

Deuteronomy 27-34

? Questions

! Literary elements

➔ Prayer

* Cross References

The Altar on Mount Ebal

27 Now Moses and the elders of Israel commanded the people, saying, "Keep the whole [!]commandment that I command you today. **2** And on the day you cross over the Jordan to the land that the LORD your God is **giving** you, you shall set up large stones and plaster them with plaster. **3** And you shall write on them all the words of this law, when you cross over to enter the land that the LORD your God is **giving** you, a land flowing with **milk and honey**, as the LORD, the God of your fathers, [!][?]has promised you. **4** And when you have crossed over the Jordan, you shall set up these stones, concerning which I command you today, on Mount Ebal, and you shall plaster them with plaster. ^{*}**5** And there you shall build an altar to the LORD your God, an altar of stones. You shall wield no iron tool on them; **6** you shall build an altar to the LORD your God of uncut stones. And you shall offer burnt offerings on it to the LORD your God, [?]and you shall sacrifice peace offerings and shall eat there, and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God. **8** And you shall write on the stones all the words of this law very plainly."

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This is the latter bookend (the first being 11:26-32) surrounding the section that retells the laws. "Ancient covenant treaties had sections of blessings (consequences of keeping the treaty stipulations) and curses (the consequences of not keeping the covenant stipulations)." (ESV Study Bible, p. 368)

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This is an explicit connection back to the Abrahamic covenant.

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Because this is the very last section of the Torah, many themes and questions that were introduced way back in Genesis are being addressed again. In light of Deuteronomy's conclusion, what other themes and motifs can you find in this section that have continued throughout the entire Torah? What does their context in Deuteronomy reveal about what God ultimately wants to communicate through them?

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Genesis 12:6-7
"Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. **7** Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So he built there an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him."

Curses from Mount Ebal

9 Then Moses and the Levitical priests said to all Israel, "Keep silence and hear, O Israel: this day you have become the people of the LORD your God. **10** You shall therefore **obey** the voice of the LORD your God, keeping his commandments and his statutes, which I command you today."

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Joshua 8:30-31
What is the point of specifying that the stones must be uncut?

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The book of Deuteronomy is the second telling of the covenant between God and Israel so that it would be emphasized to this next generation, to prepare them for the Promised Land. Therefore, this verse is just referring to the renewal of the already established covenant. They will renew this covenant again with Joshua in the Promised Land (Joshua 24).

11 That day Moses charged the people, saying, **12** "When you have crossed over the Jordan, these shall stand on Mount Gerizim to **bless** the people: Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin. **13** And these shall stand on Mount Ebal for the **curse**: Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali. **14** And the Levites shall declare to all the men of Israel in a loud voice:

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Besides the writing of the law on uncut stones and building an altar, this is the 2nd ceremony they will perform upon arrival into the Promised Land.

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Why are they divided up for the blessing and curse?

15 "Cursed be the man who makes a carved or cast metal

^(*) image, an abomination to the LORD, a thing made by the hands of a craftsman, and sets it up in secret.’ And all the people shall answer and say, ‘Amen.’



The 2nd commandment
Exodus 20:4-6 and Numbers 5:8-10

16 ^(*) “**Cursed** be anyone who dishonors his father or his mother.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’



The 5th commandment
Exodus 20:5
“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.”

17 “**Cursed** be anyone who moves his neighbor’s landmark.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’

18 “**Cursed** be anyone who misleads a blind man on the road.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’

19 “Cursed be anyone who perverts the **justice** due to the **sojourner**, the fatherless, and the widow.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’

20 “**Cursed** be anyone who lies with his father’s wife, because he has uncovered his father’s nakedness.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’

21 “**Cursed** be anyone who lies with any kind of animal.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’

22 “**Cursed** be anyone who lies with his sister, whether the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’

23 “**Cursed** be anyone who lies with his mother-in-law.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’



This last statement seems to be set apart, in that it is less specific, possibly to address their purpose. “The list of 12 curses is not comprehensive; it is a sample of the law, not a summary of it.” (ESV Study Bible, p. 370)

24 “**Cursed** be anyone who strikes down his neighbor in secret.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’

25 “**Cursed** be anyone who takes a bribe to shed innocent blood.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’



Galatians 3:10-11
“For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, “Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them.” 11 Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for “The righteous shall live by faith.”

26 ^(*) “**Cursed** be anyone who does not confirm the words of this law by doing them.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’

Blessings for Obedience

28 “And if you faithfully **obey** the voice of the LORD your God, being careful to do all his commandments that I command you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the **nations** of the earth. 2 And all these **blessings** shall come upon you and overtake you, if you **obey** the voice of the LORD your God. 3 **Blessed** shall you be in the city, and **blessed** shall you be in the field. 4 **Blessed** shall be the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground and the fruit of your cattle, the increase of

your herds and the young of your flock. 5 **Blessed** shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. 6 **Blessed** shall you be when you come in, and **blessed** shall you be when you go out.



