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Deuteronomy 31:22-30

A Witness Against You

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²² Therefore Moses wrote this song the same day, and taught it to the children of Israel. ²³ Then He inaugurated Joshua the son of Nun, and said, "Be strong and of good courage; for you shall bring the children of Israel into the land of which I swore to them, and I will be with you."

²⁴ So it was, when Moses had completed writing the words of this law in a book, when they were finished, ²⁵ that Moses commanded the Levites, who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying: ²⁶ "Take this Book of the Law, and put it beside the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there as a witness against you; ²⁷ for I know your rebellion and your stiff neck. If today, while I am yet alive with you, you have been rebellious against the LORD, then how much more after my death? ²⁸ Gather to me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers, that I may speak these words in their hearing and call heaven and earth to witness against them. ²⁹ For I know that after my death you will become utterly corrupt, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you. And evil will befall you in the latter days, because you will do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger through the work of your hands."

³⁰ Then Moses spoke in the hearing of all the assembly of Israel the words of this song until they were ended:

In the passage today, as with last week, it is noted that the song to be presented will be a witness for the Lord against the people. The reason this is so, is because the words testify to what will come upon the people if they don't pay heed.

As long as the words are available, and as long as the people exist, the words will be a witness. Well, Israel still exists, and the words of Deuteronomy also still exist. And so, the witness continues.

This is not unlike the witness given to our own nation in the writings of our founding fathers. The number of quotes of warning from those who foresaw the need to be vigilant goes on and on. As long as the words continue to exist (unless they are utterly eradicated by the commies on the left – which is a chief goal of theirs), and as long as the nation exists, they stand as a witness to us –

"I predict future happiness for Americans, if they can prevent the government from wasting the labors of the people under the pretense of taking care of them." Jefferson

Jefferson gave his warning. It stands as a witness to his wisdom and our increasing folly.

"And of what kind are the men that will strive for this profitable preeminence, through all the bustle of cabal, the heat of contention, the infinite mutual abuse of parties, tearing to pieces the best of characters? It will not be the wise and moderate, the lovers of peace and good order, the men fittest for the trust. It will be the bold and the violent, the men of strong passions and indefatigable activity in their selfish pursuits. These will thrust themselves into your government and be your rulers." Franklin

Benjamin Franklin saw the inevitable outcome of the tyrannical desires of those who hate freedom for the masses. The recent medical manipulation of the masses has moved these forces into hyperdrive. It is doubtful that even Franklin would have been able to imagine this avenue having been employed as it has.

We have established witnesses that testify to the people of what was anticipated when vigilance is replaced with apathy. Israel does too. Oddly enough, many of Israel, meaning the people, live in this nation today.

And of them, many are in the halls of government striving for ever greater promotion of wickedness. The very attitude of the people that both Moses and our founding fathers warned against is clearly seen in them.

It is as if they rejected the Lord through their rejection of Moses, and now they are openly embracing the devil through their movement of this nation towards an alignment with the coming antichrist. The same spirit moves within them now that moved them away from their Savior when He presented Himself to them.

Text Verse: *“I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive. ⁴⁴ How can you believe, who receive honor from one another, and do not seek the honor that comes from the only God? ⁴⁵ Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is one who accuses you—Moses, in whom you trust. ⁴⁶ For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. ⁴⁷ But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?” John 5:43-47*

“If Congress can employ money indefinitely, for the general welfare, and are the sole and supreme judges of the general welfare, they may take the care of religion into their own hands; they may appoint teachers in every state, county, and parish, and pay them out of the public treasury; they may take into their own hands the education of children, the establishing in like manner schools throughout the union; they may assume the provision of the poor.... Were the power of Congress to be established in the latitude contended for, it would subvert the very foundations, and transmute the very nature of the limited government established by the people of America.” Madison

Madison’s words stand as a witness as well. Exactly what he spoke of concerning the welfare state, the religion of the state, the taking over of the school, and the subversion of the government are all being cunningly worked out by the left in our nation. We can no longer say, “the radical left,” because the left has completely converted to what that once meant.

They are taking the foundational underpinnings of our nation, and they are tearing them apart, one statue, one religious attack, one police department at a time. The work of their own

hands, and not the providence of God who rules, has become the standard. And their works speak only of wickedness and control.

