

Deuteronomy 29 - The Land Covenant

III. Third sermon: What God will do for Israel (Deut 27:1—34:12)

(2) Imposition of the Land Covenant (Deut 29:1—30:20)

- (A) A New Covenant (29:1)
- (B) God's past faithfulness (29:2-8)
- (C) Nation gathers for covenant renewal (29:9-15)
- (D) Consequences of disobeying the covenant (29:16-29)

(2) Imposition of the Land Covenant (Deut 29:1—30:20) [Covenant, Land](#)

Deut 29:1—30:20 are considered the Land Covenant...

- Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer considered Deut 28—30 to be the covenant
- The Scofield Reference Bible considers it to be 29:1—30:10 with Deut 29 as the introduction
- Arnold Fruchtenbaum considers it to be 29:1—30:20
- J. Vernon McGee takes Deut 29:1—30:10 as being the covenant
- Others boil it down to only Deut 30:1-10

In a direct, personal appeal to the generation standing before him, Moses confronted them with the central purpose of the ceremony of this great day (v10-15). This central demand for the oath of allegiance, which reflects the overall pattern of the suzerainty treaty, is preceded by a reminder of the Lord's past works of salvation (v2-9) and followed by a warning that the curses of the covenant would be visited on an unfaithful nation throughout their generations (v16-29).

Outline of the Land Covenant (29:1—30:20)

- 29:1 - Introduction
- 29:2-9 - Moses' summary of the 40-year wilderness experience
- 29:10-13 - A covenant is made to warn them of things to come
- 29:14-21 - Moses' warning against turning away from the Lord
- 29:22-29 - A prophecy that they will turn away from the Lord, resulting in their dispersion out of the land and into the Gentile nations, to ensure a long period of persecutions.
- 30:1-10 - The regathering of Israel (the 1st regathering), the regeneration of Israel, then the regathering of Israel (the 2nd time)
- 30:11-20 - Further admonitions, warnings and promises

Abrahamic Covenant



Unconditional covenant with a conditional blessing (Deut. 28; Lev. 26)

Deuteronomy 29

(A) A New Covenant (29:1)

1 These are the words of the covenant which the LORD commanded Moses to make with the sons of Israel in the land of Moab, **besides** the covenant which He had made with them at Horeb.

1 These are the words of the covenant which the LORD commanded Moses to make with the sons of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the covenant which He had made with them at Horeb.

1 These are the terms of the covenant that the LORD commanded Moses to make with the Israelis in the land of Moab in addition to the covenant that he made with them in Horeb.

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.

- Deuteronomy = "second law"; it effectively takes Exodus and restates it for the second generation. In this repetition, Moses lays out the Land Covenant.

- "...besides" - this is a clear statement differentiating the Mosaic Covenant from the Land Covenant. The former is temporal and conditional while the latter is eternal and

unconditional.

- The Land Covenant is an independent covenant from the Mosaic Covenant
- This was given to Israel in Moab, before they crossed the Jordan River under Joshua
- The Land Covenant (Deut 29-30) is basically a prophecy...Israel would be removed from their land into worldwide dispersion, and in the last days, God will bring the Jews back into the land. God will not only restore them physically into the land (Cf. 1948), but also spiritually (future, Deut 30:1-3).

(B) God's past faithfulness (29:2-8)

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 all his servants, and to all his land;

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 all his servants and all his land;

2 Moses called all Israel together and addressed them: "You saw everything that the LORD did before your eyes in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh, to all his servants, and to his whole country.

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;

- (Hebrew Bible 28:69)

- There is essential continuity in God's Covenant of Redemption from Genesis through Revelation

— Nevertheless, the successive administrations of that Covenant, as it is repeatedly renewed by divine grace, are to be distinguished

3 the great trials which your eyes have seen, those great signs and wonders.

3 the great trials which your eyes have seen, those great signs and wonders.

3 Those great feats that you saw with your own eyes are signs and great wonders.

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

4 Yet to this day the LORD has **not given you a heart to know**, nor eyes to see, nor ears to hear.

4 Yet to this day the LORD has not given you a heart to know, nor eyes to see, nor ears to hear.

4 Yet to this day, the LORD hasn't given you a heart that understands, eyes that perceive, and ears that discern.

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

- "...not given you a heart to know" - Israel had previously promised to keep God's Law, but now the Lord is telling them that it will be impossible for them to do since they lack a new heart.

