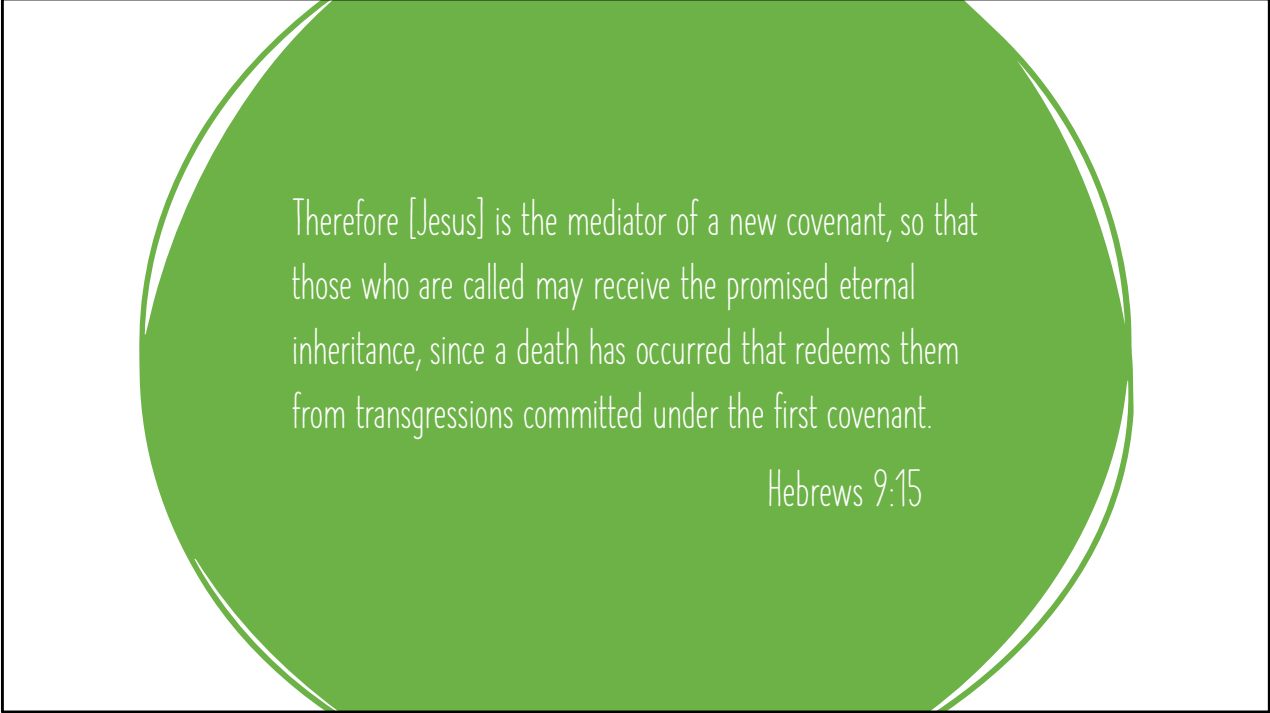


JESUS: MEDIATOR  
OF A  
NEW COVENANT

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Therefore [Jesus] is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from transgressions committed under the first covenant.

Hebrews 9:15

We're all familiar with this verse. My argument tonight is that John is making the same claim through narrative, rather than through sermon or epistle.

## PREMISE: JESUS IS *THE* PROPHET

- Which prophet? - Deut. 18:15-19. A prophet like Moses, in whose mouth God will put his words and require it of the people.
- The motif:
  - 1:19-23 - John is not the Prophet.
  - 6:1-15 - The people think Jesus is the Prophet because he gave them bread, like Moses.
  - 7:37-44 - The people think Jesus is the Prophet because he offered them water, like Moses.

- Before getting into my main argument, I want to establish one of many themes from the book of John. This one in particular is important to the argument.
- This is one motif among many in the Gospel of John
- My point in bringing up this motif is to show that John is overtly thinking of Jesus in terms of Moses. This lets us move forward to our thesis:

THESIS: THE UPPER  
ROOM DISCOURSE IS  
JESUS' "SPEECH ON THE  
PLAINS OF MOAB."