Israel failed to heed Moses, so that when Christ came, they nailed Him to a tree. Our nation is failing to heed its Christian founders⁹, and we are crucifying our religious rights – and thus all of our other rights - openly and publicly.

Man apart from Christ cannot properly rule with freedom. And a nation which has departed from the way of the Lord is doomed to destruction. In the end, we know Israel will finally learn its lesson. As for this nation, that is not as certain. Only time will tell. But for the short term, we can see where things are going. And it isn't pretty.

But enough about this nation. We have a better hope in Christ. We must do what we can while we are here, but no matter what the outcome for this land will be, for those who are the called of the Lord, a far fairer land lies ahead. For now, we have a sermon to hear. It is one based on God's Superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. And I Will Be with You (verses 22 & 23)

In the previous passage from last week, the Lord told Moses that he was to rest with his fathers. After that, He detailed to Moses how the people would rise up and play the harlot, forsaking the Lord and breaking His covenant. In this, the Lord told him that many evils would fall upon the people and that He would hide his face from them because of their actions.

With that noted, he then said these words to Moses to close us out –

“Now therefore, write down this song for yourselves, and teach it to the children of Israel; put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for Me against the children of Israel. ²⁰When I have brought them to the land flowing with milk and honey, of which I swore to their fathers, and they have eaten and filled themselves and grown fat, then they will turn to other gods and serve them; and they will provoke Me and break My covenant. ²¹Then it shall be, when many evils and troubles have come upon them, that this song will testify against them as a witness; for it will not be forgotten in the mouths of their descendants, for I know the inclination of their behavior today, even before I have brought them to the land of which I swore to give them.” Deuteronomy 31:19-21

With that context remembered, the narrative now continues, saying...

²²Therefore Moses wrote this song the same day,

This is exactly in accord with what the Lord had just said, “Now therefore, write down this song for yourselves.” The words now bear an emphasis: *v’yiktov Moshe eth ha’shirah ha’zot ba’yom ha’hu* – “And wrote Moses the song the this in the day the it.”

The command was given, and the record of Moses’ immediate obedience is recorded. In verse 19, the command was in the plural, but here it is Moses who actually pens the words that are recorded.

It can be inferred from the Lord’s words that the song to be recorded comes directly from Him through divine inspiration, or even through audible oral pronouncement, probably the latter. That this is likely was seen in Numbers 7 –

“Now when Moses went into the tabernacle of meeting to speak with Him, he heard the voice of One speaking to him from above the mercy seat that was on the ark of the Testimony, from between the two cherubim; thus He spoke to him.” Numbers 7:89

As such, the song – like all of Scripture – contains the very word of God, uttered forth by Him. Of the song that Moses records, Jamieson-Fausset-Brown gives a rather awkward analysis:

“National songs take deep hold of the memories and have a powerful influence in stirring the deepest feelings of a people. In accordance with this principle in human nature, a song was ordered to be composed by Moses, doubtless under divine inspiration, which was to be learnt by the Israelites themselves and to be taught to their children in every age, embodying the substance of the preceding addresses, and of a strain well suited to inspire the popular mind with a strong sense of God's favor to their nation.” Jamieson-Fausset-Brown

This may ultimately be true, because the Lord had covenanted with Israel to never abandon them, but it hardly reflects the words that the Lord has just said to Moses –

“...then they will turn to other gods and serve them; and they will provoke Me and break My covenant. ²¹ Then it shall be, when many evils and troubles have come upon them, that this song will testify against them as a witness.” Deuteronomy 31:20, 21

The song, rather than being something to “inspire the popular mind with a strong sense of God’s favor,” is rather a song:

- * To witness to the Lord’s unchanging character
- * Of His faithfulness to the nation in providing everything He said He would
- * Of their apostasy against Him
- * Of the consequences of that apostasy

- * Of His clear calling of others outside of Israel to Himself as a means of rebuking them for their actions because of their ridiculous stupidity in not perceiving exactly what He was doing – because He had told them in advance of exactly what He was doing
- * Of His returning His favor to them, not because they deserved it, but because of His unchanging character that set forth His plans and purposes in the first place.

These are some of the main themes that can be deduced by a cursory reading of the song recorded in Chapter 32. The only “strong sense of God’s favor” to be found is the overarching promise to not utterly destroy them.

