

Deut. 29:1 ¶ These *are* the words of the covenant, which the LORD commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, beside the covenant which he made with them in Horeb.

Horeb is a general term referencing the mountains of Sinai. This verse is declaring that though a covenant was made with the people at Mount Sinai, an affirmation of that covenant was being made in the land of Moab preceding their taking possession of the Promised Land. I would assume this was because those taking possession of the land were but children at the time of the covenant at Sinai. YHWH is ensuring that this new generation understands the terms of the covenant between them and agrees to abide by it accordingly.

Deut. 29:2 And Moses called unto all Israel, and said unto them, Ye have seen all that the LORD did before your eyes in the land of Egypt unto Pharaoh, and unto all his servants, and unto all his land;

Deut. 29:3 The great temptations which thine eyes have seen, the signs, and those great miracles:

Deut. 29:4 Yet the LORD hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day.

Though young, there were still many who could remember witnessing all the signs and wonders that God performed in Egypt before delivering them from bondage to that nation and its leaders.

Verse 4 seems to be saying that the people still gave no evidence of spiritual understanding of all they had seen. I compare it to the following example: The evidence of a Creator is prominent throughout the whole of creation, still there are people that close the understanding of their eyes, ears and mind to its truth. Like we are so often prone to do, we take God's provision for granted without truly recognizing the authority and power behind that provision. So Moses begins to try and make them understand this truth.

Deut. 29:5 And I have led you forty years in the wilderness: your clothes are not waxen old upon you, and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot.

Deut. 29:6 Ye have not eaten bread, neither have ye drunk wine or strong drink: that ye might know that I *am* the LORD your God.

First, he points out that throughout 40 years of wandering in the wilderness, mostly on foot, their clothes have not deteriorated and their shoes haven't worn out. This could only be the result of supernatural intervention. The whole time they feasted on manna and quail, not bread, and drank water instead of wine or strong drink—both miraculously provided by YHWH so as to help them understand His awesome power and authority. His miraculous provision gave proof of His uniqueness among the false gods of the heathen and also evidenced His position as the God of Israel.

Deut. 29:7 And when ye came unto this place, Sihon the king of Heshbon, and Og the king of Bashan, came out against us unto battle, and we smote them:

Deut. 29:8 And we took their land, and gave it for an inheritance unto the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to the half tribe of Manasseh.

Sihon was the king of the mighty Amorites and Og, the last of the Rephaim, some of the giants in the land, and God had already empowered His people to

defeat them and take their land that was all east of the Jordan River. It had already been designated as an inheritance for the tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh.

Deut. 29:9 Keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do them, that ye may prosper in all that ye do.

In light of the power of Almighty God as evidenced by these miracles, they should be eager to live according to the words of the covenant and experience God's continued blessing.

Deut. 29:10 ¶ Ye stand this day all of you before the LORD your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, *with* all the men of Israel,

Deut. 29:11 Your little ones, your wives, and thy stranger that *is* in thy camp, from the hewer of thy wood unto the drawer of thy water:

Deut. 29:12 That thou shouldest enter into covenant with the LORD thy God, and into his oath, which the LORD thy God maketh with thee this day:

Deut. 29:13 That he may establish thee to day for a people unto himself, and *that* he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

Moses is speaking to the whole congregation—tribal leaders and the hierarchy of leaders under them, and all the other men, children, women, foreigners that had aligned themselves with God's people, and servants. God is declaring through Moses that He is prepared to enter covenant with the people as a people set apart to Him, a position unique among all other nations on the earth. His desire is to be their God and to bless them according to His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. I am reminded of the verse where He describes them as His special treasure.

Exodus 19:4-6 "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation."

Deut. 29:14 Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath;

Deut. 29:15 But with *him* that standeth here with us this day before the LORD our God, and also with *him* that is not here with us this day:

I think it is significant to note that God carefully qualified this covenant to include not only those present before Moses at that time, but those who were not there. This would be a reference to future generations; this covenant would be binding on their descendants. Just as Abraham's descendants were seen as tithing to Melchizedek, so too would the descendants of these people be seen as being bound by this covenant.

Hebrews 7:9-10 "And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham. For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him."

God's covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob was unconditional; however, this covenant mediated through Moses was conditional. Though the people would choose to break covenant and become subject to the curses, it would not prevent

God from keeping His unconditional covenant with their forefathers. They would be judged accordingly until the Lord finally intervenes to establish a new covenant as prophesied by the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel and empowers the people to keep that covenant through His indwelling Spirit.