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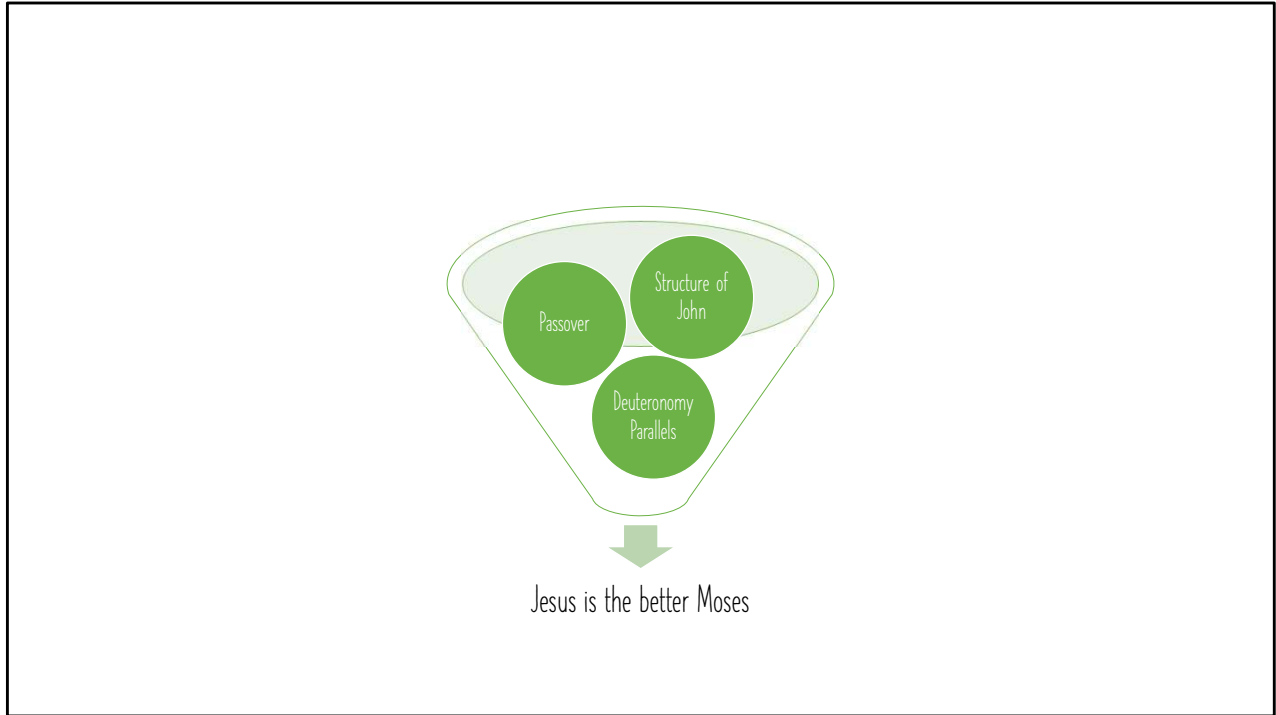
The book of Numbers ends with a recounting of the Israelites' journey through the wilderness, ending on the plains of Moab, followed by Moses' instructions on how to divide the land when they cross into it. Deuteronomy picks up here and recounts Moses' final words to the people of Israel before he dies and Joshua takes them into the land. Moses recounts their journeys and their rebellious tendencies, reminds them of the laws God has given them, warns them about their hearts, places a blessing and a curse before the people and urges them to choose life, but then prophesies that they will not do so before he gives them one final blessing and goes up the mountain with God to die.

In the Upper Room Discourse, Jesus gives his final instructions before he dies and sends the Holy Spirit to guide us.

It's important to note early on that John does not have one argument he is trying to prove, and he tends to make lots of points without explicitly tying them together. I am not arguing that seeing Jesus as the new Moses is John's central point. It's not. But it is one of the frameworks within which he accomplishes his purpose, namely, that we might believe in Jesus Christ.

John's writing is less a persuasive essay with tight logic and linear thoughts and more a symphony with several themes that he develops on their own and together with other

themes. He's not out to prove a point so much as he just wants us to see and love Jesus the way he does.  
So, let's sit back and enjoy the real beauty in what Christ accomplished in his ministry here on earth.



John's writing defies neat outlines (although I have one on the next slide), so in that spirit, rather than a three-point outline, I have three different things to look at, and hopefully by the end, we'll see that they all fit together to show that John is portraying Jesus as The Prophet, the new Moses, but better. The first is the structure of the book itself.