If that was the only thing Israel was looking forward to concerning God’s favor, it would demonstrate an even duller sense in the collective mind than the song actually portrays of them, which is a hugely dull sense, as the Lord Himself says –

“For they are a nation void of counsel,
Nor is there any understanding in them.” Deuteronomy 32:28

Despite these things, the song was recorded, it has been carefully maintained, and it clearly and accurately details the incredible future history of the nation. As such, it isn’t just a national song to inspire, like the words of their national song, *Ha’tikvah*, sung by Israel today.

Rather, it is a prophetic look into the future of the nation, which is at best bleak for much of its history, the calling of others by the Lord as a means of provoking them, and of the ultimate return to a state of blessing upon them while continuing to bless those He has called apart from them.

Paul will rely on portions of this song in His writings to convey what is going on in God’s redemptive workings between Israel and the Gentiles. With these things in mind concerning the song, Moses obediently wrote it down...

22 (con’t) and taught it to the children of Israel.

v’lamedah eth bene Israel – “and he taught sons Israel.” Again, this is exactly in accord with verse 19, “and teach it to the children of Israel; put it in their mouths.” Just as instructed, so Moses followed through with what was said. This is now the seventeenth and last time that the word *lamad*, is used in Deuteronomy.

It was introduced into Scripture in Deuteronomy 4:1, and it will continue to be seen, but it has been a common note concerning the contents of the law in this book. It properly signifies “to goad,” and thus – by implication – “to teach.” The rod is given as an incentive to learn at times. This is the idea now.

Moses is prodding them to learn this song so that it would be thoroughly instilled in them, and that they would then pass its words on to others after them. With this task complete, the Lord now personally ensures that the continuance of leadership in the nation will not be in question...

²³ Then He inaugurated Joshua the son of Nun,

v'tsav eth Yehoshua bin nun – “And commanded Joshua son Nun.” This may or may not be the same as the inauguration of Joshua recorded at the time Moses laid his hands upon him before Eleazar the priest and all the congregation. That was recorded in Numbers 27 –

“So Moses did as the LORD commanded him. He took Joshua and set him before Eleazar the priest and before all the congregation. ²³ And he laid his hands on him and inaugurated him, just as the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses.”

-Numbers 27:22, 23

The same word, *tsav*, is used both there and here. It means to command, commission, give charge, and so on. As for the command, the text makes it unclear who is actually speaking. One would initially think it was Moses based on the connection to the previous verse. And yet, in the next clause, it will be in the first person and appear to be the Lord –

“And Moses wrote this song in that same day, and he taught it to the children of Israel. ²³ And he (or He) commanded Joshua, son of Nun, and said, ‘Be strong and be strengthened; for you shall bring the children of Israel into the land which I swore to them, and I will be with you’” (CG).

This leaves several possibilities:

- * It is Moses speaking on behalf of the Lord (something seen elsewhere).
- * It is Moses speaking in the first clause, and then the Lord picks up the second.
- * The subject has changed from the previous verse from Moses to the Lord.

No matter which, the Lord is the understood subject of at least the final clause. For now, whether Moses or the Lord...

²³ (con't) **and said, “Be strong and of good courage;**

It is the exact same words spoken by Moses to Joshua in verse 31:7 – *v'yomer khazaq v'emats* – “and said, ‘be strong and be strengthened.’” It is also what Moses said to the people in verse 31:6. However, for Joshua now, there is a difference in the next words...

23 (con't) **for you shall bring the children of Israel into the land of which I swore to them,**

In 31:7, Moses said that Joshua must go with the people. Now, the Lord (either directly or through Moses) says, that Joshua would bring the people in. Joshua is both one of the people and he is the leader of them as well. Such is true with Christ. He was both of Israel, and He is the Leader who will bring them into the inheritance.

The Lord swore to Israel that He would bring them in, and He will do exactly as He swore, using Joshua as His instrument to make it come about. Likewise, the promised rest for Israel will come to them, and Jesus is the instrument by which that will come to pass. The Lord has spoken, and He will perform, as He next notes...

23 (con't) **and I will be with you."**

The "you" is singular. He is speaking to Joshua, through whom the action will be performed. Notice the three times this thought is presented in the chapter.