These are all blessings of multiplication that are especially important to their lifestyle.



What is the significance of this phrase?

7 "The LORD will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before you. They shall come out against you one way and flee before you **seven** ways. 8 The LORD will command the **blessing** on you in your barns and in all that you undertake. And he will **bless** you in the land that the LORD your God is **giving** you. 9 The LORD will establish you as a people **holy** to himself, as he has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in his ways. 10 And all the peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they shall be afraid of you. 11 And the LORD will make you abound in prosperity, in the fruit of your womb and in the fruit of your livestock and in the fruit of your ground, within the land that the LORD swore to your fathers to give you. 12 The LORD will open to you his good treasury, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season and to **bless** all the work of your hands. And you shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow. 13 And the LORD will make you the head and not the tail, and you shall only go up and not down, if you **obey** the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you today, being careful to do them, 14 and if you **do not turn aside** from any of the words that I command you today, **to the right hand or to the left**, to go after other gods to serve them.



Man's purpose is so unique in that God desires them to experience blessing through work and creation; a reflection of His original design of creation!

Genesis 1:28

"Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."



Yes, these are repeated from the verses before, revealing that this is an either-or deal. They will be either blessed or cursed. Likewise, we will either choose the narrow road of faith in Christ, or we will experience curse. There is no neutral ground presented because Christ is life; you have faith in him or you don't.



John 14:6-7

"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. 7 If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.'"

Curses for Disobedience

15 "But if you will not **obey** the voice of the LORD your God or be careful to do all his commandments and his statutes that I command you today, then all these **curses** shall come upon you and overtake you. 16 **Cursed** shall you be in the city, and **cursed** shall you be in the field. 17 **Cursed** shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. 18 **Cursed** shall be the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground, the increase of your herds and the young of your flock. 19 **Cursed** shall you be when you come in, and cursed shall you be when you go out.

20 "The LORD will send on you **curses**, confusion, and frustration

in all that you undertake to do, until you are destroyed and perish quickly on account of the evil of your deeds, because you have forsaken me. 21 The LORD will make the pestilence stick to you until he has consumed you off the land that you are entering to take possession of it. 22 The LORD will strike you with wasting disease and with fever, inflammation and fiery heat, and with drought and with blight and with mildew. They shall pursue you until you perish. 23 And the heavens over your head shall be bronze, and the earth under you shall be iron. 24 The LORD will make the rain of your land powder. From heaven dust shall come down on you until you are destroyed.

25 "The LORD will cause you to be defeated before your enemies. You shall go out one way against them and flee **seven** ways before them. And you shall be a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth. 26 And your dead body shall be food for all birds of the air and for the beasts of the earth, and there shall be no one to frighten them away. 27 The LORD will strike you with the boils of **Egypt**, and with tumors and scabs and itch, of which you cannot be healed. 28 The LORD will strike you with madness and blindness and confusion of mind, 29 and you shall grope at noonday, as the blind grope in darkness, and you shall not prosper in your ways. And you shall be only oppressed and robbed continually, and there shall be no one to help you. 30 You shall betroth a wife, but another man shall ravish her. You shall build a house, but you shall not dwell in it. You shall plant a vineyard, but you shall not enjoy its fruit. 31 Your ox shall be slaughtered before your eyes, but you shall not eat any of it. Your donkey shall be seized before your face, but shall not be restored to you. Your sheep shall be given to your enemies, but there shall be no one to help you. 32 Your sons and your daughters shall be given to another people, while your eyes look on and fail with longing for them all day long, but you shall be helpless. 33 A nation that you have not known shall eat up the fruit of your ground and of all your labors, and you shall be only oppressed and crushed continually, 34 so that you are driven mad by the sights that your eyes see. 35 The LORD will strike you on the knees and on the legs with grievous boils of which you cannot be healed, from the sole of your foot to the crown of your head.



What does this imagery mean?

Bronze: "Unable to bring rain."
Iron: "Unable to be tilled." (ESV Study Bible, p.370)



This is especially terrifying since their inhabitation of the Promised Land depends on wiping out the enemies that currently occupy it.



In Genesis 1:28, God shows that one of mankind's main jobs is to rule over all of the animals of the earth. Therefore, we see the gruesome irony of this blessing turned to curse!



This is direct reference to the sixth plague of boils in Exodus 9:8-12, showing that a disobedient Israel would deserve the punishment of Pharaoh and the Egyptians. The purpose behind the plagues: "so that you may know that I am the LORD"

36 "The LORD will bring you and your king whom you set over you to a nation that neither you nor your fathers have known. And there you shall serve other gods of wood and stone. 37 And you shall become a horror, a proverb, and a byword among all the peoples where the LORD will lead you away. 38 You shall carry much seed into the field and shall gather in little, for the locust shall consume it. 39 You shall plant vineyards and dress them, but you shall neither drink of the wine nor gather the grapes, for the worm shall eat them. 40 You shall have olive trees throughout all your territory, but you shall not anoint yourself with the oil, for your olives shall drop off. 41 You shall father sons and daughters, but they shall not be yours, for they shall go into captivity. 42 The cricket shall possess all your trees and the fruit of your ground. 43 The **sojourner** who is among you shall rise higher and higher above you, and you shall come down lower and lower. 44 He shall lend to you, and you shall not lend to him. He shall be the head, and you shall be the tail.