# OUTLINE OF JOHN

- I. Prologue: The Revelation of God and His Grace (1:1-18)
- II. Introduction: Transition from John to Jesus (1:19-51)
- III. Jesus' Ministry in Six Feasts (2:1-20:31)
  - A. 1<sup>st</sup> Passover (2:1-4:54)
  - B. A Feast of the Jews (5:1-47)
  - C. 2<sup>ND</sup> Passover (6:1-71)
  - D. Feast of Booths (7:1-10:21)
  - E. [Feast of Dedication (10:22-11:54)]
  - F. 3<sup>rd</sup> Passover (11:55-20:31)
- IV. Epilogue: A Commission and a Clarification (21:1-25)

John doesn't follow an outline so much as he follows themes. In his epistles, he keeps circling around and coming back to his points that we have an advocate, that God loves us and we ought to love our brothers, that there are false teachers afoot so watch out, etc.

In his gospel he starts with who Jesus is: he is the Word who has always been. He is the very revelation of God himself. He is the one created all things.

From there he introduces us to John the Forerunner and a few of Jesus' disciples.

From this point until nearly the end of the book, John uses the Jewish festivals to highlight different themes in Christ's life and message.

- I would love to spend time going through each of the feasts and showing all the parallels, but we already aren't going to have enough time for what we're doing.

- However, two quick examples

- Among many other things, the Feast of Booths had very strong ties with the reading of the Torah. Moses commanded that it be

read every seventh year at this feast (Deut. 31:10-13). So, in this section, most of what Jesus has to say serves to show how ignorant the Jews are of the Law. It's an ironic point, because this is the time of year that they make a



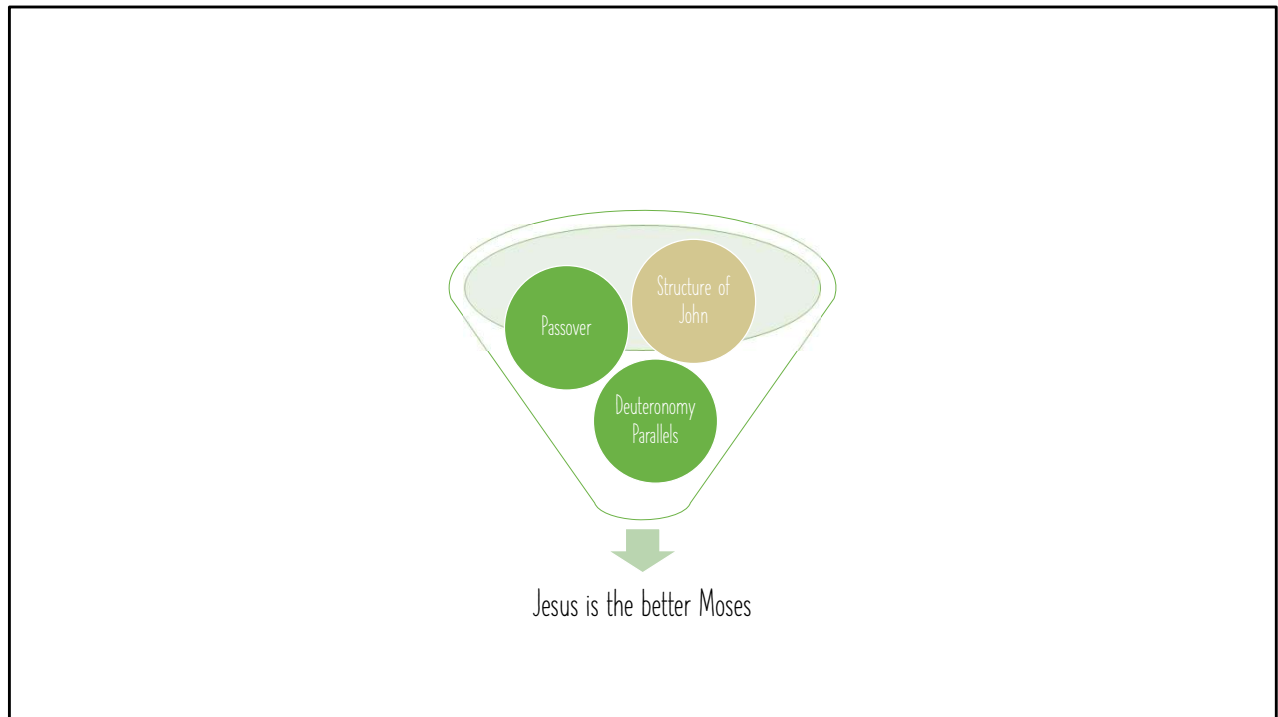
special point of reading it.