Taken together with the highly unusual structure of verse 31:3 that was carefully evaluated then, one cannot help but get a sense of the 1) absolute inspiration of Scripture, represented by Moses, and 2) the deity of Christ which is being hinted at with the words of Moses and the Lord concerning the Lord and Joshua –

v3 – Moses to the people: "The LORD your God Himself crosses over before you; Joshua himself crosses over before you."

v6 - Moses to the people: "Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the LORD your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you."

v7, 8 - Moses to Joshua: "Be strong and of good courage, for you must go with this people to the land which the LORD has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall cause them to inherit it. ⁸And the LORD, He is the One who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed."

v23 - Moses/the Lord to Joshua: "Then He inaugurated Joshua the son of Nun, and said, 'Be strong and of good courage; for you shall bring the children of Israel into the land of which I swore to them, and I will be with you.'"

The law (Moses – the word of God) instructs the people concerning who Jesus is in relation to the Lord. The law (Moses) instructs Christ Jesus concerning His charge and of the Lord's presence with Him. The law (Moses)/the Lord instructs Christ Jesus that the Lord is with Him.

Whether one accepts this interpretation or not, it is exactly what is revealed in Scripture concerning the nature of what actually occurs concerning the word of God, the Lord, and Christ Jesus when evaluated from a Christian perspective.

The word of God reflects who the Lord is. Christ is the embodiment of the Word given forth by the Lord, and the word testifies to who Christ is and what He would do because He is the Lord – He is the Word. The commissioning of Joshua is both by Moses and the Lord, and the commission of Christ is both by the Word and the Lord.

The Law of Moses, the word of the Lord presented to Israel for their instruction, is carefully presenting what lies ahead in typology concerning the coming of Messiah. With that incredible thought, the words of revelation received in the tent of meeting come to a close.

But more, the words that Moses recorded have now come to an end as well. Though the Song of Moses, the blessing of the tribes, and the record of Moses' final time overlooking the land – along with his death and burial – is yet ahead, it has been compiled by this point in the chronology by him, or some of it was recorded by someone else. This is to be understood from the next words of the narrative...

Be strong and also be of good courage
For you shall bring the people in
Let not what lies ahead discourage
For You shall prevail; in You shall be found no sin

They shall enter the land of promise that to them I swore
And I will be with You; it shall come about
Those with faith will enter and receive so much more
Because they believed My word; in them there was no doubt

Trust in Me, My people, and trust in My Son
We will go with you, and we shall bring you in
By faith in what we will do, the battle is won
At the moment you believe, your new life will begin

And it comes with a guarantee concerning what was done
The seal of the Spirit, purchased for You by My Son

II. Call Heaven and Earth to Witness (verses 24-30)

²⁴ So it was, when Moses had completed writing the words of this law in a book, when they were finished,

It is possible this was written by Moses, but it is not so much instruction as a historical account of what next takes place. Or, it could have been written later. Being dogmatic about who wrote the words here and in Chapter 34 is unnecessary.

It is true that Moses could have been inspired to write the account of his death and burial, which is what I think is correct, but most scholars would dispute that thought. No matter what, the verse now – rather than “in a book” – says, *al sepher ad tumam* – “upon document until completed.”

This means the words of the entire Pentateuch, from Genesis to Deuteronomy, had been written upon a single scroll. This is how it is maintained to this day by Jews. It is the single, united, and complete Law of Moses. As such, again, it is possible that even the words now and the words of Chapter 34 were written by him as inspired by the Lord. Once written out, it next says...

²⁵ that Moses commanded the Levites, who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying:

“The Levites,” here is a shortened form of “the priests, the sons of Levi.” It is the priests alone who could bear the ark of the covenant. In verse 31:9, it said –

“So Moses wrote this law and delivered it to the priests, the sons of Levi, who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and to all the elders of Israel.”

That was probably referring to a reading forth of the law to these people. This is now the actual presentation of the scroll of the law to the priests for its safeguarding henceforth, as next noted...

²⁶ “Take this Book of the Law, and put it beside the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there as a witness against you;

The words now and in the coming verse are carefully chosen to convey very precise meaning. The verb “put” is plural – “you (priests) put it.” It then says, “the Lord your (plural) God.” But it then ends with “against you (singular).” As such, it reads –

“Take this Book of the Law and (you, priests) put it beside *the ark of the covenant of Yehovah your (all) God*, and it shall be there in you (singular) to witness.”