45 "All these curses shall come upon you and pursue you and overtake you till you are destroyed, because you did not **obey** the voice of the LORD your God, to keep his commandments and his statutes that he commanded you. 46 They shall be a ^①sign and a wonder against you and your **offspring** forever. 47 Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joyfulness and gladness of **heart**, because of the abundance of all things, 48 therefore you shall serve your enemies whom the LORD will send against you, in hunger and thirst, in nakedness, and lacking everything. And he will put a yoke of iron on your neck until he has destroyed you. 49 The LORD will bring a nation against you from far away, from the end of the earth, swooping down like the eagle, a nation whose language you do not understand, 50 a hard-faced nation who shall not respect the old or show mercy to the young. 51 It shall eat the **offspring** of your cattle and the fruit of your ground, until you are destroyed; it also shall not leave you grain, wine, or oil, the increase of your herds or the young of your flock, until they have caused you to perish.

52 "They shall besiege you in all your towns, until your high and fortified walls, in which you trusted, come down throughout all your land. And they shall besiege you in all your towns throughout



"Signs and wonders usually refer to Israel's salvation (e.g., 4:34; 7:19; 26:8). Here the term is heavily ironic." (ESV Study Bible, p. 371)

all your land, which the LORD your God has **given** you. 53 And you shall eat the fruit of your womb, the flesh of your sons and daughters, whom the LORD your God has **given** you, in the siege and in the distress with which your enemies shall distress you. 54 The man who is the most tender and refined among you will begrudge food to his brother, to the wife he embraces, and to the last of the children whom he has left, 55 so that he will not give to any of them any of the flesh of his children whom he is eating, because he has nothing else left, in the siege and in the distress with which your enemy shall distress you in all your towns. 56 The most tender and refined woman among you, who would not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground because she is so delicate and tender, will begrudge to the husband she embraces, to her son and to her daughter, 57 her afterbirth that comes out from between her feet and her children whom she bears, because lacking everything she will eat them secretly, in the siege and in the distress with which your enemy shall distress you in your towns.

58 "If you are not careful to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may **fear** this glorious and awesome **name**, the ^{*}LORD your God, 59 then the LORD will bring on you and your **offspring** extraordinary afflictions, afflictions severe and lasting, and sicknesses grievous and lasting. 60 And he will bring upon you again all the diseases of **Egypt**, of which you were afraid, and they shall cling to you. 61 Every sickness also and every affliction that is not recorded in the book of this law, the LORD will bring upon you, until you are destroyed. 62 Whereas you were as numerous as the stars of heaven, you shall be left few in number, because you did not **obey** the voice of the LORD your God. 63 And as the LORD took delight in doing you good and **multiplying** you, so the LORD will take delight in bringing ruin upon you and destroying you. And you shall be plucked off the land that you are entering to take possession of it.

64 "And the LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other, and there you shall serve other gods of wood and stone, which neither you nor your fathers have known. 65 And among these nations you shall find no



Exodus 3:13-15

"Then Moses said to God, 'If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?' 14 God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM.' And he said, 'Say this to the people of Israel: 'I AM has sent me to you.'" 15 God also said to Moses, 'Say this to the people of Israel: 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.' This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations."

respite, and there shall be no resting place for the sole of your foot, but the LORD will give you there a trembling **heart** and failing eyes and a languishing soul. 66 Your life shall hang in doubt before you. Night and day you shall be in dread and have no assurance of your life. 67 In the morning you shall say, 'If only it were evening!' and at evening you shall say, 'If only it were morning!' because of the dread that your **heart** shall feel, and the sights that your eyes shall see. 68 And the LORD will bring you back in ships to **Egypt**, a journey that I promised that you should never make again; and there you shall offer yourselves for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but there will be no buyer." [?]

The Covenant Renewed in Moab

29 These are the words of the **covenant** that the LORD commanded Moses to make with the people of Israel in the land of Moab, [?] besides the **covenant** that he had made with them at Horeb.

2 And Moses summoned all Israel and said to them: "You have seen all that the LORD did before your eyes in the land of **Egypt**, to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land, 3 the great trials that your eyes saw, the signs, and those great wonders. 4 But to this day the LORD has not **given** you a **heart** to understand or eyes to see or ears to hear. 5 I have led you **forty** years in the wilderness. Your clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandals have not worn off your feet. 6 You have not eaten **bread**, and you have not drunk wine or strong drink, that you may know that I am the LORD your God. 7 And when you came to this place, Sihon the king of Heshbon and Og the king of Bashan came out against us to battle, but we defeated them. 8 We took their land and gave it for an inheritance to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of the Manassites. 9 Therefore keep the words of this **covenant** and do them, that you may prosper in all that you do.

