

CHAPTER 29

INTRODUCTION TO DEUTERONOMY 29

This chapter begins with an intimation of another covenant the Lord was about to make with the people of Israel, (⁽¹²⁹¹⁾Deuteronomy 29:1); and, to prepare their minds to an attention to it, various things which the Lord had done for them are recited, (⁽¹²⁹²⁾Deuteronomy 29:2-9); the persons are particularly mentioned with whom the covenant would now be made, the substance of which is, that they should be his people, and he their God, (⁽¹²⁹³⁾Deuteronomy 29:10-15); and since they had seen the idols in Egypt and other countries, with which they might have been ensnared, they are cautioned against idolatry and idolaters, as being most provoking to the Lord, (⁽¹²⁹⁴⁾Deuteronomy 29:16-21); which would bring destruction not only on particular persons, but upon their whole land, to the amazement of posterity; who, inquiring the reason of it, will be told, it was because they forsook the covenant of God, and particularly were guilty of idolatry, which, whether privately or openly committed, would be always punished, (⁽¹²⁹⁵⁾Deuteronomy 29:22-29).

Ver. 1. *These [are] the words of the covenant*, etc.] Not what go before, but follow after, in the next chapters, to the end of the book; in which are various promises of grace, and promises of good things, both with respect to Jews and Gentiles, intermixed with other things:

which the Lord commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab; or to declare unto them, and acquaint them with, they being now in the plains of Moab, ready to enter into the land of, Canaan:

besides the covenant which he made with them at Horeb: or Sinai; which Jarchi interprets, besides the curses in Leviticus, delivered on Sinai; he seems to have respect to (⁽¹²⁹⁶⁾Leviticus 26:14-46). This covenant was different from that at Sinai, spoken of (⁽¹²⁹⁷⁾Exodus 24:8); being made not only at a different time, at near forty years' distance, and at a different place, nor Sinai; but when Israel were come nearer Mount Sion, and were actually possessed of part of their inheritance, the land of promise, that part of the land of Moab which the two kings of the Amorites had seized and

dwelt in, whom Israel had dispossessed; and with different persons, that generation being dead, excepting a very few, which were at Sinai: but it was different as to the substance and matter of it, it not only including that, and being a renewal of it, as is generally thought, but containing such declarations of grace which had not been made before, not only respecting the repenting and returning Israelites, but the Gentiles also; for this covenant was made with the stranger, as well as with Israel, (^(~~REV~~)Deuteronomy 29:11); and relates to the times of the Messiah, the call of the Gentiles, the conversion of the Jews, and their return to their own land in the latter day.

Ver. 2. *Moses called unto all Israel*, etc.] He had been speaking before to the heads of them, and delivered at different times what is before recorded; but now he summoned the whole body of the people together, a solemn covenant being to be made between God and them; or such things being to be made known unto them as were of universal concernment:

and said unto them; what is in this chapter; which is only a preparation or introduction to what he had to declare unto them in the following:

ye have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt; the Targum of Jonathan is,

“what the Word of the Lord did;”

for all the wonderful things there done in Egypt were done by the essential Word of God, Christ, the Son of God; who appeared to Moses in the bush, and sent him to Egypt, and by him and Aaron wrought the miracles there; which many now present had seen, and were then old enough to take notice of, and could remember, though their fathers then in being were now dead:

unto Pharaoh and unto all his servants, and unto all his land; the plagues he inflicted on the person of Pharaoh, and on all his courtiers, and on all the people in Egypt, for they reached the whole land.

Ver. 3. *The great temptations which thine eyes have seen*, etc.] Or trials, the ten plagues which tried the Egyptians, whether they would let Israel go; and tried the Israelites, whether they would believe in the Lord, and trust in his almighty power to deliver them:

the signs and those great miracles: as the said plagues were such as were beyond the power of nature to produce, and which only Omnipotence could really effect.