He is addressing the priests, but he then lumps them in as a part of the nation to whom they belong. Yehovah is their God, and the law which has come from Him through Moses will be given as a witness against the nation.

Thus, the priests have a solemn charge laid upon them to be stewards of this law, ensuring that the people understand their responsibility toward the Lord, and their culpability when they fail to measure up according to His standard. Because they are putting the law up, and because the final chapters are a part of the law, I personally feel that even those chapters were received by Moses.

²⁷ for I know your rebellion and your stiff neck.

There is a stress here: *ki anokhi yadati* – “For I, I know.” Further, the words are singular – “your (Israel) rebelliousness and your (Israel) neck, the stiff.” Moses personally is aware of the propensity of the nation. He had to endure it, and he was absolutely certain that it was congenital. As such, he asks, or more likely proclaims...

^{27 (con’t)} If today, while I am yet alive with you, you have been rebellious against the LORD, then how much more after my death?

There is an adamant nature to his words, “Behold! In my continuance alive with you (all) this day, rebellious you (all) have been with Yehovah, and also for after my death!”

He not only notes that the nation is rebellious and stiff-necked, but everyone has been and will continue to be rebellious against the Lord after he is gone. The proclivities of Israel are carefully noted by him, and they will be magnified in the people after he has left them to their own devices.

It is not unlike Adam in the garden. Once the Lord was out of sight, he became unfaithful to the command he had been given. Likewise, once Israel’s lawgiver was out of sight, the people would become faithfully unfaithful, just like their first father.

Moses was sure to let them know this in advance. Thus, his words continue as a witness – in the recorded witness – which is the law that bears his name. As such, he now makes a special call...

²⁸ Gather to me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers,

The verb is plural and an imperative – “You (all) gather to me...!” He is calling forth for the priests to assemble the elders and the officers, meaning the scribes of the people, to be brought before him. This was so...

^{28 (con’t)} that I may speak these words in their hearing

The Hebrew literally reads “in their ears.” Moses was to personally convey to these leaders the words of the song directed by the Lord. Like verse 22, this follows directly after the command of the Lord in verse 19. Again, there He said –

“Now therefore, write down this song for yourselves, and teach it to the children of Israel; put it in their mouths.”

The song cannot be put in their mouths unless it is first spoken into their ears. Thus, Moses will convey the words to them, and from there, they will be conveyed to all the people. And as in verse 19, the words continue to run parallel in the next clause...

²⁸ (con’t) **and call heaven and earth to witness against them.**

v’aidah bam eth ha’sh’mayim v’eth ha’arets – “and call to witness in them the heavens and the earth.” In the continuation of verse 19, it said, “that this song may be a witness for Me against the children of Israel.” The song will be a witness, but the song itself calls forth witnesses, beginning with these words –

“Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak; And hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.”

-Deuteronomy 32:1

In calling for the heavens and the earth to witness, Moses is not calling for judgment, but for witnesses that will testify to the just nature of any coming judgment and punishment. In this is a reference back to the first sentence of the Bible, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

The heavens and the earth themselves are being likened to the surety of the covenant, of which the song is a prophetic anticipation of how Israel will conduct itself before the Lord in relation to the covenant.

In other words, when Moses calls the heavens and the earth to witness against Israel, it is not speaking of calling those who dwell in the heavens and those who dwell on the earth to be witnesses. Rather, it is saying that even the heavens and earth *are* the witnesses.

As evident as these are to remind us of the existence of God, so shall it be the same when judgment comes. Thus, Israel should then rightfully say, “As sure as I am standing on the ground, and as surely as the heavens are above my head – both created by God – so is this punishment deserved.”

The inanimate heavens and earth metaphorically speak out the obvious reality of what has occurred when Israel fails and is punished. Just as the Lord is the Creator and Sustainer of the heavens and the earth, He is the Initiator and Monitor of the covenant.

As such, He is also the offended party if (meaning when) Israel does not measure up to their side of the agreement. One thing is for sure, if the Lord did not uphold His side of the covenant, the whining of the people against Him would never end. But He did and He continues to do so.

On the other hand, Israel never measured up to it, and Moses has told them that he is certain they never will. Thus, the song is a witness against them, and the heavens and the earth that have been called forth to hear are sure witnesses against them as well.