— The purpose of this statement is to prepare them to realize that they need God's grace in their lives, they need a new heart, which the New Covenant later promises (Jer 31:31).

— Isaiah has a great deal to say about this

— Paul in Romans deals with the blindness of Israel

— Rom 11:8 - According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear; unto this day.

— The simplest spiritual knowledge is beyond the perception of man unless the Spirit of God grants him understanding as a sovereign gift of grace

— This people, so signally favored as to have lived 40 years in the atmosphere of supernatural providence, lacked that necessary gift (Cf. 9:7,24)

5 And I have led you in the wilderness for forty years; your clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandal has not worn out on your foot.

5 I have led you forty years in the wilderness; your clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandal has not worn out on your foot.

5 Though I've led you for 40 years in the desert, neither your clothes nor your shoes have worn out.

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.

6 You have not eaten bread, nor have you drunk wine or *other* strong drink, in order that you might know that I am the LORD your God.

6 You have not eaten bread, nor have you drunk wine or strong drink, in order that you might know that I am the LORD your God.

6 You didn't have bread to eat or wine or anything intoxicating to drink, so that you would learn that I am the LORD your God.

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.

7 When you reached this place, Sihon the king of Heshbon and Og the king of Bashan came out to meet us for battle, but we defeated them;

7 When you reached this place, Sihon the king of Heshbon and Og the king of Bashan came out to meet us for battle, but we defeated them;

7 Then you reached this place, where King Sihon of Heshbon and King Og of Bashan had come out to meet and fight with us, but we defeated them.

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:

8 and we took their land and gave it as an inheritance to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of the Manassites.

8 and we took their land and gave it as an inheritance to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of the Manassites.

8 We captured their land and handed it as an inheritance to the descendants of Reuben, the descendants of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh.

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.

(C) Nation gathers for covenant renewal (29:9-15)

9 So you will keep the words of this covenant and do them, in order that you may be successful in everything that you do.

9 So keep the words of this covenant to do them, that you may prosper in all that you do.

9 Therefore, keep the terms of this covenant, carrying them out so that you'll be wise in everything you do."

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

- The responsibility for this spiritual dullness was Israel's, and by this reproof the people were incited to a better response to their Lord.

- The imperceptible way in which the appeal of Moses becomes the direct appeal of the Lord (v5ff.; Cf. 7:4; 11:15; 17:3; 28:20) evidences the reality of the supernatural revelation which came through Moses, God's mediator.

10 "You stand today, all of you, before the LORD your God: your heads, your tribes, your elders and your officers, *that is*, all the men of Israel,

10 "You stand today, all of you, before the LORD your God: your chiefs, your tribes, your elders and your officers, *even* all the men of Israel,

10 "All of you are standing today in the presence of the LORD your God—the heads of your tribes, your elders, your magistrates, all the men of Israel,

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,

11 your little ones, your wives, and the stranger who is within your camps, from the one who gathers your firewood to the one who draws your water,

11 your little ones, your wives, and the alien who is within your camps, from the one who chops your wood to the one who draws your water,

11 along with your children, your wives, even the foreigner in your camp, including the woodchopper and the water drawer—

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:

- The terms indicate the solemnly formal nature of the assembly and stress the fact that the entire covenant community was present for participation in the oath.

- Women and children, non-Israelites (Cf. Ex 12:38; Num 10:29; 11:4), and servants (Deut 29:11c; Cf. Josh 9:21) were included

12 so that you may **enter into the covenant with the LORD** your God, and into His oath which the LORD your God is making with you today,

12 that you may enter into the covenant with the LORD your God, and into His oath which the LORD your God is making with you today,

12 to enter into a covenant with the LORD your God and into the oath that he is about to make with you today,

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:

- "...enter into the covenant with the LORD" - the Hebrew phrase, found only here, means literally, pass over into, or pass through

— According to the latter translation, the expression might derive from a ceremony of oath taking like that in Gen 15:17-18

The equating of the Lord's covenant with his oath is a significant linkage to the nature of the covenant as an instrument of God's rule whereby he secures the commitment of a people to his service. "That he may establish thee": This verse is to the same effect, but it shows, too, that God's establishment of covenant relationship with man is not a humiliating subjugation but an act of redemptive favor. It fulfills the promise and oath in which the children of God have found hope and consolation (Cf. Heb 6:17-18).