10 "You are standing today, all of you, before the LORD your God: the heads of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, all the men of Israel, 11 your little ones, your wives, and the



God, this imagery is terrifying AND the ability to obey ALL of your commandments with a genuine heart of love is impossible! But God, I thank You that these curses are terrifying because You hate sin and want to be honest about what life would look like apart from You. I thank You that this also means Your grace is even greater than all of that! I praise You for Your Son. I praise You that through him we not only can avoid such heart-wrenching destruction and separation from You, but in him we also have the fullest blessing of life. How marvelous! We praise You and Your mercy and justice!



What is the covenant made in Moab?

It is simply all of the spoken words of Moses in this book, which are reiterations of the covenant given at Mt. Sinai. It is all one covenant.

sojourner who is in your camp, from the one who chops your wood to the one who draws your **water**, 12 so that you may enter into the sworn **covenant** of the LORD your God, which the LORD your God is making with you today, 13 that he may establish you today as his people, and that he may be your God, as he promised you, and as he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. 14 It is not with you alone that I am making this sworn **covenant**, 15 but with whoever is standing here with us today before the LORD our God, and with whoever is ^①not here with us today.

16 "You know how we lived in the land of **Egypt**, and how we came through the midst of the nations through which you passed. 17 And you have seen their detestable things, their idols of wood and stone, of silver and gold, which were among them. 18 Beware lest there be among you a man or woman or clan or tribe whose **heart is turning** away today from the LORD our God to go and serve the gods of those nations. Beware lest there be among you a root bearing ^①poisonous and bitter fruit, 19 one who, when he hears the words of this sworn **covenant**, ^①**bleses** himself in his **heart**, saying, 'I shall be safe, though I walk in the stubbornness of my **heart**.' This will lead to the sweeping away of moist and dry alike. 20 The LORD will not be willing to forgive him, but rather the anger of the LORD and his **jealousy** will smoke against that man, and the curses written in this book will settle upon him, and the LORD will blot out his name from under heaven. 21 And the LORD will single him out from all the tribes of Israel for calamity, in accordance with all the **curses** of the **covenant** written in this Book of the Law. 22 And the next generation, your children who rise up after you, and the foreigner who comes from a far land, will say, when they see the afflictions of that land and the sicknesses with which the LORD has made it sick— 23 the whole land burned out with brimstone and salt, nothing sown and nothing growing, where no plant can sprout, an overthrow like that of ^①Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, which the LORD overthrew in his anger and wrath— 24 all the **nations** will say, 'Why has the LORD done thus to this land? What caused the heat of this great anger?' 25 Then people will say, 'It is because they abandoned the **covenant** of the LORD, the God of their



"...refers to future generations. The covenant with God is not simply for one generation, just as the Horeb covenant was also for this current generation." (ESV Study Bible, p.373)



This again reveals that the nature of sin not only brings destruction on the sinner, but to others around them, which is why the law demands the separation of sin, and often sinners from the assembly.



This is referring to pride. Pride and humility are also major themes throughout the Torah, revealing pride to be trust in oneself instead of God alone.





"The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah is used several times in the Bible as the paradigmatic act of God's judgment." (ESV Study Bible, p. 373)

Genesis 19:24-25

"Then the LORD rained on Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur and fire from the LORD out of heaven. 25 And he overthrew those cities, and all the valley, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground."

fathers, which he made with them when he brought them out of the land of **Egypt**, 26 and went and served other gods and worshiped them, gods whom they had not known and whom he had not allotted to them. 27 Therefore the anger of the LORD was kindled against this land, bringing upon it all the **curses** written in this book, 28 and the LORD uprooted them from their land in anger and fury and great wrath, and cast them into another land, as they are this day.'

29 "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.  

Repentance and Forgiveness

30 "And when all these things come upon you, the **ble[!]sing** and the **curse**, which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the **nations** where the LORD your God has driven you, 2 and [!]return to the LORD your God, you and your children, and **obey** his voice in all that I command you today, with all your **heart** and with all your soul, 3 then the LORD your God [!]will restore your fortunes and have mercy on you, and he will [!]gather you again from all the peoples where the LORD your God has scattered you. 4 If your outcasts are in the uttermost parts of heaven, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there he will take you. 5 And the LORD your God will bring you into the land that your fathers possessed, that you may possess it. And he will make you more prosperous and numerous than your fathers. 6 And the LORD your God will circumcise your [!]**heart** and the **heart** of your **offspring**, so that [!]you will love the LORD your God with all your **heart** and with all your soul, that you may live. 7 And the LORD your God will put all these **curses** on your foes and enemies who persecuted you. 8 And you shall again **obey** the voice of the LORD and keep all his commandments that I command you today. 9 The LORD your God will make you [!]abundantly prosperous in all the work of your hand, in the fruit of your womb and in the fruit of your cattle and in the fruit of your ground. For the LORD will again take delight in prospering you, as he took delight in your fathers, 10 when you **obey** the voice of the LORD your God,