Ver. 4. *Yet the Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive*, etc.] They had some of them seen the above miracles with their bodily eyes, but had not discerned with the eyes of their understanding the power of God displayed in them, the goodness of God to them on whose behalf they were wrought, in order to obtain their deliverance, and the vengeance of God on the Egyptians for detaining them; so Jarchi interprets it of an heart to know the mercies of the Lord, and to cleave unto him:

and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day; to see and observe the gracious dealings of God with them, and to hearken to his voice and obey it: so the understanding heart, the seeing eye, and hearing ear, in things spiritual, are from the Lord, are special gifts of his grace, which he bestows on some, and not on others; (see ^{<300>}Proverbs 20:12). The Targum of Jonathan is,

“the Word of the Lord did not give you an heart, etc.”

Ver. 5. *And I have led you forty years in the wilderness*, etc.] From the time of their coming out of Egypt unto that day, which though not quite complete, is given as a round number. Eupolemus ^{f541}, an Heathen writer, confirms this date of the ministry of Moses among the Israelites; he says, Moses performed the office of a prophet forty years:

your clothes are not waxen old upon you: were not worn out; all those forty years they had been in the wilderness, they had never wanted clothes fitting for them, according to their age and stature, and which decayed not; (see Gill on ^{<300>}Deuteronomy 8:4”);

and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot; which were necessary to wear in travelling, and especially in a rugged wilderness; and yet, thought they had been always in use during so long a time, were not worn out, which was really miraculous; (see Gill on ^{<300>}Deuteronomy 8:4”).

Ver. 6. *Ye have not eaten bread*, etc.] Bread made of corn, common bread, of their own preparing, made by the labour of their own hands; but manna, the food of angels, the bread of heaven:

neither have you drank wine, nor strong drink; only water out of the rock, at least chiefly, and for constancy; though it may be, when they were on the borders of other countries, as of the Edomites, they might obtain some wine for their money:

that ye might know that I [am] the Lord your God; who was both able and willing to provide food, drink, and raiment for them, and supply them with all good things, and support them without the use of the common necessaries of life; which were abundant proofs of his power and goodness.

Ver. 7. *And when ye came unto this place*, etc.] The borders of Moab, the wilderness before it, to which joined the plains they were now in; (see ^{<0213>}Numbers 21:13,20 ^{<0226>}Deuteronomy 2:26);

Sihon king of Heshbon, and Og king of Bashan, came out against us unto battle; not together, but one after the other, and that very quickly; as soon almost as they had fought with the one, and conquered him, the other came out against them:

and we smote them; killed them and their armies, and the inhabitants of their countries; the history of which see in (^{<0223>}Numbers 21:23-35).

Ver. 8. *And we took their land*, etc.] Which belonged to the two kings, the lands of Jazer, Gilead, and Bashan, fine countries for pasturage:

and gave it for an inheritances unto the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to the half tribe of Manasseh; who requested it, and to whom it was granted on certain conditions, and they were now in possession of it; (see ^{<0331>}Numbers 32:1-42).

Ver. 9. *Keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do them*, etc.] To do which they were laid under great obligations, through the goodness of God to them, in giving them victory over the two kings, and delivering their countries into their hands, as well as by all the favours bestowed on them in the wilderness, where they were sufficiently supplied with food, drink, and raiment; all which is made use of as a motive and argument to engage them to observe and keep the covenant the Lord made with them:

that ye may prosper in all that ye do: in all their occupations and businesses of life, in their manufactures and commerce, in the culture of their fields and vineyards, and in whatsoever they were employed in a lawful way; the word used has sometimes, the signification of acting wisely

and prudently, as in (⁻²⁵²¹³Isaiah 52:13); hence the Septuagint version is, “that ye may understand all that ye do”; and so the Jerusalem Targum.