13 in order that He may establish you today as His people, and that He may be your God, just as He spoke to you and as He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

13 in order that He may establish you today as His people and that He may be your God, just as He spoke to you and as He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

13 so that he will elevate you to be a people for him. And he will be God to you, just as he promised you and swore to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

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.

14 "Now *it is* not with you alone *that* I am making this covenant and this oath,

14 "Now not with you alone am I making this covenant and this oath,

14 Now, I'm not making this covenant and oath with you alone,

14 Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath;

15 but *both* with those who stand here with us today in the presence of the LORD our God,
and with those who are not with us here today

15 but both with those who stand here with us today in the presence of the LORD our God
and with those who are not with us here today

15 but with whoever is here with us standing in the presence of the LORD our God today,
as well as with those who aren't here with us today."

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:

- "...and with those who are not with us here today" - this means that there was to be
genealogical continuity to the covenant

— Such is the case not because salvation is an inalienable family heirloom but because
God is faithful to his promise to extend his covenant mercies to the thousandth generation
of those who love him and because covenant administration respects parental authority
(v14-15)

— Accordingly, the covenant with its sacramental sign of consecration is administered
to believers together with their children

(D) Consequences of disobeying the covenant (29:16-29)

16 (for you know how we lived in the land of Egypt, and how we passed through the midst
of the nations through which you passed;

16 (for you know how we lived in the land of Egypt, and how we came through the midst of
the nations through which you passed;

16 "Now, you know how we lived in the land of Egypt and how we traveled through the
territory of other nations.

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

17 moreover, you have seen their abominations and their idols *made of* wood and stone,
silver and gold, which *they had* with them);

17 moreover, you have seen their abominations and their idols *of* wood, stone, silver, and
gold, which *they had* with them);

17 You have seen their detestable practices, their idols of wood, stone, silver, and gold that
they had with them.

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

18 so that there will not be among you a man or woman, or family or tribe, whose heart turns away today from the LORD our God, to go to serve the gods of those nations; that there will not be among you a root bearing poisonous fruit and wormwood.

18 so that there will not be among you a man or woman, or family or tribe, whose heart turns away today from the LORD our God, to go and serve the gods of those nations; that there will not be among you a root bearing poisonous fruit and wormwood.

18 Be alert so there is no man, woman, family, or a tribe whose heart is turning away from the LORD your God to go and serve the gods of those nations. Be alert so there will be no root among you that produces poisonous and bitter fruit,

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;

- (Remember), lest idolatry take root among you and you reap a bitter, poisonous harvest (v18; Cf. Heb 12:15)

- The danger figuratively depicted in v18b is developed in v19-28 (the root in v19-21 and the bitter fruit in v22-28)

19 And it shall be when he hears the words of this curse, that he will consider himself fortunate in his heart, saying, 'I will do well though I walk in the stubbornness of my heart in order to destroy the watered *land* along with the dry.'

19 It shall be when he hears the words of this curse, that he will boast, saying, 'I have peace though I walk in the stubbornness of my heart in order to destroy the watered *land* with the dry.'

19 because when such a person⁸ hears the words of this oath, he will bless himself and say:

'I will have a peaceful life, even though I'm determined to be stubborn.' By doing this he will be sweeping away both watered and parched ground alike.'

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:

20 The LORD will not be willing to forgive him, but rather the anger of the LORD and His wrath will burn against that person, and every curse that is written in this book will lie upon him, and the LORD will wipe out his name from under heaven.

20 The LORD shall never be willing to forgive him, but rather the anger of the LORD and His jealousy will burn against that man, and every curse which is written in this book will rest on him, and the LORD will blot out his name from under heaven.

20 "The LORD won't forgive such a person. Instead, the zealous anger of the LORD will blaze against him. All the curses that were written in this book will fall on him. Then the LORD will wipe out his memory from under heaven.

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.

21 Then the LORD will single him out for disaster from all the tribes of Israel, in accordance with all the curses of the covenant which is written in this Book of the Law.

21 Then the LORD will single him out for adversity from all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant which are written in this book of the law.

21 The LORD will set him apart from all the tribes of Israel for destruction, according to the curses of the covenant that were written in this Book of the Law."