"Not everything that is true of God has been revealed. That there are secret things anticipates the need to trust, obey, and be humble before God. What God has revealed is for the sake of obedience..." (ESV Study Bible, p. 374)



God, even as I read this final book of the Torah I struggle with the questions left in my mind. However, I love how many of those questions truly are answered between entering the Promised Land and the final book of Revelations. Although many questions are still left in my mind about You and Your plans even after reading Revelations, I trust that You are faithful. I thank for the extraordinarily beautiful and intentional way in which You have chosen to reveal Yourself.



Deuteronomy reveals that both will happen.



It is so beautiful that after all of the warnings about "turning away" from the Lord, which we know Israel will do, there is still an opportunity to "return" to Him through obedience and love. What mercy!



Not only will he forgive them, he will reverse the curse and save them from oppressors once again.



Jeremiah 31 & Ezekiel 16



YES! FINALLY! The true answer to the true problem! The Israelites need a heart change to love God!



God, I am so aware that You take sin SO seriously. So how much more is this grace and mercy You are willing to extend to repentant hearts that are changed by the power of Your Holy Spirit? God... I am amazed! You are so kind. Your definition of restoration is like nothing I could ever imagine!

to keep his commandments and his statutes that are written in this Book of the Law, when you **turn** to the LORD your God with all your **heart** and with all your soul.

The Choice of Life and Death

11 "For this commandment that I command you today is ^①not too hard for you, neither is it far off. 12 It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may **hear** it and do it?' 13 Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may **hear** it and do it?' 14 But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your **heart**, so that you can do it.

^{*}15 "See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil. 16 If you **obey** the commandments of the LORD your God that I command you today, by loving the LORD your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his rules, ^②then you shall live and **multiply**, and the LORD your God will **bless** you in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. 17 But if your **heart turns** away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, 18 I declare to you today, that you shall surely perish. You shall not live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess. 19 I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, ^③**blessing** and **curse**. Therefore choose life, that you and your **offspring** may live, 20 loving the LORD your God, **obeying** his voice and holding fast to him, ^④for he is your life and length of days, that you may dwell in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them."

Joshua to Succeed Moses

31 So Moses continued to speak these words to all Israel. 2 And he said to them, "I am 120 years old today. I am no longer able to **go out and come in**. The LORD has said to me, 'You shall not go over this Jordan.' 3 The LORD your God himself will



Under the new covenant, when the heart is circumcised, then obedience to the law is possible! We see here that it has always been about the posture of our heart towards God.



Will we trust God is enough and trust His definition of good? Will we choose Him and His way, or rely on ourselves and our own way? This is the same question presented back in Genesis 2:15-17:

"The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. 16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, 'You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.'"



Do you think the Israelites had a difficult time trusting in God's promised grace? Do you have a difficult time trusting God's grace, even though you know more to the story than they did?



This section (30:15-20) acts as a summary of the theme of blessings and curses for the entire Torah!



The choice is not one of working really hard to earn or achieve life. It is a choice of God who IS life! It is to choose trust in Him alone and His ability to transform our hearts for obedience!

go over before you. He will destroy these nations before you, so that you shall dispossess them, and Joshua will go over at your head, as the LORD has spoken. 4 And the LORD will do to them as he did to Sihon and Og, the kings of the Amorites, and to their land, when he destroyed them. 5 And the LORD will give them over to you, and you shall do to them according to the whole commandment that I have commanded you. 6 Be strong and courageous. **Do not fear** or be in dread of them, for it is the LORD your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you.”

7 Then Moses summoned Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, “Be strong and courageous, for you shall go with this people into the land that the LORD has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall put them in possession of it. 8 It is the LORD who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. **Do not fear** or be dismayed.”

The Reading of the Law

9 Then Moses wrote this law and gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi, who carried the ark of the **covenant** of the LORD, and to all the elders of Israel. 10 And Moses commanded them, “At the end of every **seven** years, at the set time in the year of release, at the Feast of Booths, 11 when all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God at the place that he will choose, you shall ^①read this law before all Israel in their hearing. 12 Assemble the people, men, women, and little ones, and the sojourner within your towns, that they may **hear** and learn to **fear the LORD** your God, and be careful to do all the words of this law, 13 and that their children, who have not known it, may **hear** and learn to fear the LORD your God, as long as you live in the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess.”



For the theme of reading the law aloud throughout Scripture, watch the The Bible Project's video: “Public Reading of Scripture”

Joshua Commissioned to Lead Israel

14 And the LORD said to Moses, “Behold, the days approach when you must die. Call Joshua and present yourselves in the tent of meeting, that I may commission him.” And Moses and Joshua went and presented themselves in the tent of meeting.

