

Third Mosaic Speech: A Way Back from Apostasy (February 1406 BC)

Deuteronomy 29:2–30:20

An Exhortation to Covenant Renewal

29:2 Moses proclaimed to all Israel as follows: “You have seen all that the LORD did in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh, all his servants, and his land.

3 Your eyes have seen the great judgments, those signs and mighty wonders.

4 But to this very day the LORD has not given you an understanding mind, perceptive eyes, or discerning ears! [\[Rom 11:8\]](#)

5 I have led you through the desert for forty years. Your clothing has not worn out nor have your sandals deteriorated.

6 You have eaten no bread and drunk no wine or beer—all so that you might know that I am the LORD your God!

7 When you came to this place King Sihon of Heshbon and King Og of Bashan came out to make war and we defeated them.

8 Then we took their land and gave it as an inheritance to Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh.

9 “Therefore, keep the terms of this covenant and obey them so that you may be successful in everything you do.

The Significance and Scope of the Covenantal Renewal

10 You are standing today, all of you, before the LORD your God—the heads of your tribes, your elders, your officials, every Israelite man,

11 your infants, your wives, and the foreigners living in your encampment, those who chop wood and those who carry water—

12 so that you may enter by oath into the covenant the LORD your God is making with you today.

13 Today he will affirm that you are his people and that he is your God, just as he promised you and as he swore by oath to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

14 It is not with you alone that I am making this covenant by oath,

15 but with whoever stands with us here today before the LORD our God as well as those not with us here today.

Warning Against Disobedience

16 “(For you know how we lived in the land of Egypt and how we crossed through the nations as we traveled.

17 You have seen their detestable things and idols of wood, stone, silver, and gold.)

18 Beware that the heart of no man, woman, clan, or tribe among you turns away from the LORD our God today to pursue and serve the gods of those nations; beware that there is among you no root producing poisonous and bitter fruit. [\[Heb 12:15\]](#)

19 When such a person hears the words of this oath he secretly blesses himself and says, “I will have peace though I continue to walk with a stubborn spirit.” This will destroy the watered ground with the parched.

20 The LORD will be unwilling to forgive him, and his intense anger will rage against that man; all the curses written in this scroll will fall upon him and the LORD will obliterate his name from memory.

21 The LORD will single him out for judgment from all the tribes of Israel according to all the curses of the covenant written in this scroll of the law.

22 The generation to come—your descendants who will rise up after you, as well as the foreigner who will come from distant places—will see the afflictions of that land and the illnesses that the LORD has brought on it.

23 The whole land will be covered with brimstone, salt, and burning debris; it will not be planted nor will it sprout or produce grass. It will resemble the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiim, which the LORD destroyed in his intense anger.

24 Then all the nations will ask, “Why has the LORD done all this to this land? What is this fierce, heated display of anger all about?”

25 Then people will say, “Because they abandoned the covenant of the LORD, the God of their ancestors, which he made with them when he brought them out of the land of Egypt.

26 They went and served other gods and worshiped them, gods they did not know and that he did not permit them to worship.

27 That is why the LORD’s anger erupted against this land, bringing on it all the curses written in this scroll.

28 So the LORD has uprooted them from their land in anger, wrath, and great rage and has deported them to another land, as is clear today.”

29 Secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those that are revealed belong to us and our descendants forever, so that we might obey all the words of this law.

A Way Back from Apostasy

30:1 “When you have experienced all these things, both the blessings and the curses I have set before you, you will reflect upon them in all the nations where the LORD your God has banished you.

2 Then if you and your descendants turn to the LORD your God and obey him with your whole mind and being just as I am commanding you today,

3 the LORD your God will reverse your captivity and have pity on you. He will turn and gather you from all the peoples among whom he has scattered you.

4 Even if your exiles are in the most distant land, from there the LORD your God will gather you and bring you back.

5 Then he will bring you to the land your ancestors possessed and you also will possess it; he will do better for you and multiply you more than he did your ancestors.

6 The LORD your God will also cleanse your heart and the hearts of your descendants so that you may love him with all your mind and being and so that you may live.

7 Then the LORD your God will put all these curses on your enemies, on those who hate you and persecute you.

8 You will return and obey the LORD, keeping all his commandments I am giving you today.

9 The LORD your God will make the labor of your hands abundantly successful and multiply your children, the offspring of your cattle, and the produce of your soil. For the LORD your God will once more rejoice over you to make you prosperous just as he rejoiced over your ancestors,

10 if you obey the LORD your God and keep his commandments and statutes that are written in this scroll of the law. But you must turn to him with your whole mind and being.

Choose Life!