- I think (but can't prove) that the "feast of the Jews" in chapter 5 is the Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost. It's the other of the three

feasts commanded of all Jews to gather together. In Leviticus 23, Moses only issues one command that isn't specifically how to celebrate a feast, and that is not to reap their fields up to the edge, and it's right after the instructions for this feast. Basically, this feast is a reminder to take care of the poor among them. In John 5, Jesus heals the man who had been overlooked for thirty-eight years.

- The feast we are most concerned with tonight is the Passover, because that is the feast which frames the Upper Room Discourse.

At the end of the book, John has something of an epilogue, giving instruction to the apostles, and specifically Peter, on how to lead the church.



- So we can see that John structures his gospel around the festivals, but what does that have to do with Jesus' relation to Moses?
- John frames his story around the feasts, but in particular, he structures it around the Passover. I say this because three of the six feasts in John are Passovers.
- This is also the feast we are most concerned with tonight, because that is the feast which frames the Upper Room Discourse.

PASSOVER  
THROUGH THE  
OLD TESTAMENT

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# PASSOVER IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

- Only 6 Passovers observed in the whole Old Testament: 3 in the Hexateuch; 3 in Kings/Chronicles and Ezra.
- First three progress toward becoming the people of God in the land
- Second three demonstrate a progressive return to the LORD

- There are six Passovers in the OT, but if we're thinking in terms of Moses, like I think John is, then only the first three matter. We'll look at a really brief summary of all six, but then we'll focus in on the ones involving Moses.

### 1<sup>st</sup> Passover

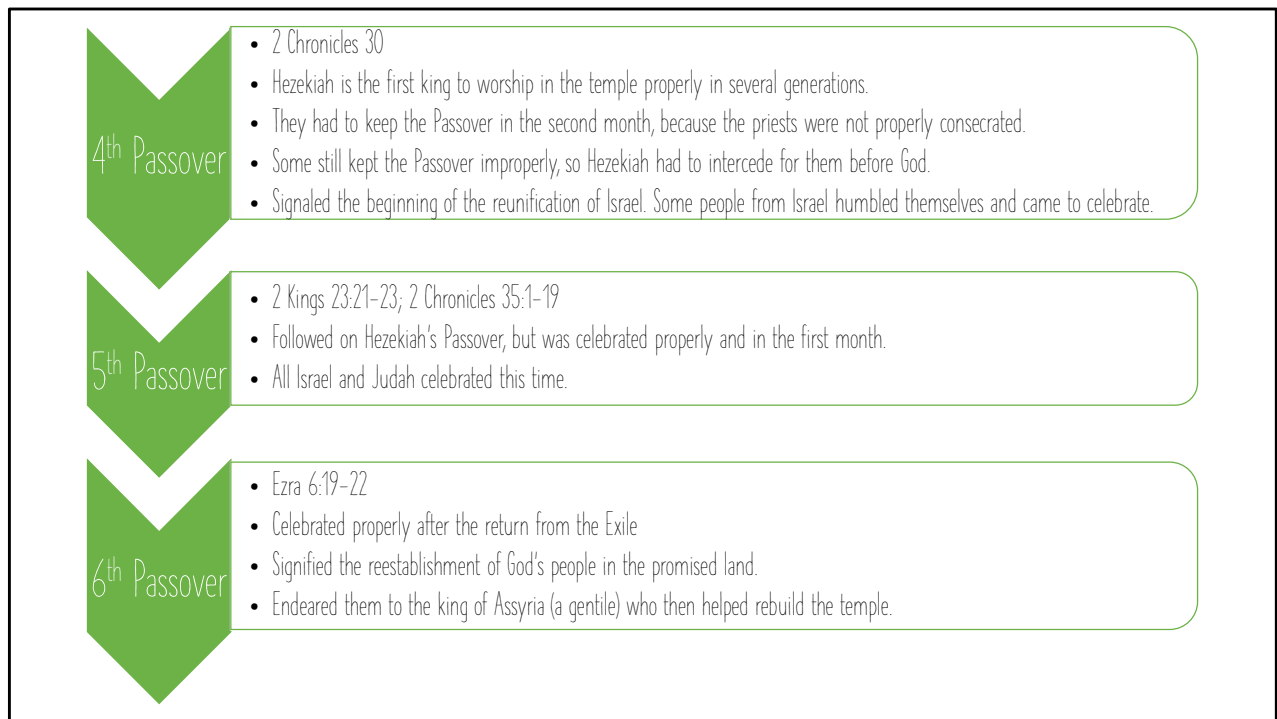
- Exodus 11:1-13:16
- Separates Israel from Egypt and establishes Yahweh as their God rather than the Egyptian gods.
- Gave possession of firstborn to God. Animals could be sacrificed; sons had to be redeemed.
- Signifies salvation by faith.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Passover