Ver. 10. *Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God*, etc.] Being gathered together at the door of the tabernacle, at the summons of Moses. Aben Ezra interprets it round about the ark, which was the symbol of the divine Presence:

your captains of your tribes; the heads and rulers of them:

your elders and your officers, [with] all the men of Israel; not the seventy elders only, but their elders in their several tribes, cities, and families, men of gravity and prudence, as well as of age, and who were in some place of power and authority or another: and the “officers” may design such who attended the judges, and executed their orders; (see ⁻⁶¹⁶¹⁸Deuteronomy 16:18); and with them were the common people, the males, who were grown persons. Aben Ezra thinks they stood in the order in which they here are mentioned, which is not improbable; next to Moses the princes, then the elders, and after them the officers, and next every man of Israel, the males; and then the little ones with the males; after them the women, and last of all the proselytes.

Ver. 11. *Your little ones, your wives*, etc.] Who are scarce ever mentioned in any special law or solemn transaction:

and thy stranger that [is] in thy camp; not only the proselyte of righteousness, who embraced the Jewish religion entirely, but the proselyte of the gate, who was admitted to dwell among them, having renounced idolatry. These standing with the Israelites, when this covenant was made, has respect to the Gentiles, who as well as the Jews have an interest in the covenant of grace made with Christ; in whom there is, neither Jew nor Gentile, any difference between them:

from the hewer of thy wood to the drawer of thy water; that hewed wood for firing and other uses, and drew water for the camp; who were generally mean persons, and perhaps some that came out of Egypt with them are here intended; however, mean and abject persons are meant, and signifies that none should be excluded from a concern in this solemn affair on account of their meanness.

Ver. 12. *That thou shouldest enter into covenant with the Lord thy God*, etc.] That is, they were all to appear and stand in this order before the

Lord, that they might solemnly avouch him to be their God, and hear him declaring them to be his people, and the many promises and prophecies of good things he should deliver to them, as well as threatenings of wrath and vengeance in case of disobedience to him: or “that thou shouldest pass”^{f542}; which some think is an allusion to the manner of making covenants, by slaying a creature, and cutting it in pieces, and passing between them, as in (~~2418~~Jeremiah 34:18); so Jarchi and Aben Ezra:

and into his oath; annexed to his covenant and promise, to show the immutability and certain fulfilment of it on his part; and may signify not only the oath he swore that they should be his people, but the oath he gave them, and they took, that he should be their God:

which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day; which refers both to the covenant and the oath, or the covenant confirmed by an oath, even the covenant now made in the plains of Moab, distinct from that at Horeb or Sinai.

Ver. 13. *That he may establish thee this day for a people unto himself, and [that] he may be unto thee a God*, etc.] Which contains the sum and substance of the covenant; (see ~~2428~~Jeremiah 32:38);

as he hath said unto thee, and as he had sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; (~~1537~~Deuteronomy 26:17,18 28:9).

Ver. 14. *Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath.*] That is, Moses; for he was ordered to make this covenant with them in the name of the Lord; what promises of good things, or declarations of his mind and will, God would make, Moses was to deliver to them; and what was required of them he would inform them of. Aben Ezra interprets it, not only you, but those that will come after you, your sons and your sons’ sons.

Ver. 15. *But with [him] that standeth here with us this day before the Lord our God*, etc.] Who are before specified according to their dignity, age, sex, and station of life; or rather, “but [as] with him that standeth”, etc.

and so with [him] that [is] not here with us this day; detained at home by illness and indisposition of body, or by one providence or another; so that they could not come out of their tents, and make their appearance before

the tabernacle; though Jarchi interprets this of the people of future generations.

Ver. 16. *For ye know how we have dwelt in the land of Egypt*, etc.] How long they and their fathers had dwelt there, the number of years they had been in the land, as the Targum of Jonathan, which was upwards of two hundred years; and being a country the inhabitants of which were much given to idolatry, they had seen many of their idols, and much of their idolatrous worship; and their hearts had been apt to be ensnared by it, and the minds of some tinctured with it, and the remembrance thereof might make ill impressions on them; to remove or prevent which this covenant was made:

and how we came through the nations which ye passed by; as the Edomites, Ammonites, Moabites, and Midianites, as Aben Ezra observes, through whose borders they came, as they passed by their countries in their journeys in the wilderness.