11 “This commandment I am giving you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it too remote.

12 It is not in heaven, as though one must say, “Who will go up to heaven to get it for us and proclaim it to us so we may obey it?”

13 And it is not across the sea, as though one must say, “Who will cross over to the other side of the sea and get it for us and proclaim it to us so we may obey it?”

14 For the thing is very near you—it is in your mouth and in your mind so that you can do it. [[Rom 10:6–9](#)]

15 “Look! I have set before you today life and prosperity on the one hand, and death and disaster on the other.

16 What I am commanding you today is to love the LORD your God, to walk in his ways, and to obey his commandments, his statutes, and his ordinances. Then you will live and become numerous and the LORD your God will bless you in the land which you are about to possess.

17 However, if you turn aside and do not obey, but are lured away to worship and serve other gods,

18 I declare to you this very day that you will certainly perish! You will not extend your time in the land you are crossing the Jordan to possess.

19 Today I invoke heaven and earth as a witness against you that I have set life and death, blessing and curse, before you. Therefore choose life so that you and your descendants may live!

20 I also call on you to love the LORD your God, to obey him and be loyal to him, for he gives you life and enables you to live continually in the land the LORD promised to give to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.”

Yahweh Commissions Joshua as Israel’s Next Leader (February 1406 BC)

Deuteronomy 31:1–23

I Will Not Go With You, But Yahweh Will

1 Then Moses went and spoke these words to all Israel.

2 He said to them, “Today I am a hundred and twenty years old. I am no longer able to get about, and the LORD has said to me, ‘You will not cross the Jordan.’

3 As for the LORD your God, he is about to cross over before you; he will destroy these nations before you and dispossess them. As for Joshua, he is about to cross before you just as the LORD has said.

4 The LORD will do to them just what he did to Sihon and Og, the Amorite kings, and to their land, which he destroyed.

5 The LORD will deliver them over to you and you will do to them according to the whole commandment I have given you.

6 Be strong and courageous! Do not fear or tremble before them, for the LORD your God is the one who is going with you. He will not fail you or abandon you!” [[Heb 13:5](#)]

Moses Publically Encourages His Successor

7 Then Moses called out to Joshua in the presence of all Israel, “Be strong and courageous, for you will accompany these people to the land that the LORD promised to give their ancestors, and you will enable them to inherit it.

8 The LORD is indeed going before you—he will be with you; he will not fail you or abandon you. Do not be afraid or discouraged!”

Moses Arranges for the Law to Be Read Every Seven Years

9 Then Moses wrote down this law and gave it to the Levitical priests, who carry the ark of the LORD’s covenant, and to all Israel’s elders.

10 He commanded them: “At the end of seven years, at the appointed time of the cancellation of debts, at the Feast of Temporary Shelters,

11 when all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God in the place he chooses, you must read this law before them within their hearing.

12 Gather the people—men, women, and children, as well as the resident foreigners in your villages—so they may hear and thus learn about and fear the LORD your God and carefully obey all the words of this law.

13 Then their children, who have not known this law, will also hear about and learn to fear the LORD your God for as long as you live in the land you are crossing the Jordan to possess.”

Yahweh Commissions Joshua

14 Then the LORD said to Moses, “The day of your death is near. Summon Joshua and present yourselves in the tent of meeting so that I can commission him.” So Moses and Joshua presented themselves in the tent of meeting.

15 The LORD appeared in the tent in a pillar of cloud that stood above the door of the tent.

16 Then the LORD said to Moses, “You are about to die, and then these people will begin to prostitute themselves with the foreign gods of the land into which they are going. They will reject me and break my covenant that I have made with them.

17 At that time my anger will erupt against them and I will abandon them and hide my face from them until they are devoured. Many disasters and distresses will overcome them so that they will say at that time, ‘Have not these disasters overcome us because our God is not among us?’

18 But I will certainly hide myself at that time because of all the wickedness they will have done by turning to other gods.

19 Now write down for yourselves the following song and teach it to the Israelites. Put it into their very mouths so that this song may serve as my witness against the Israelites!

20 For after I have brought them to the land I promised to their ancestors—one flowing with milk and honey—and they eat their fill and become fat, then they will turn to other gods and worship them; they will reject me and break my covenant.

21 Then when many disasters and distresses overcome them this song will testify against them, for their descendants will not forget it. I know the intentions they have in mind today, even before I bring them to the land I have promised.”

22 So on that day Moses wrote down this song and taught it to the Israelites,

23 and the LORD commissioned Joshua son of Nun, “Be strong and courageous, for you will take the Israelites to the land I have promised them, and I will be with you.”

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