

2009 Deuteronomy Series

A Study of the Character of God as He has Revealed Himself vs.
the Substitute Idols of our Neo-Pagan Culture
Availability of Revelation and the Imminent Choice

Fellowship Chapel

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SESSION #68 (3 Jan 2012)

Deut 30:11-20

I. INTRODUCTION & REVIEW

1:1-5	Introduction to God's spokesman, the 1 st Prophet Moses
1:6-4:40	1 st Exposition of the Torah = <i>motivation</i> to obey from (1) <u>past gracious actions</u> of Yahweh and (2) sovereign <u>destiny</u> of the nation (<u>future gracious actions</u> of Yahweh)
4:41-49	Editorial comment on context of 2 nd Exposition of the Torah
5:1-26:19	2 nd Exposition of the Torah = <i>proper response</i> to Yahweh in heart and soul
27:1-29:1	3 rd Exposition of the Torah = <i>inauguration of the covenant</i> in the land
29:2-30:20	4 th Exposition of the Torah = prophetic fore view of <i>covenant performance</i>
29:2-29:29	Israel's past, present and (near) future
30:1-20	Moses' closing challenge

II. MOSES' CLOSING CHALLENGE (30:1-20)

Keep the big picture of the 4th exposition in view: it gives a prophetic fore view of Israel's experience under the covenant it is about to inaugurate.

- Ultimate Personality over all history vs. [Impersonal Fate/Chance] (*which modern unbelievers are in denial over*)
- Ultimate responsibility vs. Ultimate [Victimhood] (*which is central to the struggle in our culture today in the debates from homosexuality to the sense of entitlement*)
- Establishes the rationale for the rest of the Old Testament
- 900 year theocratic experience → public demonstration that later would spread across the globe giving mankind heightened confidence that it was possible to think about the basic questions of life

A. The Interplay Between the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants (30:1-10)

1. Do the promised cursings invalidate the Abrahamic Covenant? Chap 29 ends in the ultimate cursing of exile which raises the question whether the Abrahamic Covenant will be violated.

Gen. 12:1-3 ==> God's counter-culture intrusion into the corrupted Noahic civilization & exclusive program of redemption

2. Abrahamic Covenant land promise to be fulfilled but in a way that does not invalidate the Mosaic Covenant (30:1-10).

30:1-2 it will come to pass

Omniscient knowledge of the future unique to the Bible. Three events to come.

blessing and curse

(1) future historic events of foreseen consequences of Israel's good & bad choices ==> God is "above" human choices

call them to mind (Heb: "return them to your heart")

(2) future historic perception of the design of their history (cf. **1 Kings 8:47** for same Hebrew expression translated in NKJV "*when they come to themselves* and repent")

Prodigal Son "came to himself" (**Lk 15:17**)

The case with Israel:

- **Deut 29:4 Yahweh has not given you a heart to perceive and eyes to see and ears to hear** — 1st generation didn't "get it", i.e., they thought they knew their new kingdom relationship to God but they really didn't
- **Deut 29:19 I shall have peace even though I follow the dictates of my heart** Acting perversely to true knowledge = "re-engineered" reality = idolatry
- **Deut 30:1-2 call them to mind** (Heb "return them to your heart") Like **1 Kings 8:47** "when they come to themselves" and **Lk 15:17** "came to himself **you return to the LORD your God and obey His voice**"

Repentance requires a [re-alignment] *between one's psychological state of awareness and one's deep-down epistemological state.*

Repentance can't occur until:

- (1) the underlying and suppressed truth is "released";
- (2) the *pain of suppression is seen to be worse than the pain of acknowledgement*;
- (3) the *authority of the Word of God replaces the authority of self*

This repentance thus fulfills *the obedience requirements of the Mosaic covenant*

30:3-5 that the LORD your God will bring you back from captivity. . .

God blesses after repentance because He can do so without aiding our perversion.

gather. . .

Prophets' expansion of **Deut 30:3-5**:

Isa. 11:11-12 the second time to recover the remnant of His people

Isa. 27:12-13 gathered one by one. . . Assyria. . . Egypt. . .

