

BIBLE DIFFICULTIES

Please explain Jude 9

The verse reads, "Yet Michael the archangel when, contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, the LORD rebuke thee."

This is an instance of Divine revelation, as is also the passage concerning Enoch, for there is nothing in the earlier part of Scripture about either. In Deuteronomy 34, the death of Moses is recorded,—“So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD. And HE buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor; but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.” Though “an hundred and twenty years old,” he was in the full vigour of health. He died because God decreed it, and that the way might be open for Joshua to lead Israel into Canaan (see Josh. 1:2)

Since the LORD buried him, and kept secret from man the site of his tomb, it might be inferred, and perhaps rightly, that God would not allow pilgrimages thereto. But did the devil know or seek to know, and if so, why? Hebrews 2:14 tells of “him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.” Through him one man sinned, and death came by sin (Rom. 5:12). The sentence pronounced upon him by God was,—“Dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.” (Gen. 3:14.) This is confirmed in Isaiah 65:25—“dust shall be the serpent’s meat (bread)” and Micah 7:17,—“They shall lick (up) the dust like a serpent.” To Adam God said, “Dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return.” That is death. Hence we read of “the dust of death” (Ps. 22:15). Since then, dust is the serpent’s bread, the inference is that *Satan feeds on death*. It is solemn reading in 1 Corinthians 5:5,—“To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh.”

Do these Scriptures lead to the thought that Satan wanted to disintegrate the body of Moses? There are two persons—Enoch and Elijah—who were taken upward without dying. On the Mount of Transfiguration, Moses appeared, with Elijah. He had died, but, apparently, God had preserved his body to that end, and had commissioned “Michael . . . the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people” (Dan. 12:1 see also 10:21 and Rev. 12:7) to pronounce the Divine sentence on Satan,—“The LORD rebuke thee.”

That Satan has “the might (kratos) of death” is plainly declared, and how often, as recorded in the Gospels, he sought to bring about the death of Christ before the arrival of the “hour” (Luke 22:53), when were fulfilled the word of God to the tempter,—“Thou shalt bruise His heel” (Gen. 3:15).

The foregoing is not to be taken as dogmatic statements, but as suggestions for readers’ consideration.
