

CHAPTER 30

INTRODUCTION TO DEUTERONOMY 30

This chapter contains some gracious promises of the conversion of the Jews in the latter day, of their calling things to mind that have befallen them, of their repentance, and the circumcision of their hearts to love the Lord, of the return of them to their own land, and of the great increase of them, and of their enjoyment of plenty of good things, (^{<BIB>}Deuteronomy 30:1-10); in it is an account of the Gospel, or word of faith, which at this time should be brought near to the Jews, and be received by them, (^{<BIB>}Deuteronomy 30:11-14); and for the present Moses desires them to consider what he now set before them, and what would be the consequences of receiving or rejecting it, and so what it would be most proper for them to make choice of, (^{<BIB>}Deuteronomy 30:15-20).

Ver. 1. *And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee*, etc.] Declared, pronounced, foretold, and prophesied of in the three preceding chapters, especially in (^{<BIB>}Deuteronomy 28:1-68);

the blessing and the curse which I have set before thee; the blessings promised to those that pay a regard to the will of God and obey his voice, and curses threatened to the (see ^{<BIB>}Deuteronomy 28:1-20);

and thou shall call [them] to mind among all the nations whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee; recollect the promises and the threatenings, and observe the exact accomplishment of them in their captivities, and especially in this their last and present captivity.

Ver. 2. *And shalt return unto the Lord thy God*, etc.] By repentance, acknowledging their manifold sins and transgressions, particularly their disbelief and rejection of the Messiah, now seeking him and salvation by him; (see ^{<BIB>}Hosea 3:5);

and shalt obey his voice; in the Gospel, yielding the obedience of faith to that; embracing the Gospel, and submitting to the ordinances of it:

according to all that I command thee this day, thou, and thy children; which was to love the Lord, and walk in his ways, directed to in the Gospel, and which were to be regarded from a principle of love to God and the blessed Redeemer; (see ^{f506}Deuteronomy 30:6,16);

with all thine heart and with all thy soul; that is, both their return unto the Lord, and their obedience to his voice or word, should be hearty and sincere; which being the case, the following things would be done for them.

Ver. 3. *That then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion on thee,* etc.] Return them from their captivity, or bring them out of it, both in a temporal and spiritual sense; free them from their present exile, and deliver them from the bondage of sin, Satan, and the law; and all this as the effect of his grace and mercy towards them, and compassion on them; (see ^{f508}Jeremiah 30:18); The Targum of Jonathan is,

“his Word shall receive with good will your repentance;”

it being cordial and unfeigned, and fruits meet for it brought forth:

and will return and gather thee from all the nations whither the Lord thy God scattered thee; or, “will again gather thee” ^{f547}; as he had gathered them out of all places where they had been scattered, on their return from the Babylonish captivity; so will he again gather them from all the nations of the earth, east, west, north, and south, where they are now dispersed; when they shall turn to the Lord, and seek David their King, the true Messiah. Maimonides ^{f548} understands this passage of their present captivity, and deliverance from it by the Messiah.

Ver. 4. *If [any] of thine be driven out unto the outmost [parts] of heaven,* etc.] As many of them are in this remote island of ours, Great Britain, reckoned formerly the uttermost part of the earth, as Thule, supposed to be Schetland, an isle belonging to Scotland, is said to be ^{f549}; (see Gill on “^{f549}Deuteronomy 28:49”); and as some of them are thought to be in America, which Manasseh Ben Israel ^{f550} had a firm belief of:

from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee; whose eye is omniscient, and reaches every part of the world; and whose arm is omnipotent, and none can stay it, or turn it back. The Targum of Jonathan is,

“from thence will he bring you near by the hands of the King Messiah.”

Ver. 5. *And the Lord thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it*, etc.] That the Jews upon their conversion in the latter day will return to the land of Judea again, and possess it, is the sense of many passages of Scripture; among others, (see ^{<2818>}Jeremiah 30:18 ^{<2825>}Ezekiel 28:25,26 37:21,22,25 ^{<3800>}Zechariah 10:10); the above Targum is;

“the Word of the Lord will bring thee, etc.”

and he will do thee good; both in things temporal and spiritual; (see ^{<2824>}Ezekiel 34:24-31);

and multiply thee above thy fathers; increase their number more than ever they were in any age; for they shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered, (^{<3010>}Hosea 1:10,11).