Jeremiah 31:33-34 "But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

Ezekiel 36:23-28 "And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God."

Deut. 29:16 (For ye know how we have dwelt in the land of Egypt; and how we came through the nations which ye passed by;

Deut. 29:17 And ye have seen their abominations, and their idols, wood and stone, silver and gold, which *were* among them:)

Moses adds a parenthetical statement at this point reminding the people of how they were miraculously delivered from Egypt and protected from the enemy nations they encountered along the way. There is a distinct difference between YHWH, the almighty powerful God of Israel, and the disgusting impotent idols of wood, stone, silver and gold that those nations worshipped.

Deut. 29:18 Lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the LORD our God, to go *and* serve the gods of these nations; lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood;

Deut. 29:19 And it come to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst:

Deut. 29:20 The LORD will not spare him, but then the anger of the LORD and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the LORD shall blot out his name from under heaven.

Deut. 29:21 And the LORD shall separate him unto evil out of all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant that are written in this book of the law:

In these verses Moses is verbalizing the possibility that there could be some among the congregation who would give lip service to the covenant, but who would secretly determine to keep self on the throne of his/her life rather than yield to God as Lord. That person need not think that he/she will get by with their hypocrisy. Verse 20 declares that individuals could suffer according to the curses for breaking covenant just as surely as could the nation as a whole. That person would ensure that his/her name would not be found in the Book of Life, a prerequisite to enjoying the covenant blessings for eternity.

Revelation 20:12&15 "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works....And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

The sad truth is that sin spreads like leaven through bread. There were guidelines in the law for dealing with sin in the camp. The effects of the curse would single one out as guilty of sin, and unless the people dealt with the transgressor according to the law, the sin would continue to spread among the people and eventually result in the culpability of the nation as a whole.

Deut. 29:22 So that the generation to come of your children that shall rise up after you, and the stranger that shall come from a far land, shall say, when they see the plagues of that land, and the sicknesses which the LORD hath laid upon it;

Deut. 29:23 And that the whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and burning, that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom, and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which the LORD overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath:

Deut. 29:24 Even all nations shall say, Wherefore hath the LORD done thus unto this land? what *meaneth* the heat of this great anger?

These verses pick back up with address to the nation as a whole. If the people break covenant with God, the effects of the pronounced curses on the land will be evident to future generations and any foreigners who come to the land. Eventually, the soil will become poisoned and will not even produce grass. Even the heathen nations will wonder why YHWH has judged His people so harshly and what they did to make Him so angry.

Deut. 29:25 Then men shall say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt:

Deut. 29:26 For they went and served other gods, and worshipped them, gods whom they knew not, and *whom* he had not given unto them:

Deut. 29:27 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against this land, to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book:

Deut. 29:28 And the LORD rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as *it is this day*.

There will still be those around who will be able to explain that it is because the people chose to break covenant with the “LORD God of their fathers” who brought them out of Egypt. They had chosen to reject God and turn to the worship of “other gods,” the false gods and idols of the heathen nations. God is true to His word, and the curses clearly recorded in this book will testify to that fact. They will be told that the decision of the people to break covenant and disobey God’s law is the reason for His great anger and wrath, the reason He has taken their nation away and scattered the people among the nations.

To witness God’s judgment should be a powerful deterrent to others who might choose to disobey Him. Why is it that we insist on repeating the mistakes of others in spite of the obvious consequences of those mistakes? This thought really hits home at this time in our nation’s history; we seem hell bent on ignoring the vivid consequences of yielding to socialism as evidenced by Germany in the last century. Sadly, I’m afraid we are going to suffer the consequences because of closing eyes, ears and mind to that example.

Deut. 29:29 The secret *things* belong unto the LORD our God: but those *things which are revealed* belong unto us and to our children for ever, that *we may do all the words of this law*.

This is a very intriguing verse. Point is made that there are things that YHWH is keeping secret from His people. However, those things that He has revealed to His people are to be obeyed—not just by those listening to Moses, but also by their future descendants. Scripture is clear throughout that the truth He reveals to us is for our benefit. (see journal on Psalm 119)

One commentator posited the idea that this could be a reference to God’s knowledge of Israel’s future transgression. If that is the case, it is better for the people not to know and feel like the situation is hopeless.

One thing we can be sure of—God’s word never changes; its truth is eternal.
Psalms 119:89 “LAMED. For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.”

Psalms 119:160 “Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever.”

Isaiah 40:8 “The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.”