Ver. 17. *And ye have seen their abominations and their idols*, etc.] Or, “their abominations, even their idols”; for the same are meant by both: it is common in Scripture to call the idols of the Gentiles abominations, without any other explanation of them; (see ^{<11116>}1 Kings 11:5,7); because they are abominable to God, and ought to be so to men: the word for idols has the signification of dung, and may be rendered dunghill gods, either referring to such that were bred and lived in dung, as the beetle, worshipped by the Egyptians, as Bishop Patrick observes; or which were as much to be loathed and abhorred as the dung of any creature:

wood and stone, silver and gold; these are the materials of which the idols they had seen in the several countries they had been in, or passed through, were made of; some of wood, others of stone cut out of these, and carved; others more rich and costly were made of massive gold and silver, and were molten ones; or the images of wood were glided with gold and silver;

which [were] among them; now these being seen by them in as they passed along, they might run in their minds, or be called to remembrance by them, and so they be in danger of being drawn aside to make the like, and worship them.

Ver. 18. *Lest there should be among you man or woman, or family, or tribe*, etc.] These words stand in connection with (^{<15215>}Deuteronomy 29:15), with (^{<15216>}Deuteronomy 29:16,17) being in a parenthesis, as may be

observed, and show the design of this solemn appearance of the people, and their entering afresh into covenant; which was to prevent their falling into idolatry, and preserve them from it, whether a single person of either sex, or a whole family, or even a tribe, which might be in danger of being infected with it, and so all the people:

whose heart turneth away this day from the Lord our God, to go [and] serve the gods of those nations; whose heart is enticed and drawn aside at the remembrance of the idols he has seen worshipped by others; and is looking off from the Lord God, his faith in him being weakened, his fear of him removed, and his affections for him lessened; and is looking towards the idols of the nations, with a hankering mind to serve and worship them:

lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood: the word “rosh”, which we render “gall”, signifies, according to Jarchi, a bitter herb, which better suits with a root than gall, and is elsewhere by us rendered “hemlock”, (^{<2900>}Hosea 10:4); and is by him very rightly interpreted of a wicked man among them; for not a principle of immorality, or heresy, rooted in the mind, productive of bitter fruits, or evil actions, is meant; but a bad man, particularly an idolater, who is rooted in idolatry, and is guilty of and commits abominable actions; the issue of which will be bitterness and death, if not recovered; which agrees with what the apostle says, (^{<3025>}Hebrews 12:15); who manifestly alludes to this passage; see the Apocrypha:

“In those days went there out of Israel wicked men, who persuaded many, saying, Let us go and make a covenant with the heathen that are round about us: for since we departed from them we have had much sorrow.” (1 Maccabees 1:11)

and is confirmed by what follows.

Ver. 19. *And it cometh to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse,* etc.] That is, the man before compared to a root bearing bitter herbs, when he should hear the curses pronounced by the law against such persons as himself:

that he bless himself in his heart; inwardly pronounce himself blessed, thinking himself secure from the curse of the law, and flattering himself it will never reach him nor come upon him:

saying, I shall have peace; all happiness and prosperity, in soul, body, and estate; inward peace of mind now, and eternal peace hereafter:

though I walk in the imagination of my heart; in worshipping idols which he vainly and wickedly imagined to be gods; to the worship of which his wicked heart prompted him, and he was resolutely and stubbornly bent upon, and in which he continued:

to add drunkenness to thirst; as a thirsty man to quench his thirst drinks, and adds to that, or drinks yet more and more until he is drunken; so a man inclined to idolatry, that has a secret desire after it, thirsts after such stolen or forbidden waters, and drinks of them, adds thereunto, drinks again and again until he is drunk with the wine of fornication, or idolatry, as it is called (^{667D}Revelation 17:2); so the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan understand the words of adding sin to sin, particularly of adding sins of ignorance to pride, or to presumptuous ones. Wicked men, deceivers and deceived, always grow worse and worse, increasing to more ungodliness, and yet promise themselves peace and impunity, (^{518B}1 Thessalonians 5:3).