Ver. 6. *And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed*, etc.] No mention is made of circumcision of the flesh, which will now be out of use with the Jews; they being fully convinced of the abrogation of the ceremonial law by the Messiah, whom they will now receive. It is spiritual circumcision only that is here spoken of, with which the Jews will be circumcised, when they shall be pricked and cut to the heart, and be thoroughly convinced of sin; when the iniquity of their hearts will be laid open to them, and they put to pain, and filled with shame and loathing for it; when the hardness of their hearts will be removed, and the foolishness of them will be exposed and taken away, and they will be made willing to part with their sins, and with their own righteousness; when the graces of the Spirit will be implanted in them, and the blood of Christ applied to them for pardon and cleansing. This is the circumcision made without hands, which is not of men, but of God; what he calls for, and exhorts unto, as being necessary, (^{<5016>}Deuteronomy 10:16); he here promises to do; and deed none but himself can do it; for he only can come at the hearts of men, to take anything out of them, or put anything into them; it is he that opens the heart, softens, quickens, enlightens, and purifies it: Baal Hatturim says this respects the times of the Messiah:

to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; which, though the duty of every man, is performed by none but those that have the grace of God; there is no love to God in the heart before this inward and

spiritual circumcision of it: it is a fruit of the Spirit in conversion when the affections are taken off of other things, and set on Christ; when a man sees his sin and his Saviour, and the one is odious, and the other precious; when the blessings of grace are applied, and the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, which cause love to God and Christ again:

that thou mayest live; spiritually and eternally; for there is no spiritual life in the soul till the heart is circumcised, or, in other words, regenerated and renewed; then it is quickened; then a man lives a life of faith on Christ, of holiness from him, communion with him, and has both an open right unto, and meetness for, eternal life.

Ver. 7. *And the Lord thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies*, etc.] Recorded in (⁽⁴⁵³⁶⁾Deuteronomy 28:16-68); that is, the Word of the Lord, as the Targum of Jonathan; for he being now sought unto, and embraced, will be their King and their Saviour, and revenge their enemies:

and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee: the Turks and Papists, the former having taken possession of their land, and the latter being violent persecutors of them in all their countries. This will be fulfilled when the vials of God's wrath will be poured on the antichristian states, (⁽⁴⁶⁰¹⁾Revelation 16:1-21).

Ver. 8. *And thou shall return, and obey the voice of the Lord*, etc.] In the Gospel; obey the form of doctrine delivered to them, embrace the truth of the Gospel cordially, and yield a cheerful subjection to the ordinances of it; or receive the Word of the Lord, as the Targum of Jonathan, Christ, the essential Word, by faith, as the Saviour and Redeemer, Mediator, Prophet, Priest, and King:

and do all his commandments which I command thee this day; the commandment nigh unto them, in their mouths and hearts, even the word of faith, the ministers of Christ preach, (⁽⁴⁶⁰¹⁾Deuteronomy 30:11); besides, all the moral precepts and commands of the law, which will then be in force, being eternal and invariable; which faith in Christ, and love to him, will influence and constrain them to observe.

Ver. 9. *And the Lord thy God will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand*, etc.] In every manufacture, trade, or business of life in which they should be employed; the meaning is, that the Lord will greatly bless them in all that they shall set their hands to in a lawful way; so that they

shall abound in good things, and have enough and to spare, a redundancy of the good things of life, great plenty of them:

in the fruit of thy body; abundance of children:

and in the fruit of thy cattle; a large increase of oxen and sheep:

and in the fruit of thy land for good; it being by the blessing of God on their labours restored to its former fertility, though now barren through want of inhabitants, and the slothfulness of those that are possessed of it; for travellers observe ^{f551}, the soil is still good, was it properly manured and cultivated:

for the Lord will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers; particularly in the days of Solomon and David, when the people of Israel enjoyed plenty of all good things, and so they will hereafter; (see ^{<4825>}Hosea 2:15,21,22); The Targum of Jonathan is,

“the Word of the Lord will return to rejoice, etc.”

