subject of his conversation with the Lord was about the Lord's decease:

Lk 9.30-31 And behold, two men were talking with Him; and they were Moses and Elijah,³¹ who, appearing in glory, were speaking of His departure which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

“departure” = Gk. *exodos*

“The only perfect example is Jesus Christ, but when we read about Moses, he reminds us of our Lord and encourages us to become more like our Savior in all things.”⁶

⁵ Merrill, 454.

⁶ Wiersbe, *Be Equipped*, 199.