Ver. 20. *Then the Lord will not spare him*, etc.] Have no mercy upon him, nor forgive him, being an hardhearted, impenitent, stubborn, and obstinate sinner, as well as guilty of the grossest and most provoking sin, as idolatry is:

but then the anger of the Lord, and his jealousy, shall smoke against that man; or, “the nose of the Lord shall smoke”^{f543}; alluding to an angry, wrathful, furious man, whose brain being heated, and his passions inflamed, his breath steams through his nostrils like smoke; it denotes the vehement anger, the greatness of God’s wrath and indignation against such a person, and his burning zeal or jealousy for his own honour and glory injured by the idolater:

and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him: for as he that offends in one point is guilty of all, and especially in such a principal point as this, which concerns the being and worship of God; so he makes himself liable to all the curses of the law, which shall not only come upon him, but abide on him; and there is no person clear of them but by redemption through Christ, who, by being made a curse for his people, has redeemed them from the curse of the law:

and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven; he shall have no name in Israel, not in the church, and among the people of God, from

whom he is to be excommunicated; shall have no name and place in the earth, being cut off from the land of the living; and shall have no name or fame after his death, his memory shall rot and perish; and he shall appear to have no name in the book of life; (see ^{<1928>}Psalm 69:28 ^{<1115>}Revelation 3:5).

Ver. 21. *And the Lord shall separate him unto evil out of all the tribes of Israel*, etc.] Unto the evil of punishment, devote and consign him to it, and make him a visible and distinguished mark of his displeasure and vengeance. So some men are righteously separated from others, and preordained unto condemnation, being wicked and ungodly men; for such God has made or appointed for the day of evil; (see ^{<2104>}Proverbs 16:4 ^{<1014>}Jude 1:4);

according to all the curses of the covenant that are written in this book of the law; the evil of punishment he shall be separated unto shall be according to them, or include them all; the sense is, that the wrath of God, and the whole curse of the law due to him for his sin, shall come upon him; (see ^{<1216>}Deuteronomy 28:16-18), etc.

Ver. 22. *So that the generation to come of your children that shall rise up after you*, etc.] Not the next generation, but in future times, in ages to come, at a great distance, even after the destruction of Judea by the Romans; to which (^{<1223>}Deuteronomy 29:23) seems to refer:

and the stranger that shall come from a far land; on trade and business, or for the sake of travelling, his road either lying through it, or his curiosity leading him to see it:

shall say, when they see the plagues of the land; cities and towns in ruins, fields lie uncultivated, and the whole land depopulated, and all become a barren wilderness, which was once a fruitful country, a land flowing with milk and honey:

and the sicknesses which the Lord hath laid upon it; upon the inhabitants of it, as the pestilence and other diseases, which shall have swept the land of them; (see ^{<1222>}Deuteronomy 28:22,27,35). This case supposes a general departure from the worship of God to the service of idols; otherwise single individuals are punished in their own persons, as in the (^{<1221>}Deuteronomy 29:21).

Ver. 23. *[And that] the whole land thereof [is] brimstone and salt, [and] burning*, etc.] That is, is become exceeding barren, as all such land is

where there are sulphureous mines, or salt pits, or burning mountains; not that this would be, or has been the case of the land of Judea in a strict literal sense; only these are expressions made use of to show the barrenness of it, which is its case at this day, not through the nature of its soil being changed, but through the slothfulness of the inhabitants of it; to which time it better agrees than to the time of its falling into the hands of the Chaldeans, who left men in it for husbandmen and vinedressers. Aben Ezra understands this as a prayer to God, that the land might be burnt up; that is, for the sins of the people:

[that] it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein; not being sown, it would bear and produce no corn for men; and not being manured, no grass would spring up for the cattle: and so would be

like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, of Admah and Zeboim; which indeed are, strictly speaking, become a sulphurous and bituminous lake, called the salt sea, and the lake Asphaltites, and where no green grass or corn, or any kind of fruit grow: which the Lord overthrew in his anger and in his wrath the Targum of Jonathan is,

“which the Word of the Lord overthrew;”

and it was Jehovah, the Word, or Son of God, who rained, from Jehovah the Father, out of heaven, fire and brimstone on Sodom and Gomorrah, and the rest of the cities; (see Gill on “⁰¹⁹²⁴Genesis 19:24”), in which chapter is the history of this fatal overthrow.