- Numbers 9:1-14
- Celebrated in the wilderness.
- Made provision for those who were unclean at the time of the Passover.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Passover

- Joshua 5:10-12
- First Passover in the land, eaten from the produce of the land.
- Ended the provision of Manna, because God had fulfilled his promise to bring them into the land flowing with milk and honey
- Immediately preceded by Moses' re-giving of the Law...



We won't spend so much time on these last three, because, as we've argued, John seems more concerned with the parallels with Moses.

We will look at some parallels between the first three Old Testament Passovers and the three Passovers in John's gospel.

# PASSOVERS IN JOHN AND THE HEXATEUCH

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## Hexateuch

- 1<sup>st</sup> Passover
  - Preceded by water turned to blood, bringing death (Ex. 7:14-25)
  - Establishment of God's people, Israel, through water (Ex. 14)
- God kills the king's son (Ex. 13:29-30)
- Those who were God's acted in faith, and God's judgment passed over them (Ex. 12:7-13)

## John

- 1<sup>st</sup> Passover
  - Preceded by water turned to wine, bringing joyful celebration (John 2:1-11)
  - Entrance into God's kingdom through water *and* Spirit (John. 3:5)
  - Jesus saves an official's son from death (John 4:46-54)
  - Jesus' disciples believed him (John 2:11); Judgment passes over those who believe Jesus' word (John 3:14-16, 31-36)

## PASSOVERS IN JOHN AND THE HEXATEUCH

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### Hexateuch

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Passover
  - Kept in the wilderness after God sustained them with manna and water for a whole year (Num. 9:1-5).

### John

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Passover
  - Jesus offers himself as the bread of life and promises those who come to him will never hunger or thirst. Those who eat this bread will never die (John 6:25-59).