Jer. 23:3-6 gather the remnant. . . a Branch of Righteousness. . . ==> Messiah now involved in the restoration

Jer. 23:7-8 no longer say. . . but. . . ==> Exodus event eclipsed by global restoration event

Matt. 24:31 (cf Mark 13:27)

30:6 the LORD will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants

100% regenerated nation guarantees that the blessings of Yahweh occur as promised by the Abrahamic covenant.

Jer. 31:31-37 New Covenant

Ezek 36:24-32; 37:21-25 New Covenant w/ Messiah

B. The Availability of the Revealed Covenant (30:11-14)

Moses now deals with the [clarity] of revelation which is the justification for God to hold Israel responsible *just as He holds us responsible for the greater revelation that has been available for 2000 years to mankind.*

30:11 not too mysterious. . .nor far off

Doctrines of *revelation* and *inspiration* appear over and over again in this book.

Total conflict with pagan unbelief including the scholarly paganism of the modern university

Doctrine of revelation

- Revelation is *verbal*
- Revelation is *personal*
- Revelation is *historical*
- Revelation is *comprehensive*
- Revelation comes via *a line of prophets*

Doctrine of inspiration

- Necessity for covenant witness and 9th commandment (I Cor 15:15)
- Analogy with ANE treaties that protected the copies with curses (Deut 12:32; 31:9-13)
- Only a subset of all revelation (John 20:30-31)

30:12 not in heaven

Cf. **29:29**. There are truths that God has chosen NOT to reveal to us such as:

- Why He included *[_ responsible choices to do evil_]* in His creatures
- Why this *[_particular trial_]* has come my way
- What exactly will believers be doing in heaven and the eternal state

But what He has revealed is to be understood by believers (**Eph 1:17-19; 3:16-19; Heb. 5:13-14**).

30:13-14 not across the sea. . .in your mouth and in your heart that you may do it

Cf **31:19** verbal expression ~ mental comprehension

Relationship between speech and thought

C. The Imminent Choice (30:15-20)

Bottom line of this chapter and this book is the *choice* that God presented to theocratic Israel.

30:15-16 life and good. . .death and evil. . .

God treats mankind as adults—responsible for their choices.

But in theocratic Israel He revealed the final state of history:

- The *metaphysical* condition of creature existence would perfectly correspond to the *ethical* condition of creature existence!!
- All pagan unbelief divorces these two aspects of existence—attainment of truth and comfort and health and joy is sought independently of one's ethical state.

love Yahweh

= be loyal = honor His authority and position

live, multiply, bless the land

Material, physical existence. "Life" = "spirit" + "body"

30:17-18 heart turns away so you do not hear and are drawn away

Note the sequence: first is the *[_ decision to turn away_]* from the Word of God then an autonomous attitude sets in and finally a *[_wholesale alteration_] in worldview occurs*.

surely perish

God's blessings are contingent upon being loyal to Him. Blessing/cursing consequences were certain and immediate in theocratic Israel.

30:19 call heaven and earth as witnesses

New element in Deuteronomy: treaty-contract witnesses.

Every contract is open to “public witness” (e.g., wedding service). Witnesses provide objectivity in contract behavior.

Role of angels in history—a much neglected biblical theme, esp. in reformed covenant theology that so emphasizes redemption to the near exclusion of the doxological processes throughout the _[doxological processes throughout the non-redemptive]_ angelic realm.

- Role of angels in Gentile history: **Deut. 4:19; Dan. 10:13**
- Role of angels in Israel’s history: **Deut. 4:26; 32:1; 1 Kings 22:19-22; Ps. 89:5-8; Isa. 1:2 (Acts 7:53; Gal. 3:19; Heb 2:1-3** and the role of them surrounding **Jesus’** birth, life, and resurrection)
- Role of angels in Church history: **1 Cor. 11:10; Eph.3:20; Rev. 1:20; 2-3**

30:20 that. . .that. . .that. . .that

Four contingencies of Israel’s choices

He is your life and the length of your days

Human spirit: human body : : God: nation Israel

God’s “sacred space” on earth was His Presence in the nation Israel.

III. CONCLUSION

The ball is in Israel’s court!