(see ^{<4834>}Jeremiah 32:41).

Ver. 10. *If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God*, etc.] Or rather, “for thou shalt hearken” ^{f552}; seeing it is before promised that the Lord would circumcise their hearts to love him, and they should obey his voice, (^{<4816>}Deuteronomy 30:6,8). The Targum is,

“receive the Word of the Lord:”

to keep his commandments and his statutes, which are written in this book of the law; particularly in this chapter, and all that are of a moral nature:

[and] if thou return unto the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul; or, “for thou shall return”, etc. as it is promised they should, (^{<4818>}Deuteronomy 30:8).

Ver. 11. *For this commandment which I command thee this day*, etc.] Which the Jews understand of the law, but the Apostle Paul has taught us to interpret it of the word of faith, the Gospel preached by him and other ministers, (^{<4816>}Romans 10:6-8); which better suits with the context, and the prophecies before delivered concerning the conversion of the Jews, their reception of the Messiah, and his Gospel:

it [is] not hidden from thee; being clearly revealed, plainly and fully preached: if hidden from any, it is from them that are lost; from the wise and prudent, while it is revealed to babes, and given to them to know the mysteries of it: or too “wonderful”^{f553}; hard, difficult, and impossible; its doctrines, are not beyond the understanding of an enlightened person; they are all plain to them that understand and find the knowledge of them; and the ordinances of it are not too hard and difficult to be kept; the commandments of Christ are not grievous:

neither [is] it far off; for though it is good, news from a far country, from heaven, it is come down from thence; it is brought nigh in the ministry of the word to the ears and hearts of men.

Ver. 12. *It [is] not in heaven*, etc.] The scheme of it was formed in heaven, it was hid in the heart of God there, before revealed; it was ordained before the world was for our glory; it was brought down from thence by Christ, and committed to his apostles and ministers of the word to preach it to men; and has been ever since continued on earth, and will be at the time of the conversion of the Jews:

that thou shouldest say; that there should be any occasion of saying; it forbids any such kind of speech as, follows:

who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it to us, that we may hear it, and do it? there is no need of that, for it is brought from thence already, and may be heard, and should be obeyed; for to put such a question would be the same as to ask “to bring Christ down from above”, who is come down already by the assumption of human nature, to preach the Gospel, give the sense of the law, and fulfil it, to do the will of his Father, bring in an everlasting righteousness, and save his people; so that there is no need of his coming again on the same errand, since he has obtained eternal redemption, and is the author of everlasting salvation, which is the sum and substance of the Gospel.

Ver. 13. *Neither [is] it beyond the sea*, etc.] There is no need to travel into foreign parts, into transmarine countries for it, as the Heathen philosophers did to get knowledge; for the Gospel is ordered to be preached to all the world, and sent into all nations; and at the time of the conversion of the Jews the earth will be filled with the knowledge of it, as the waters cover the sea; so that there will be no need to go into distant countries for it; nor any occasion

that thou shouldest say, who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? which would be all one as to desire “to bring up Christ again from the dead”; when he is already risen, and is gone to heaven, where he ever lives to make intercession for us; is thereby declared to be the Son of God with power, and is discharged as the surety of his people, having done completely what he engaged to do; and is risen for their justification, and become the firstfruits of the resurrection of the dead; wherefore whoever confesses with his mouth, and believes with his heart, that God has raised him from the dead, that is enough, he shall be saved: what a sublime sense of the words is this the apostle gives and how puerile is that of the Chaldee paraphrast in comparison of it! (see Gill on “^{<5106>}Romans 10:6”).

Ver. 14. *But the word [is] very nigh unto thee*, etc.] In the ministration of it by those who clearly, plainly, and faithfully preach it, and in the application of it by the Spirit of God to the heart; and in the gracious experience converted persons have of the power and efficacy of it in them, and of the comfort they receive from it:

in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it; in the mouth by confession, being not ashamed to own it, and profess it before men; and in the heart, where it is come with power, has a place, and works effectually, and is cordially believed, and comfortably experienced; and when this is the case, its ordinances will be faithfully kept as delivered, and cheerfully submitted to.

