

Deuteronomy Chapter 31

V: 1-6 Moses' birthday! 120 years old "this day".

- The Lord told Moses that he would not, could not pass over the Jordan into the promise land because he had misrepresented God, he hadn't sanctified the Lord before the people at the waters of Meribah.
- The Lord will go, the Lord shall do, the Lord shall give: The Lord is doing all the work – so that they may do their part, which is simply to be obedient.
- The exhortation: because the Lord will go before you, because the Lord will give them the victory: Be strong, be courageous, do not be afraid!

2 Timothy 1:7 "For God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

- Faith is the opposite of fear:

Romans 10:17 "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

"... He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee!"

- This is a general and public exhortation to move forward. Considering the failure of the nation to move forward 40 years prior, this would seem both poignant and appropriate.

V: 7-8 Now Moses turns to Joshua and delivers a personal encouragement or exhortation in front of the nation – be strong and of a good courage!

- This is one of the most often repeated commands in the Bible – don't be afraid.
- Be strong in the Lord, keep the faith! That is a good encouragement for any of us pretty much all the time.
- This chapter amounts to Joshua's public commissioning, his ordination.
- This will be an orderly transition in leadership, the passing of the mantle.

1 Corinthians 14:33 "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints."

V: 9-13 Moses records what the Lord had given him, delivered it to the priests, then commands that they read it publically every seven years in the year of release.

- So the Law of the Lord is somehow related to the release, or deliverance from bondage.

Isaiah 61:1 “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.”

Psalms 78:5-7 “⁵For He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which He commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: ⁶that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children: ⁷That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments.”

V: 14-15 Moses is told that his time is approaching:

Hebrews 9:27 “And it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:”

- Moses is told to bring Joshua to the Tabernacle, there they will meet with God and God will give Joshua a “charge” – this will be his commission, his marching orders.

Psalms 37:23 “The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way.”

V: 16 Bad news, the people will turn away from the Lord.

- God uses strong language to describe their infidelity: “whoring” after other gods, forsaking God, breaking His commandments.

V: 17-18 The result: kindling the anger of the Lord. We should never forget that He is a jealous God.

Exodus 34:14 “For thou shalt worship no other god: for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God:”

- Twice He says: “I will hide my face from them...”
- The Jews today call this the “hidden face of God.”

- This is the opposite of the Aaronic blessing:

Numbers 6:24-26 “²⁴The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: ²⁵The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee. ²⁶The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.”

- Why is God’s face hidden from them?

Isaiah 59:1-2 “¹Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear: ²But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and you sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear.”

- Prophetically there is a time coming when God will no longer hide His face from Israel.

Ezekiel 39:22, 29 “²²So the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God from that day and forward.” – “²⁹Neither will I hide My face any more from them: for I have poured out My spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God.”

V: 19 “Write ye this song...” God gives Moses the song to write, Moses wasn’t left to compose it himself.

- Write it, and teach it to the children of Israel – as they sing it later and consider the words, it will be a witness against them, an accurate account of what happened.

V: 20-21 After they’ve been in the land, after they’ve enjoyed the fruition of God’s promises in their lives, when they’ve eaten and are full and have waxed fat – then they will turn to other gods and provoke the True and Living God to anger.

- Prosperity is not always a good thing, not unless we are able to maintain an appreciation for the one who has prospered us.

James 1:17 “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.”

Proverbs 31:8-9 “⁸Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food convenient for me: ⁹Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, who is the Lord? Or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.”

V: 22-23 Moses is obedient to what God said to do.

- Moses repeats the charge that God had given Joshua: words that bear repeating.

“Be strong and of a good courage:” Why? *“I will be with thee.”*

V: 24-27 When Moses finished writing the word of the Law in a book which is also translated as a scroll, he had the Levites place next to the Ark of the Covenant.

- Moses seemingly muses; “you’ve been so rebellious while I’m here, how much more will they be when I’m gone.”
- Moses is expressing his concern for the people when he’s gone.

V: 28-30 Moses gathers the elders, and the leaders of the tribes for one last word of encouragement – and to teach them the song of the Lord, hereafter known as the “song of Moses.”

V: 29 *“For I know...”* (yada) Moses isn’t tentative in this statement, he knows – but how does he know?

- Because God’s word says!
- Moses speaks the song in the ears of Israel – he was faithful to do what God said to do.
- Which brings us to chapter 32.

Deuteronomy Chapter 32

- The “song” of Moses; composed by God Himself goes from V: 1-43
- There are 4 major divisions to the son:
 1. The character of God: V: 1-4
 2. The kindness of God: V: 5-14
 3. The faithfulness of God to chasten His people: V: 15-25
 4. The vengeance of God against His adversaries: V: 26-43

V: 1-2 Give ear / listen – all of the host of heaven and inhabitants of the earth, for God speaks.