Ver. 24. *Even all nations shall say*, etc.] For the destruction of this land, and the people of it, would be, as it has been, so very great and awful, and so very remarkable and surprising, that the fame of it would be heard among all the nations of the world, as it has been; who, upon hearing the sad report of it, would ask the following questions:

wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land? so distinguished from all others for the fruitfulness and pleasantness of it; the people, the inhabitants of which, he chose, above all others, to be a special and peculiar people; and where he had a temple built for him, and where he had his residence, and worship used to be given unto him:

what [meaneth] the heat of this great anger? what is the reason of his stirring up his fierce wrath, and causing it to burn in so furious a manner? surely it must be something very horrible and provoking indeed!

Ver. 25. *Then men shall say*, etc.] The answer that will be returned to the above questions will be this

because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers: breakers of covenants with men are always reckoned among the worst of men, (see ^{<603>}Romans 1:31); and especially breakers of covenant with God, and with such a God as the God of Israel was, so good, so kind, and gracious; and of such a covenant he made with them, in which so many good things were promised unto them, on condition of their obedience; as the continuance in, such a land they dwelt in, with an abundance of privileges, civil and religious: and this covenant God of theirs was the God of their fathers also; and it was always reckoned an heinous sin among the Heathens to forsake the gods of their ancestors; (see ^{<411>}Jeremiah 2:11);

which he made with them when he brought them out of the land of Egypt; which is another aggravation of their breach of the covenant the Lord made with them; it being made with them by that God, and at that time, when he in so wonderful a manner, with such mighty power, and a outstretched arm, and in great kindness and tenderness to them, brought them, out of hard bondage and most wretched slavery in Egypt.

Ver. 26. *For they went and served other gods, and worshipped them*, etc.] As did all Israel, in the times of Solomon, and the ten tribes under Jeroboam, and other succeeding kings of Israel; and the two tribes in the times of Ahaz, and especially of Manasseh, when they worshipped all the host of heaven; (see ^{<1113>}1 Kings 11:33 12:28 ^{<1264>}2 Kings 16:4 21:3);

gods whom they knew not; to whom they, as well as their fathers before them, were strangers and approved not of them; and of whose power and goodness they had no experience, and of which there never were any instances; yet such was their stupidity, as to leave their God, the only true God, of whom they had many proofs in both respects, and worship these idols, which had never been profitable and serviceable to them on any account:

and [whom] he hath not given unto them; which version seems not to afford a good sense; for to what people soever has God, the true God, given other gods to worship, which this seems to imply, though he had not given or allowed any to them? Onkelos paraphrases it, “did not do them good”; which Jarchi explains, the gods they chose them did not impart to them any inheritance, or any portion; for the word used signifies to divide,

or part a portion or inheritance; now the Lord God did divide to Israel the land of Canaan for an inheritance, but these idols had never divided anything to them, and had been in no instance profitable or advantageous to them; and therefore it was madness and folly in them to worship them, as well as great ingratitude to the Lord their God, who had done such great and good things for them; for so the words may be rendered, “and did not impart” or “divide to them”^{f544} anything; that is, not anyone of them did; for the verb is singular.

Ver. 27. *And the anger of the Lord was kindled against this land*, etc.] For this their idolatry and base ingratitude:

to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book; in this book of Deuteronomy, and particularly (^{f528f6}Deuteronomy 28:16-68); (see ^{291b}Daniel 9:11).