15 And the LORD appeared in the tent in a pillar of cloud. And the pillar of cloud stood over the entrance of the tent.

16 And the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, you are about to lie down with your fathers. Then this people will rise and whore after the foreign gods among them in the land that they are entering, and they will forsake me and break my **covenant** that I have made with them. 17 Then my anger will be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them and hide my face from them, and they will be devoured. And many evils and troubles will come upon them, so that they will say in that day, 'Have not these evils come upon us because our God is not among us?' 18 And I will surely hide my face in that day because of all the evil that they have done, because they have **turned** to other gods.

19 "Now therefore write this song and teach it to the people of Israel. Put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me against the people of Israel. 20 For when I have brought them into the land flowing with **milk and honey**, which I swore to give to their fathers, and they have eaten and are full and grown fat, they will **turn** to other gods and serve them, and despise me and break my **covenant**. 21 And when many evils and troubles have come upon them, this song shall confront them as a witness (for it will live unforgotten in the mouths of their **offspring**). For I know what they are inclined to do even today, before I have brought them into the land that I swore to give." 22 So Moses wrote this song the same day and taught it to the people of Israel.

23 And the LORD commissioned Joshua the son of Nun and said, "Be strong and courageous, for you shall bring the people of Israel into the land that I swore to give them. I will be with you."

24 When Moses had finished writing the words of this law in a book to the very end, 25 Moses commanded the Levites who carried the ark of the **covenant** of the LORD, 26 "Take this Book of the Law and put it by the side of the ark of the **covenant** of the LORD your God, that it may be there for a witness against



"Idolatry is often described in the OT in language of whoredom and idoltery." (ESV Study Bible, p. 376)
Therefore, this is just the beginning of this imagery that will especially unfold as Israel remains unfaithful to God and ends up in exile.



Ezekiel 16



What exactly does it mean that this song will be a witness against Israel? Is it because God knows songs have a way with sticking in people's memory? Is it because God is serious about reminding the people that He already foreshadowed their rebellion?



This will be a repeated phrase of instruction especially to Joshua as he leads the people into the Promised Land! Joshua 1:9
"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

you. 27 For I know how **rebellious** and stubborn you are. Behold, even today while I am yet alive with you, you have been **rebellious** against the LORD. How much more after my death! 28 Assemble to me all the elders of your tribes and your officers, that I may speak these words in their ears and call heaven and earth to witness against them. 29 For I know that after my death you will surely act corruptly and **turn** aside from the way that I have commanded you. And in the days to come evil will befall you, because you will do what is evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking him to anger through the work of your hands."

The Song of Moses

30 Then Moses spoke the words of this song until they were finished, in the ears of all the assembly of Israel:

32 "Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak,
and let the earth **hear** the words of my mouth.

2 May my teaching drop as the rain,
my speech distill as the dew,
like gentle rain upon the tender grass,
and like showers upon the herb.

3 For I will proclaim the name of the LORD;
ascribe greatness to our God!

4 "The Rock, his work is perfect,
for all his ways are **justice**.

A God of faithfulness and without iniquity,
just and upright is he.

5 They have dealt corruptly with him;
they are no longer his children because they are blemished;
they are a crooked and twisted generation.

6 Do you thus repay the LORD,
you foolish and senseless people?

Is not he your father, who created you,
who made you and established you?

7 **Remember** the days of old;
consider the years of many generations;
ask your father, and he will show you,
your elders, and they will tell you.



How will this song particularly describe God and His nature? How will it describe Israel and mankind's nature? What does it say God has accomplished and what is He going to do?

8 When the Most High **gave** to the **nations** their inheritance,
when he divided mankind,
he fixed the borders of the peoples
according to the number of the sons of God.

9 But the LORD's portion is his people,
Jacob his allotted heritage.

10 "He found him in a desert land,
and in the howling waste of the wilderness;
he encircled him, he cared for him,
he kept him as the apple of his eye.

11 Like an eagle that stirs up its nest,
that flutters over its young,
spreading out its wings, catching them,
bearing them on its pinions,

12 the LORD alone guided him,
no foreign god was with him.

13 He made him ride on the high places of the land,
and he ate the produce of the field,
and he suckled him with honey out of the rock,
and oil out of the flinty rock.

14 Curds from the herd, and milk from the flock,
with fat of lambs,
rams of Bashan and goats,
with the very finest of the wheat—
and you drank foaming wine made from the blood of the
grape.

15 "But Jeshurun grew fat, and kicked;
you grew fat, stout, and sleek;
then he forsook God who made him
and scoffed at the Rock of his salvation.

16 They stirred him to **jealousy** with strange gods;
with abominations they provoked him to anger.

17 They sacrificed to demons that were no gods,
to gods they had never known,
to new gods that had come recently,
whom your fathers had never dreaded.