Ver. 15. *See, I have set before thee this day*, etc.] Moses here returns to press the Israelites to the present observance of the laws, statutes, and judgments of one sort and another, he had been delivering to them; as being of great moment and importance to them, no other than

life and good, and death and evil; which are the effects and consequences of obedience and disobedience to them; a happy temporal life, and a continuance of it in the good land of Canaan, and an enjoyment of the blessings and good things thereof to them that are obedient; for not spiritual and eternal life, or spiritual blessings and everlasting happiness, are to be had by man’s obedience to the law of works, only through Christ, through his obedience, righteousness, sufferings, and death; (see ^{<8821>}Galatians 3:21); so temporal death, or a cutting short of natural life in the promised land, and evil things, calamities, and distresses, or a

deprivation of all the good things of it to the disobedient; (see ^{<2319>}Isaiah 1:19,20).

Ver. 16. *In that I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God*, etc.] Which is the sum and substance of the first table of the law, and includes the whole worship of God, the contrary to which are idolatry, superstition, and will worship, from which Moses had been dissuading and deterring them:

to walk in his ways; which he has prescribed, as his will to walk in, and his law directs to:

and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments; his laws, moral, ceremonial, and judicial, Moses had been repeating and reciting:

that thou mayest live and multiply; live in the land of Canaan, and have a numerous offspring and posterity to succeed and continue in it, which is confirmed by what follows:

and the Lord thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it; with health and happiness, with an affluence of all good things, in the land of Canaan they were just entering into to take possession of.

Ver. 17. *But if thine heart turn away*, etc.] From the true God, and the right worship of him, and from his commands, statutes, and judgments:

so that thou wilt not hear; the voice of the Lord and obey it, or hearken to his laws, and do them:

but shalt be drawn away; by an evil heart, and by the ill examples of others:

and worship other gods and serve them; the gods of the Gentiles, the idols of the people, besides the one living and true God, the God of Israel.

Ver. 18. *I denounce unto, you this day that ye shall surely perish*, etc.] By one judgment or another; this he most solemnly averred, and it might be depended upon that it would certainly be their case; (see ^{<6025>}Deuteronomy 4:26);

[and that] ye shall not prolong [your] days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it; but be cut short by death, of one kind or another, by sword, or famine, or pestilence, or be carried into captivity; one or other of which were frequently their case.

Ver. 19. *I call heaven and earth to record this day against you,* etc.]

Either, literally understood, the heavens above him, and the earth on which he stood, those inanimate bodies, which are frequently called upon as witnesses to matters of moment and importance; (see ^{<1806>}Deuteronomy 4:26 32:1 ^{<2302>}Isaiah 1:2); or figuratively, the inhabitants of both, angels and men:

[that] I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; had plainly told them in express words what would be the consequence of obedience and disobedience to the law of God; long life, and the blessings of it in the land of Canaan, to those that obey it; death, by various means, and dreadful curses, to those that disobey it; of which see at large (^{<1836>}Deuteronomy 28:16-68);

therefore choose life, that thou and thy seed may live; that is, prefer obedience to the law, and choose to perform that, the consequence of which is life; that they and their posterity might live comfortably and happily, quietly and safely, and constantly, even to the latest ages, in the land of Canaan.

Ver. 20. *That thou mayest love the Lord thy God,* etc.] And show it by keeping his commands:

[and] that thou mayest obey his voice; in his word, and by his prophets:

and that thou mayest cleave unto him; and to his worship, and not follow after and serve other gods:

for he [is] thy life, and the length of thy days; the God of their lives, and the Father of their mercies; the giver of long life, and all the blessings of it; and which he had promised to those that were obedient, to him, and which they might expect:

that thou mayest dwell in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them; the land of Canaan, often thus described; this was the grand promise made to obedience to the law, and was typical of eternal life and happiness; which is had, not through man's obedience to the law, but through the obedience and righteousness of Christ.