All of creation will behold the steadfastness of the Lord and the unceasing failure of the nation and its people. And this is not without a greater purpose.

In the never-ceasing failure of the people – through their rebellion, harlotries, and rejection of the Lord – and through the unswerving faithfulness of the Lord in His keeping them as a people despite their failings, His very nature as the covenant-keeping God is revealed.

For the most part, this is either ignored (think of replacement theology), overlooked (think of replacement theology), or misunderstood (think of replacement theology), by the people of the world.

But if someone truly wants an example of the unlimited grace and mercy of the Lord, and of His covenant-keeping nature despite all else, all he needs to do is consider in its proper light the nation of Israel that has been, Israel that is, and Israel as it is promised to be.

When one believes that God has replaced Israel with the church, he has an unbalanced, even a skewed, sense of God's faithfulness. Eventually, there will always be a fault in how such a person perceives the word "grace."

He may say that good works are a necessary part of saving faith. He may say that salvation can be lost. He may point his fingers at the unsaved and decide they are not worth saving. And so on. But he will never truly understand what it means that a person is saved, continues to be saved, or that he is even worth saving at times, by demonstrating faith – and nothing else – when presented with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Paul says that the law is a tutor to lead people to Christ. If that is so, then it is those under the law who are the example of what that means. As Daniel 9 tells us that there are seven more years of law left for this group of people, that example continues on to this day.

Until that time of law comes, the punishments for disobeying the law from the past continue on in them. Nobody in his right mind would disagree that the last two thousand years have been a fulfillment of what is stated in Deuteronomy 28.

If this is so, then it means that the words of Deuteronomy 28 still apply to Israel. And if they do, then it means that Israel is still bound to them, and if that is so, then Israel has not been replaced by the church. They are simply waiting to be brought into what the church has already received.

Be sound in your theology in this regard, and you will understand the magnitude of what Moses is saying to the people, there on the eastern shores of the Jordan River.

²⁹ For I know that after my death you will become utterly corrupt,

There is a very heavy emphasis in the words: *ki yadati akhare moti ki haskhet tashkhitun* – “for I know after my death, for corrupting, you will (certainly) corrupt yourselves.”

Moses isn't just saying that the people will become gross. Rather, they will be septic. Their putridity would cause a match to ignite the surrounding air and level everything around them. This is the general sense of the force of his words. And there is a result of such corruption...

^{29 (con't)} and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you.

The way of the Lord is right. The way of the Lord is just. The way of the Lord is holy and pure. If one has corrupted, it is not possible for him to follow the way of the Lord. The natural consequence of such corruption is to turn away from it...

^{29 (con't)} And evil will befall you in the latter days,

v'qarat etkem ha'raah b'akharit ha'yamim – “and will befall you (all) the evil in later the days.” It is as if evil is personified. They will turn from the way of the Lord, and they will walk directly into the path of Mr. Evil.

Moses has not even yet read the words of the song to the people, but he already knows the words himself. It is as if the frustration of the knowledge he possesses impels him to chide them now, even before he has presented them with it.

And in his chastising, he tells them they will reap what they have sowed. They will meet a foe because they have rejected their closest Friend.

As far as the term “the latter days” it is used much like Paul uses it in the New Testament to refer to an indeterminate time. It is simply a time in the future when the things being described come to pass because they will surely come to pass...

29 (con't) because you will do evil in the sight of the LORD,

Here it says that they will do *ha'ra*, the evil, in the eyes of the Lord. In doing such, they will meet the same consequences for what they have done. They will do the evil and they will thus encounter the evil. The Lord's eyes will see, and the Lord will repay in kind – evil for evil – because of what they have done...

29 (con't) to provoke Him to anger through the work of your hands.”

The word *kaas* or “anger,” has been used twice so far in Deuteronomy. Both times, it was in relation to provoking the Lord's anger through false gods fashioned by hand. And it will again be used in the song that will next be presented to the people –

“They provoked Him to jealousy with foreign gods; With abominations they provoked Him to anger.” Deuteronomy 32:16

Moses remembered what they had done in fashioning the golden calf. He had warned them about doing such things again, and yet he knows that they will – in fact – do them as the song clearly says. Because of this, he is furious at them for what they will do in the coming days.