18 You were unmindful of the Rock that bore you,
and you forgot the God who **gave** you birth.

19 "The LORD saw it and spurned them,
because of the provocation of his sons and his daughters.

20 And he said, 'I will hide my face from them;
I will see what their end will be,
for they are a perverse generation,
children in whom is no faithfulness.

21 They have made me **jealous** with what is no god;
they have provoked me to anger with their idols.
So I will make them jealous with those who are no people;
I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.

22 For a fire is kindled by my anger,
and it burns to the depths of Sheol,
devours the earth and its increase,
and sets on fire the foundations of the mountains.

23 "And I will heap disasters upon them;
I will spend my arrows on them;
24 they shall be wasted with hunger,
and devoured by plague
and poisonous pestilence;
I will send the teeth of beasts against them,
with the venom of things that crawl in the dust.

25 Outdoors the sword shall bereave,
and indoors terror,
for young man and woman alike,
the nursing child with the man of gray hairs.

26 I would have said, "I will cut them to pieces;
I will wipe them from human memory,"
27 had I not feared provocation by the enemy,
lest their adversaries should misunderstand,
lest they should say, "Our hand is triumphant,
it was not the LORD who did all this."

28 "For they are a nation void of counsel,
and there is no understanding in them.
29 If they were wise, they would understand this;
they would discern their latter end!
30 How could one have chased a thousand,
and two have put ten thousand to flight,
unless their Rock had sold them,
and the LORD had given them up?

31 For their rock is not as our Rock;
our enemies are by themselves.

32 For their vine comes from the vine of Sodom

and from the fields of Gomorrah;
their grapes are grapes of poison;
their clusters are bitter;
33 their wine is the poison of serpents
and the cruel venom of asps.
34 "Is not this laid up in store with me,
sealed up in my treasuries?
35 Vengeance is mine, and recompense,
for the time when their foot shall slip;
for the day of their calamity is at hand,
and their doom comes swiftly.'
36 For the LORD will vindicate his people
and have compassion on his servants,
when he sees that their power is gone
and there is none remaining, bond or free.
37 Then he will say, 'Where are their gods,
the rock in which they took refuge,
38 who ate the fat of their sacrifices
and drank the wine of their drink offering?
Let them rise up and help you;
let them be your protection!
39 "See now that I, even I, am he,
and there is no god beside me;
I kill and I make alive;
I wound and I heal;
and there is none that can deliver out of my hand.
40 For I lift up my hand to heaven
and swear, As I live forever,
41 if I sharpen my flashing sword
and my hand takes hold on judgment,
I will take vengeance on my adversaries
and will repay those who hate me.
42 I will make my arrows drunk with blood,
and my sword shall devour flesh—
with the blood of the slain and the captives,
from the long-haired heads of the enemy.'
43 "Rejoice with him, O heavens;
bow down to him, all gods,
for he avenges the blood of his children
and takes vengeance on his adversaries.

He repays those who hate him
and cleanses his people's land."

44 Moses came and recited all the words of this song in the hearing of the people, he and Joshua the son of Nun. 45 And when Moses had finished speaking all these words to all Israel, 46 he said to them, "Take to **heart** all the words by which I am warning you today, that you may command them to your children, that they may be careful to do all the words of this law. 47 For it is no empty word for you, but your very life, and by this word you shall live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess."

Moses' Death Foretold

48 That very day the LORD spoke to Moses, 49 "Go up this mountain of the Abarim, Mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, opposite Jericho, and ^①view the land of Canaan, which I am **giving** to the people of Israel for a possession. 50 And die on the mountain which you go up, and be gathered to your people, as Aaron your brother died in Mount Hor and was gathered to his people, 51 because you broke faith with me in the midst of the people of Israel at the waters of Meribah-kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin, and because you did not treat me as **holy** in the midst of the people of Israel. 52 For you shall see the land before you, but you shall not go there, into the land that I am **giving** to the people of Israel."



Like Abraham, Moses received God's direct revelation of this promise, and even got to glimpse the Promised Land, but had to die without seeing the promise completely fulfilled!

Moses' Final Blessing on Israel

33 This is the **blessing** with which Moses the man of God ^{*}**blessed** the people of Israel before his death. 2 He said,
"The LORD came from Sinai
and dawned from Seir upon us;
he shone forth from Mount Paran;
he came from the ten thousands of **holy** ones,
with flaming fire at his right hand.
3 Yes, he loved his people,
all his **holy** ones were in his hand;
so they followed in your steps,
receiving direction from you,



"Like a patriarch, Moses blesses Israel before his death." (ESV Study Bible, p.380)

Genesis 49:3-27

4 when Moses commanded us a law,
as a possession for the assembly of Jacob.

5 Thus the LORD became king in Jeshurun,
when the heads of the people were gathered,
all the tribes of Israel together.

6 "Let Reuben live, and not die,
but let his men be few."

7 And this he said of Judah:
"Hear, O LORD, the voice of Judah,
and bring him in to his people.
With your hands contend for him,
and be a help against his adversaries."