Ver. 28. *And the Lord rooted them out of the land*, etc.] Which was true both at the Babylonish captivity by Nebuchadnezzar, and at their present one by the Romans; and especially the latter, by whom they have been so rooted out, as that they have not been able to return to it these 1700 years, nor to have any inheritance or possession in it; whereas, at the end of seventy years, they returned from the Babylonish captivity to their land again: and which was done

in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation; which were most abundantly shown in the utter destruction of their land, city, and temple, by the Romans:

and cast them another land, as [it is] this day; the ten tribes were cast into Assyria, and from thence into the cities of the Medes, the two tribes into the land of Chaldea, and now into all lands; and none their own, but another, a strange and foreign country. The word “cast” denotes the vehemence of the divine displeasure at them, expressed by the removal of them out of their own land into another. In the Hebrew word for “cast”, a middle letter in it is greater than usual; the reason of which perhaps is, that this dealing of God with them might be observed and taken notice of as very remarkable; and Ainsworth thinks it is to observe the greatness of the punishment; and the Jews understand this of the casting away of the ten tribes: and they gather from hence that the ten tribes shall not return, though about it they are divided; for so they say in the Misnah^{f545},

“the ten tribes shall not return, as it is said, and cast them into another land, as this day; as the day goes and does not return, so they go and return not; these are the words of R. Akiba. R. Eliezer says, as the day brings on darkness and light, so the ten tribes who are now dark shall be enlightened.”

Ver. 29. *The secret [things belong] unto the Lord our God, etc.]*

Respecting the people of Israel, and the providential dealings of God with them, and especially the final rejection of them; with respect to which, the apostle’s exclamation agrees with this, (~~4006~~ ⁴¹¹³Romans 11:33); and though the Lord had revealed many things which should befall them, there were others still secret with him, and the reasons of others; and particularly the times and seasons of their accomplishment, which he retains in his own power, (~~4006~~ ⁴¹¹³Acts 1:6). There are many secret things in nature, which cannot be found out and accounted for by men, which the Lord only knows; and there are many things in Providence, which are unsearchable, and past finding out by finite minds, especially the true causes and reasons of them; and there are many things relating to God himself, which remain secret with him; notwithstanding the revelation he has made of himself; for not only some of his perfections, as eternity, immensity, etc. are beyond our comprehension; but the mode of subsistence of the three divine Persons in the Godhead, the paternity of the one, the generation of the other, and the procession of the Spirit from them both; the union of the two natures, divine and human, in the person of Christ; the thoughts, purposes, and decrees of God within himself, until brought into execution; and so there are many things relating to his creatures, as the particular persons predestinated unto eternal life, what becomes of such who die in infancy, what will befall us in life, when we shall die, where and in what manner, and also the day and hour of the last judgment. The Jews generally interpret this and what follows of the sins of men, and punishment for them, and, particularly, idolatry; take Aben Ezra’s sense instead of many,

“he that commits idolatry secretly, his punishment is by the hand of heaven (from God immediately); he that commits it openly, it lies upon us and upon our children to do as is written in the law:”

but those [things which are] revealed [belong] to us and to our children for ever; the things of nature and Providence, which are plain and manifest, are for our use and instruction; and especially the word and ordinances of God, which are the revelation of his will, the doctrines and promises

contained in the Scriptures, each of the duties of religion, and the commandments of God, such as are of eternal obligation, which may be chiefly designed, because it follows:

that [we] may do all the words of this law: for the end of this revelation is practice; hearing and reading the word will be of no avail, unless what is heard and read is practised. Some render the words ^{f546},

“the secret things of the Lord our God are revealed to us and to our children;”

but neither the construction of the words in the original, nor the Hebrew accents, will admit of such a version; otherwise it would furnish out a very great truth: for the secrets of God’s love, of his council and covenant, are revealed unto his people, as well as many of his providences, and the mysteries of his grace; (see ~~1254~~ Psalm 25:14). There are some extraordinary pricks in the Hebrew text on the words “to us and to our children”: which are designed to point out the remarkable and wonderful condescension and goodness of God, in making a revelation of his mind and will, both with respect to doctrine and duty, to the sons of men.