- God’s “doctrine” / instruction is compared to the rain. Rain washes:

Psalm 119:9 *“Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word.”*

- Rain also nourishes and brings forth fruit.

Isaiah 55:10-11 “¹⁰For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: ¹¹So shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.”

Describing Elijah

James 5:18 “And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.”

V: 3 Why does His doctrine cleanse and bring forth fruit? Because it proclaims / publishes the name of the Lord, because it ascribes greatness to our God.”

V: 4 “He is the Rock!”

Psalms 95:1 “O come, let us sing unto the Lord, let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation.”

- He is the God of truth, there is no iniquity in Him, He is just and righteous!

Revelation 19:1-2a “¹And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, alleluia; salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: ²For true and righteous are his judgments...”

Psalms 145:17-18 “¹⁷The Lord is righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works. ¹⁸The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth.”

V: 5 They need some spiritual spot remover.

John 15:3 “Now you are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.”

Ephesians 5:26-27 “²⁶That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.”

V: 6 Is this how you re-pay me? With disobedience?

Psalms 116: 12-14, 17 “¹²What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me? ¹³I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. ¹⁴I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all His people.” – “¹⁷I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord.”

- “Father” (H-1) 'ab, awb; father, forefather, chief, principal, originator. "Abi-".

Matthew 23:9 “And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.”

- “Father” (G-3962) pater, pat-ayr'; father, near or more remote, parent. “Live giver”; one who has infused his own spirit into others, who actuates and governs their minds.

V: 7-14 Remember your history, think about all the blessings. Think about your relationship with God.

- Remember that you are the Lord's portion, He wants you – all of you.

Hebrews 12:2 “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

- Remember His faithfulness.

V: 10 “The apple of His eye” – God's focus, the object of His affection!

V: 11 Jesus later builds on this analogy:

Matthew 23:37 “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!”

- Describing the days of obedience, the days of abundance, of being in God's will.

V: 15 “But” – here's what happened – couldn't handle prosperity.

- Jeshurun is a poetic name for Israel, it literally means upright or righteous.
- “Lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation” – meaning they didn't appreciate their salvation, nor what it cost.
- Instead of ascribing greatness to the Lord their God, they scorned Him.

V: 16-19 They provoked the judgment of God with their sin.

- They weren't mindful or aware of the Rock that begat them.

Psalm 89:26 “... thou art my Father, my God, and the rock of my salvation.”

- We need to be aware or conscious of God at all times, He is to fill our consciousness at all times.

V: 20 Again “the hidden face of God”

- A “froward” or perverse generation – having done all the things already mentioned; why? Because they have no faith!

Hebrews 11:6 “For without faith it is impossible to please Him; for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.”

V: 21 They have moved God to jealousy – provoked Him to wrath – not good!

- God will turn it around, he will provoke them to jealousy with those which are not a people, with a foolish nation.
- He’s speaking of the Gentiles.

Later Paul uses this very passage describing the relationship in God's eyes between the Gentiles and the Jews.

Romans 11:11 “I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.”

V: 22-43 Describes the down side of disobedience to God's word.

Hebrews 12:29 “For our God is a consuming fire.”

Hebrews 10:26-27 “²⁶For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, ²⁷but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.”

V: 22-25 Sounds very much like the holocaust.

V: 28-29 This is a lament, this nation has not received counsel, they have no understanding.

- They should consider the results before making these big mistakes.

V: 31 Their “rock” (little “r”) or their little god doesn’t compare to our “Rock”.

Isaiah 40:18 “To whom will ye liken God? Or what likeness will compare unto Him?”

- Our God is in-comparable!

V: 32-33 Their vine, their fruit is the same as Sodom & Gomorah: selfish, self-indulgent, fruit of the flesh that leads to death.

- Progression: vine, grapes, wine – the poison of dragons.

Revelation 20:2 “And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan...”

- Dragons are symbolic of evil in the Bible, symbolic of the Devil.

V: 35 Vengeance belongs to God.

Romans 12:19 “... vengeance is mine, I will repay saith the Lord.”

V: 39 Proclaiming the sovereignty of God – there is none that can deliver out of His hand!

V: 43 God will eventually be merciful to His land and to His people.

- In English this song may not come across as a real catchy jingle – but in Hebrew...

V: 44-47 Moses spoke the song to the people and to Joshua.

- Set your hearts, purpose in your hearts to be obedient!
- This is not a vain thing, this is your life and the length of your days!

V: 48-52 The appointed time has come.

- See the promise land from this side of the Jordan, from the top of Nebo in Moab.