8 And of Levi he said,
"Give to Levi your Thummim,
and your Urim to your godly one,
whom you tested at Massah,
with whom you quarreled at the waters of Meribah;
9 who said of his father and mother,
'I regard them not';
he disowned his brothers
and ignored his children.
For they observed your word
and kept your **covenant**.

10 They shall teach Jacob your rules
and Israel your law;
they shall put incense before you [Ⓢ]
and whole burnt offerings on your altar.

11 **Bless**, O LORD, his substance,
and accept the work of his hands;
crush the loins of his adversaries,
of those who hate him, that they rise not again."

12 Of Benjamin he said,
"The beloved of the LORD dwells in safety.
The High God surrounds him all day long,
and dwells between his shoulders."

13 And of Joseph he said,
"**Blessed** by the LORD be his land,
with the choicest gifts of heaven above,
and of the deep that crouches beneath,
14 with the choicest fruits of the sun



This is a great summary of the priests' role throughout the Old Testament; they will act as teachers of the law and overseers of the sacrifices. Remember, priests represent God to the people, and the people to God, which is what all of God's people are meant to do.

and the rich yield of the months,
15 with the finest produce of the ancient mountains
and the abundance of the everlasting hills,
16 with the best gifts of the earth and its fullness
and the favor of him who dwells in the bush.
May these rest on the head of Joseph,
on the pate of him who is prince among his brothers.
17 A firstborn bull—he has majesty,
and his horns are the horns of a wild ox;
with them he shall gore the peoples,
all of them, to the ends of the earth;
they are the ten thousands of Ephraim,
and they are the thousands of Manasseh.”
18 And of Zebulun he said,
“Rejoice, Zebulun, in your going out,
and Issachar, in your tents.
19 They shall call peoples to their mountain;
there they offer right sacrifices;
for they draw from the abundance of the seas
and the hidden treasures of the sand.”
20 And of Gad he said,
“**Blessed** be he who enlarges Gad!
Gad crouches like a lion;
he tears off arm and scalp.
21 He chose the best of the land for himself,
for there a commander’s portion was reserved;
and he came with the heads of the people,
with Israel he executed the **justice** of the LORD,
and his judgments for Israel.”
22 And of Dan he said,
“Dan is a lion’s cub
that leaps from Bashan.”
23 And of Naphtali he said,
“O Naphtali, sated with favor,
and full of the **blessing** of the LORD,
possess the lake and the south.”
24 And of Asher he said,
“Most **blessed** of sons be Asher;
let him be the favorite of his brothers,
and let him dip his foot in oil.

25 Your bars shall be iron and bronze,
 and as your days, so shall your strength be.

26 "There is none like God, O Jeshurun,
 who rides through the heavens to your help,
 through the skies in his majesty.

27 The eternal God is your dwelling place,
 and underneath are the everlasting arms.
 And he thrust out the enemy before you
 and said, 'Destroy.'

28 So Israel lived in safety,
 Jacob lived alone,
 in a land of grain and wine,
 whose heavens drop down dew.

29 Happy are you, O Israel! Who is like you,
 a people saved by the LORD,
 the ^{*}shield of your help,
 and the sword of your triumph!
 Your enemies shall come fawning to you,
 and you shall tread upon their backs."

The Death of Moses

34 Then Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is opposite Jericho. And the LORD showed him all the land, Gilead as far as Dan, 2 all Naphtali, the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the western sea, 3 the Negeb, and the Plain, that is, the Valley of Jericho the city of palm trees, as far as Zoar. 4 And the LORD said to him, "This is the land of which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, 'I will give it to your **offspring**.' I have let you see it with your eyes, but you shall not go over there." 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 one knows the place of his burial to this day. 7 Moses was 120 years old [?]^{*} when he died. His eye was undimmed, and his vigor unabated.

8 And the people of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days. Then the days of weeping and mourning for Moses were ended.



Genesis 15:1

"After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision: 'Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.'"



This is incredible considering all Moses had undergone... What does this reveal about God's provision for Moses as the leader?



Recall Moses' response to God's first command back Exodus 3:10-12: "Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt." 11 But Moses said to God, 'Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?' 12 He said, 'But I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain.'"

9 And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him. So the people of Israel **obeyed** him and did as the LORD had commanded Moses. 10 And there has not arisen a prophet ^① since in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, 11 none like him for all the signs and the wonders that the LORD sent him to do in the land of **Egypt**, to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land, 12 and for all the mighty power and all the great deeds of terror that Moses did in the sight of all Israel. ^②



Jesus will ultimately be the better Moses in every way!



Wow God, what a beautiful beginning to Your Story. And yet, it is not only the beginning, but a beautiful summary of the gospel by which you promised to restore right relationship with Your people! I praise You for being the beginning and the end of this grand narrative! I can't wait to continue to see Your reckless love unfold throughout the rest of the pages of the Bible, as well as throughout all time!