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:

22 "Now the future generation, your sons who rise up after you and the foreigner who comes from a distant land, when they see the plagues of that land and the diseases with which the LORD has afflicted it, will say,

22 "Now the generation to come, your sons who rise up after you and the foreigner who comes from a distant land, when they see the plagues of the land and the diseases with which the LORD has afflicted it, will say,

22 "Then the generation to come—your descendants after you and the foreigners who come from afar—will see plagues and illnesses infecting the land that the LORD will inflict on it.

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;

- Abruptly changing his standpoint to the future (Deut 29:22) beyond the desolation of the theocracy and the Exile (v28), which he had before threatened in the covenant curses, Moses again traced the cause of Israel's fall to her having forsaken the covenant by transferring her allegiance to idol god-kings (v25-28).

23 'All its land is brimstone and salt, burned debris, unsown and unproductive, and no grass grows on it, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiim, which the LORD overthrew in His anger and in His wrath.'

23 'All its land is brimstone and salt, a burning waste, unsown and unproductive, and no grass grows in it, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiim, which the LORD overthrew in His anger and in His wrath.'

23 The whole land will be covered with salt pits and burning sulfur, with nothing planted, nothing sprouting, and producing no vegetation—overthrown like Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, when the LORD overthrew them in his raging fury.

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:

24 All the nations will say, '**Why has the LORD done *all* this** to this land? Why this great outburst of anger?'

24 All the nations will say, 'Why has the LORD done thus to this land? Why this great outburst of anger?'

24 All the nations will ask, 'Why did the LORD do this to this land? What is the meaning of this fierce and great anger?'

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

- "...Why has the LORD done *all* this...?": He used the device of a dramatic dialogue of Israelites and foreigners standing amid the charred ruins of the theocratic land, a former paradise turned, like the cities of the plain, into a barren waste by the fury of God's judgment (v23)

— The Vale of Siddim, once a paradise, a visible witness of God's devastating judgment (Gen 13:10; 19:24-25)

25 Then *people* will say, '*It is* because they abandoned the covenant of the LORD, the God of their fathers, which He made with them when He brought them out of the land of Egypt.

25 Then *men* will say, 'Because they forsook the covenant of the LORD, the God of their fathers, which He made with them when He brought them out of the land of Egypt.

25 Then they will answer themselves,

'Because they've abandoned the covenant of their LORD, the God of their ancestors that he had made with them when he brought them out of Egypt.

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:

26 And they went and served other gods and worshiped them, gods that they have not known and whom He had not assigned to them.

26 They went and served other gods and worshiped them, gods whom they have not known and whom He had not allotted to them.

26 They followed and worshipped other gods whom they had not known and whom he did not assign to them.

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

27 Therefore, the anger of the LORD burned against that land, to bring upon it every curse which is written in this book;

27 Therefore, the anger of the LORD burned against that land, to bring upon it every curse which is written in this book;

27 For this reason, the anger of the LORD raged against this land, to bring upon it all the curses that were written in this book.

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:

28 and the LORD uprooted them from their land in anger, fury, and in great wrath, and hurled them into another land, as *it is* this day.'

28 and the LORD uprooted them from their land in anger and in fury and in great wrath, and cast them into another land, as *it is* this day.'

28 The LORD uprooted them from the land in his anger, wrath, and great fury, deporting them to another land, and that's the way things are today.'

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.

29 "The **secretthings** belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, so that we may follow all the words of this Law.

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

29 "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but what has been revealed belongs to us and to our children forever, so that we might observe the words of this Law."

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.

- "...secret things" - the "mysteries" revealed in the NT are "secret things" in the OT. The "hidden things" in God's plan for history.

— This verse also teaches us that the only way humans can ever learn about God is if He reveals Himself to us, if He tells us about the "secret things" that are part of His plan.

- The Lord does this in context with the Mosaic Law. These are the things that God has revealed for the purpose of Israel obeying His laws.
- Attention to the Lord's revealed demand for consecration is the life-business of his servants (Cf. 30:11ff.), not lusting after knowledge of divine mysteries (Cf. Gen 3:5).
- There are, of course, many "mysteries" in the Bible, which comes from the Greek word, *musterion*, which actually means a revealed secret, rather than an secret unknown.
- See [Mysteries in Scripture](#) for an overview of mysteries of God revealed in the NT.