One can see, even before the law is finalized that it is a point by which Israel will not, and indeed cannot, abide. In Moses' words, there is actually not a call out for, “This law will save you.” He has already told them that it is their life, but he has also told them that it will be their death.

His words are clearly a call out for something else; something better. He has hinted at it, and the fact that he will die on the east side of the Jordan confirms it. The song of Moses will, in fact, testify to it as well. We need something else!

It cannot be otherwise, because the song says, “I will provoke them to jealousy by those who are not a nation.” However, only Israel was given the Mosaic Covenant which is the Law of Moses.

As such, it cannot be that the Lord will use this law to provoke Israel, unless it is a provoking of them by it as it is fulfilled by Another. But if it is fulfilled by Another, it must be One who is of Israel, because only Israel was given it. If only they could see this. As for now...

***30 (fin) Then Moses spoke in the hearing of all the assembly of Israel the words of this song until they were ended:**

The meaning here is that either Moses spoke to all of the people with the elders close enough to hear, or that he simply spoke to the leaders who represent all of the assembly. As the elders and the officers were just called to assemble in verse 28, the latter is likely. From there, they would have conveyed the words to the people.

Either way, the words are recorded, they would be copied and rebroadcast, and they were intended to be remembered by the people for all time.

They are words that witness to the state of the people, and they explain the state of them from the times of Moses, even until the day when they are again redeemed to be considered the people of the Lord through their acceptance of the New Covenant in Christ's blood.

With the coming of this song next week, and with its being so close to the time of Israel's entrance into the land of promise, one can see that the two songs of Moses, one in Exodus 15, and one in Deuteronomy 32, actually bracket the period of the Exodus. From exit to entry.

However, the Song of Moses, the servant of God, is also referred to in Revelation 15. As such, it will be right to consider that when the song is presented to Israel by Moses. For now, it is certain that as Deuteronomy winds down, we are seeing an amazing step in the plan of redemption for mankind taking place.

Everything about this book, and the four books that precede it, have given us clues into what God is doing in Christ to reconcile the world to Himself. Israel has been used as a key part of this, but Israel is not the focus of the story. They are intended to highlight that which is key.

Through their disobedience, the obedience and faithfulness of Jesus Christ is especially highlighted. And the faithfulness of Jesus, in turn, highlights the glory of the Lord. It is in His coming and uniting with human flesh that we see the highest magnificence of what God was willing to do to ensure His creatures could be brought back to Himself.

Let us not forget this as we consider our own failings before Him. And then let us be ever thankful that they have been dealt with through the sufferings and death of Jesus. Yes, let us thank God for Jesus Christ our Lord today and through all the days of our lives.

And, of one thing we can be certain. When we are translated to glory, we will continue to be thankful to God forever and ever. Hallelujah to our God. Great things He has done.

Closing Verse: *“Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law. ²² But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. ²³ But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. ²⁴ Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵ But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.” Galatians 3:21-25*

Next Week: Deuteronomy 32:1-6 *It will take several sermons before the chapter is done... (The Song of Moses, Part I) (93rd Deuteronomy Sermon)*

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. But He also has expectations of you as He prepares you for entrance into His Land of Promise. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

A Witness Against You

Therefore Moses wrote this song the same day
And taught it to the children of Israel; the words He did convey

Then He inaugurated Joshua the son of Nun, and said
“Be strong and of good courage; for you shall bring
-----the children of Israel
Into the land of which I swore to them
And I will be with you, so all shall go well

So it was, when Moses had completed writing
The words of this law in a book, when they were finished
-----all the words he was conveying
That Moses commanded the Levites
Who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying...

“Take this Book of the Law
And put it beside the ark of the covenant, so you shall do
Of the LORD your God
That it may be there as a witness against you

For I know your rebellion and your stiff neck
If today, while I am yet alive with you – while I still have breath
You have been rebellious against the LORD
Then how much more after my death?

Gather to me all the elders of your tribes
And your officers, so to you I address
That I may speak these words in their hearing
And call heaven and earth against them to witness

For I know that after my death
You will become utterly corrupt, I know that it is true
And turn aside from the way
Which I have commanded you

And evil will befall you in the latter days
Because you will do evil in the LORD's sight
To provoke Him to anger
Through the work of your hands, things that just aren't right

Then Moses spoke in the hearing of all the assembly of Israel
The words of this song until they were ended, every word
-----he did tell

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...