## PASSOVERS IN JOHN AND THE HEXATEUCH

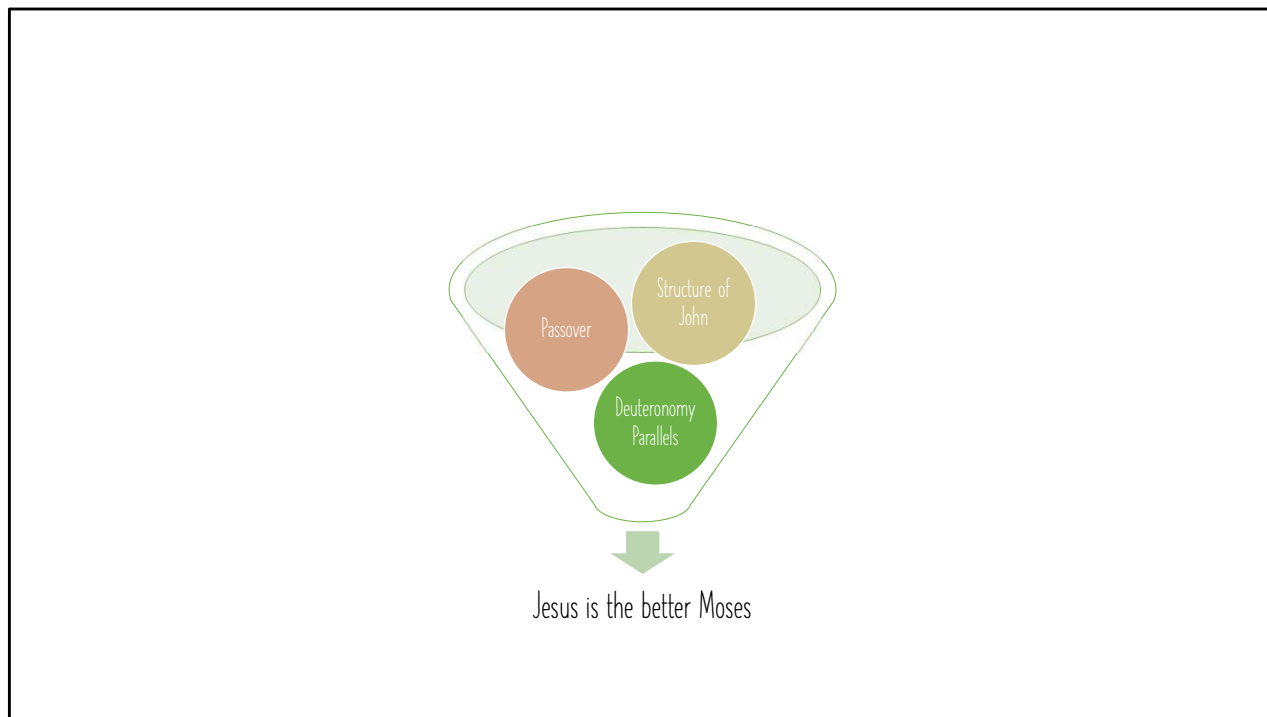
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### Hexateuch

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Passover
  - Celebrated under Joshua after they crossed into the land, marking the fulfillment of God's promise to bring them into the land (Josh. 5:10-12).
  - Immediately preceded by Moses' speech in the wilderness and subsequent death (Deut. 1-34)

### John

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Passover
  - Jesus had kept his disciples until that point (John 17:12).
  - Immediately preceded by Jesus' discourse and subsequent death (John 13:1)



So we've looked at the structure of John and some parallels between the Passovers in the Hexateuch and the Passovers in John. John does not make the comparison explicit, but I don't think it's that far of a stretch to see them this way. The Passover is clearly important to John in more ways than Jesus' death on the cross, though that's certainly the most important aspect. I think John really may have had some of these parallels in the back of his head when he was writing.

Because of the close parallels between the third Passover in the Hexateuch and the third Passover in John, I also draw a comparison between the events immediately preceding the Passover in Joshua and the events immediately preceding the Passover in John, and those events specifically include Moses' last words and Jesus' last words before their respective deaths.

As we look at several parallels between Deuteronomy and the Upper Room Discourse, I specifically want you to see the problems Moses raised and the answer Jesus provides to them.



SHORTCOMINGS IN DEUTERONOMY  
AND JESUS' ANSWER TO THEM

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# MOSES' CONCERNS IN HIS LAST ADDRESS



The people must obey if they are to live a life of blessing in the land (4:1, 40, 5:31-33, 6:1-3, 24-25, 7:12-16, 11:8-15, **26-32**, 28:1-68, 29:22-28, 30:15-19)



Moses could not go with the people into the land (1:37-38, 3:23-28, **4:21-22**, 31:1-2, 34:1-12)



Moses warned the people not to forget either what God had done for them or his commands to them (4:9-14, 23, 6:10-15, **8:1-20**, 11:18-21, 31:9-13, 31:21)



Moses warned them to follow God with their hearts, but also knew they could not (4:9; **5:29**; 6:5; 9:4-24; **10:12-22**, 11:13; 29:4; 30:1-10, 17-20; 31:21)



Moses warned them not to be afraid of their enemies as they went into the land (7:17-24; 9:1-3; 20:4; **31:1-8**, 23)

# JESUS' ANSWER TO MOSES' DILEMMA



We must abide in Christ if we are to have joy, and Christ prayed that the Father would keep us in him (15:1-17, 16:1-4, 17:11-15, 20-26)



Jesus was leaving them, but he would return, and they would rejoice (14:3, 18-19, 28-31; 16:5-7, 16-22, 28; 17:11-13, 24)



