

# Deuteronomy 31:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and unto all the elders of Israel.

## Analysis

**And Moses wrote this law**—the Hebrew vayichtov Moshe et-hatorah hazot (וַיְקַتֵּב מֹשֶׁה אֶת-הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת) establishes Moses as the author of the Pentateuchal legal corpus. **And delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD**—the Levitical priesthood received custody of the written law, connecting legal authority with ark guardianship. **And unto all the elders of Israel**—both religious (priests) and civil (elders) leaders received the law, ensuring comprehensive societal governance under divine instruction.

This verse documents the transition from oral proclamation (Moses's sermons in Deuteronomy) to written scripture preserved for future generations. The law's placement with the ark (verse 26) physically located God's word at the covenant's heart. The dual delivery to priests and elders ensured both worship and civil life would conform to divine standards. This pattern—written revelation, authorized custodians, communal accessibility—established the biblical principle that God's people are governed by His inscripturated word.

## Historical Context

Written circa 1406 BC in Moses's final weeks before his death at age 120. The 'law' (torah) likely included Deuteronomy itself and possibly the entire Pentateuch in substantially final form. Ancient Near Eastern treaties were similarly written and deposited in temples, though uniquely Israel's treaty-partner was Yahweh Himself.

The Levitical priesthood would maintain this text through Israel's history, though later corruptions required reforms under Josiah (2 Kings 22-23) when the lost book of the law was rediscovered.

## Related Passages

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**1 John 4:8** — God is love

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

## Study Questions

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1. Why does God require His revelation in written form rather than merely oral tradition?
2. How does dual custody (priests and elders) protect against either religious or political corruption of God's word?
3. What responsibilities accompany receiving and preserving God's written word for Christian leaders today?

## Interlinear Text

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בְּרִית	יְתִיכְתֶּבֶת	מֹשֶׁה	אַתָּה	הַתּוֹךְ	הַפְּזַאת	תִּתְּנֵה	אֶל
wrote	And Moses	H853	this law	H2063	and delivered	H413	
H3789	H4872		H8451		H5414		
בְּרִית	יְתִיכְתֶּבֶת	מֹשֶׁה	אַתָּה	הַפְּזַאת	אֶל	תִּתְּנֵה	אֶל
it unto the priests	the sons	of Levi	which bare	H853	the ark	of the covenant	
H3548	H1121	H3878	H5375	H727	H1285		
בְּרִית	יְתִיכְתֶּבֶת	מֹשֶׁה	אַתָּה	הַפְּזַאת	אֶל	תִּתְּנֵה	אֶל
of the LORD	H413	H3605	and unto all the elders	H2205	of Israel	H3478	
H3068							

## Additional Cross-References

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**Numbers 4:15** (Parallel theme): And when Aaron and his sons have made an end of covering the sanctuary, and all the vessels of the sanctuary, as the camp is to set forward; after that, the sons of Kohath shall come to bear it: but they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die. These things are the burden of the sons of Kohath in the tabernacle of the congregation.

**Joshua 3:3** (Covenant): And they commanded the people, saying, When ye see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests the Levites bearing it, then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it.

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