

# DEUTERONOMY

STUDY EIGHT | CHAPTER 30:1-20




CHOOSE  
LIFE

## INTRODUCTION

This passage is a part of Moses' third and final address to the people of Israel before they enter the promised land. Before Israel stands the choice of life or death, that is, either to love the Lord their God by walking in all his ways, or to turn their hearts away from him. The final words in the law section of Deuteronomy are an impassioned plea to hold fast to God.

Previous chapters focused a lot on the recent past or the immediate future. Chapter 30 speaks of Israel's more distant future and God's unwavering eternal faithfulness despite their constant failure to love and serve him. It is important to note why Moses is giving this word to Israel. Despite curses, exile, and hardship, God's blessing shall have the last word and his plans shall always be carried out.

## STUDY FRAMEWORK

-  Bible Passage
-  Study Notes + Study Questions
-  Prayer

# Bible Passage

## DEUT 30.1-20

- 1 And when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the LORD your God has driven you,
- 2 and return to the LORD your God, you and your children, and obey his voice in all that I command you today, with all your heart and with all your soul,
- 3 then the LORD your God will restore your fortunes and have mercy on you, and he will gather you again from all the peoples where the LORD your God has scattered you.
- 4 If your outcasts are in the uttermost parts of heaven, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there he will take you.
- 5 And the LORD your God will bring you into the land that your fathers possessed, that you may possess it. And he will make you more prosperous and numerous than your fathers.
- 6 And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.
- 7 And the LORD your God will put all these curses on your foes and enemies who persecuted you.
- 8 And you shall again obey the voice of the LORD and keep all his commandments that I command you today.
- 9 The LORD your God will make you abundantly prosperous in all the work of your hand, in the fruit of your womb and in the fruit of your cattle and in the fruit of your ground. For the LORD will again take delight in prospering you, as he took delight in your fathers,
- 10 when you obey the voice of the LORD your God, to keep his commandments and his statutes that are written in this Book of the Law, when you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.
- 11 For this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for you, neither is it far off.
- 12 It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?'
- 13 Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?'
- 14 But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it.
- 15 See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil.
- 16 If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I command you today, by loving the LORD your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his rules, then you shall live and multiply, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to take possession of it.
- 17 But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them,
- 18 I declare to you today, that you shall surely perish. You shall not live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess.
- 19 I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live,
- 20 loving the LORD your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for he is your life and length of days, that you may dwell in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.



# Study Notes

## STRUCTURE

- vv. 1-10: Salvation from exile.
- vv. 11-14: What you have been asked to do is not impossible.
- vv. 15-20: Two truths with heavenly witness.

## IMMEDIATE CONTEXT

- Moses begins his third sermon in Deut 29, with a major emphasis being the possibility of future failure.
- Chapter 31 details the handing off of leadership for Israel from Moses to Joshua who will now lead them into the land after Moses dies.
- The third sermon is the last one. Moses' life is nearly over, and he shall not enter the promised land with Israel.

## IN DEUTORONOMY

- v.1 "The blessing and the curse..." is a theme we have seen before (Deut 11.26-28 and 27.15-28.19).
- v.6 speaks about "circumcision of the heart, which we first ran into in Deut 10.12-16.

## IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

- The story of the exile and eventual return of Israel make up a large portion of the Old Testament. We read about the fall and exile of Israel in 1 and 2 Kings, and the return in Ezra and Nehemiah.

- vv. 5-10 speak about God's future plans. Abraham's covenant is restated, along with a new promise to change the hearts of the people. These ideas are echoed in the prophets (Jer 31.31-34, Ezek 36.24-28).

## IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

In the New Testament we read about God's heart-changing salvation, often expressed often in terms similar to those found here:

- Romans 2.28-29, where Paul elaborates upon the true meaning of circumcision as a matter of the heart, occurring by the Spirit. That inner change comes from God, and for God's worship.
- Romans 10.5-13, where Paul quotes Deut 30.11-14. The Gospel is the fulfillment of this promise that salvation is not "difficult to find."



## WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Read 29:18-29 and 31:1-18. Why does the covenant with Abraham keep appearing in Deuteronomy? How is it different in this passage?

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Read Ezekiel 36:24-28. What does this passage reveal to be the fulfillment of God's promise in Deuteronomy 30:6?

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How does Moses motivate the people to choose life? Why does his final sermon finish this way?

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## STUDY TIPS

### Ⓐ Look at the context

- Read the passage immediately before and after
- How does the context help us understand the meaning of the text?
- Look up cross references.
- How do they help us better understand the passage?
- In your small group share how the context has added to your understanding of this week's passage.

### Ⓑ Summarize the big idea

- So, what's the main idea of the passage? How would you title this passage?
- In your small group share the main idea

### Ⓒ Stop to pray

- Thank God for all he has already revealed to you, and ask him to help you see Jesus more clearly, and love him more deeply, through the next steps of your study.

## WHAT DOES IT REVEAL?

Is the eventual exile of Israel a failure of God's plan?

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What do the promises God makes reveal ?

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Read Hebrews 9.11-14 and 10.12-18 What do we learn about the nature of our hearts and our need for Christ?

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## HOW WILL I RESPOND?

Failure is an expected part of our lives as Christians. How are vv. 30.11-14 and the gift of the Gospel still encouraging for you?

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Once again in Deuteronomy, matters of the heart are of utmost importance to God. How does knowing that “the Lord your God is your life and length of days” help you choose life and reorient your heart towards God?

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## Prayer

Take time to say back to God the things which he has been teaching you here in this passage. Ask for his help in making them a reality in your life.