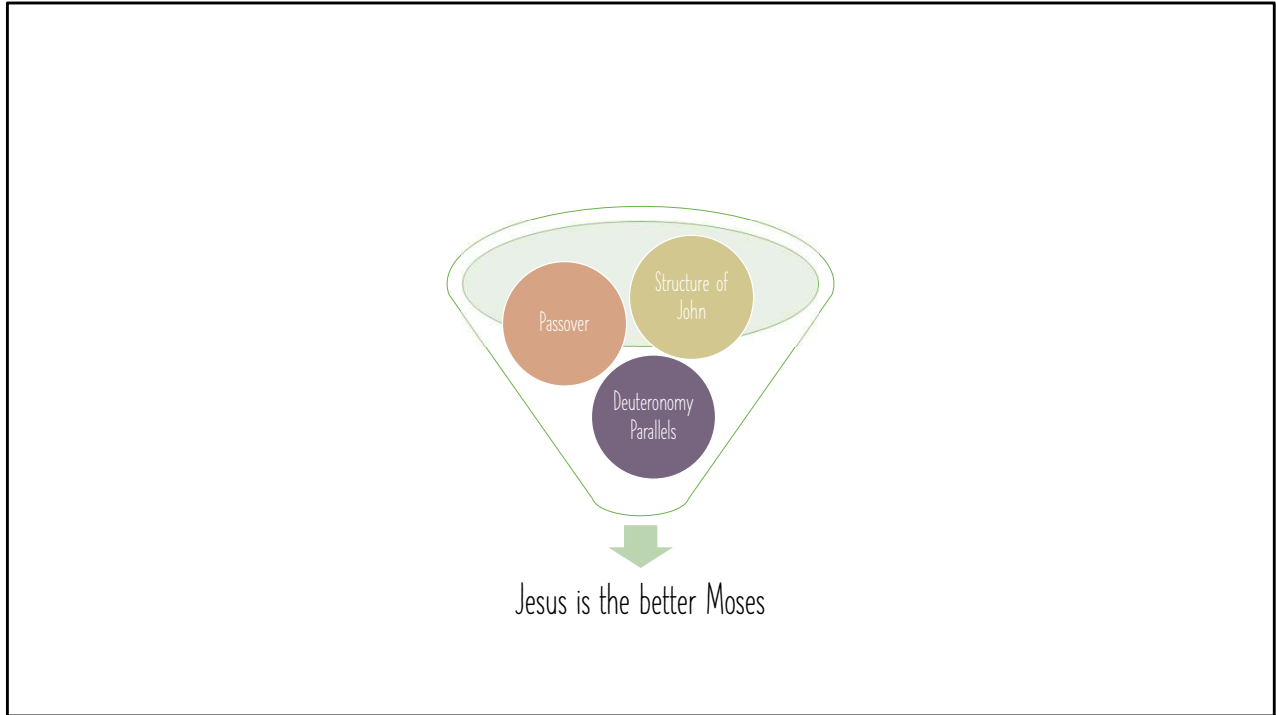
Jesus would send the Spirit to bring his teaching to their memory (14:25-26; 15:26; 16:12-15)



Jesus sends the Spirit to dwell in us and keeps us in the love of Jesus (14:15-26; 15:26-16:1; 16:12-15)



Jesus offered peace rather than fear (14:27; 16:1-4, 33)



I hope by this point that we can see John shows how Jesus in many ways followed the same path as Moses.

The difference is, Moses left the people with an expectation of judgment, while Jesus left his disciples with the expectation of joy. Jesus is the better Moses, who mediated a better covenant.



## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PARALLEL

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A similarity:

- On the Plains of Moab, Moses knew he was about to die, so he left the people with a final instruction for how to live a blessed life under the covenant.
- In the Upper Room, Jesus knew he was about to die, so he left his disciples with a final instruction for how to live a blessed life under the New Covenant.

However,

- On the Plains of Moab, Moses prophesied that the people would fall away and be cursed.
- In the Upper Room, Jesus promised the Spirit who would guide us and help us and prayed to the Father that he would keep us.





## JESUS' LAST PASSOVER

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- From here, Christ went to the cross. He shed his own blood to protect us from God's judgment, just like the Passover lamb in Exodus.
- With the slaying of the Passover lamb, God has set us apart as a new people for himself
- By sparing us from judgment, we were purchased and belong to God.
- Jesus has demonstrated his great power in overcoming all his enemies.

1 Cor. 5:7-8