

Deuteronomy

Lesson 17

Chapter 29

X. Moses's Summary of the Covenant in Moab (29:1 – 30:20)

Beginning in chapter 29, we find Moses' summary of the covenant in Moab. Chapter 29, verse 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."* (29:1).

All of the covenant of the LORD has been summarized by Moses in chapters 1 through 28. When the LORD says, *"These are the words of the covenant which the LORD commanded Moses to make"* it refers to all that has already been told by Moses in the previous chapters. The covenant is for Israel as she stands on the Plains of Moab. It will be the LORD's covenant with Israel until the end of all human life on earth. It is the same covenant made by the LORD at Horeb, at the foot of Mount Sinai. Here is the original notice of the covenant made by the LORD at Horeb. Exodus 34:27.

"Then the LORD said to Moses, 'Write down these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel.'"²⁸ So he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did not eat bread or drink water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments." (Exodus 34:27–28).

The Ten Commandments were first. Then a complete description of how Israel was to live under those commandments was given in the Book of Leviticus. In this book, Moses has summarized and harmonized all the covenant facets of the LORD together. The covenant at Horeb and the covenant at Moab brought together in one place for the Nation of Israel.

A. The Journey of the Covenant – To the Last Generation (29:2-9)

1. From Egypt to the Plains of Moab (29:2-9)

a) Her Experience with Moses in Egypt (29:2-4)

Moses speaks of the journey of the covenant to the last generation that lived from Egypt to the Plains of Moab and her experience with Moses in Egypt. Verse 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;³ the great trials which your eyes have seen, those great signs and wonders, Yet to this day the LORD has not given you a heart to know, nor eyes to see, nor ears to hear.'"* (29:2-4).

The LORD did not rescue Israel from Egypt because He had to! He did so because He promised Israel's ancestors that He would. He did. Israel saw the work of the LORD, His great signs and wonders, and yet Israel could not know, see, or hear His importance. It was real evidence that the LORD was in control.

b) Her Experience with Moses in the Wilderness (29:5-6)

Moses continues to speak of the journey of the covenant with Israel with her experience with Moses in the wilderness. Verse 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.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."* (29:5-6).

These two verses reveal more about life in the forty-year wilderness journey with Moses than found anywhere else in the Bible. They tell us the things that did not happen in the wilderness.

First, the clothing they wore as they left Egypt did not wear out. The new adult generation standing with Moses was probably wearing the forty-year-old hand-me-downs. Where would they have obtained enough material to make new clothing?

Second, the sandals they wore as they left Egypt did not wear out. Again, the new adult generation was probably wearing the old hand-me-downs.

Third, after arriving at Mount Sinai, they did not eat one bite of bread until they reached the Plains of Moab. That means the tribes did not plant seeds or harvest crops while living in the wilderness for forty years. It also meant the nation did not have grain for the grain offerings the entire time in the wilderness. Expanding that thought, it meant the LORD fed all the animals as well as the nation.

Fourth, after the wine or strong drink they brought out of Egypt was gone, they did not have one more drink while living in the wilderness for forty years.

What does that mean? It means the LORD provided everything the nation needed while in the wilderness for the entire forty years. It was true evidence that the LORD was in control.

c) Her Experience with Moses in Battle (29:7-9)

Moses speaks to Israel and her experience with Moses in the battle that occurred just months before. Verse 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; ⁸ and we took their land and gave it as an inheritance to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of the Manassites. ⁹ So keep the words of this covenant to do them, that you may prosper in all that you do.”* (29:7-9).

The ease in which Israel defeated the armies of Sihon and Og was true evidence that the LORD was in control. Israel was not strong enough to defeat those armies on her own.

B. The Journey of the Covenant – To the Present Generation (29:10-21)

1. The Participants of the Covenant (29:10-13).

But it was Moses’ job to explain the journey of the covenant to the present generation standing with him on the Plain of Moab because they were also participants of the covenant. Verse 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, 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, 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, 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.”* (29:10-13).

The covenant of the LORD was His oath to the Nation of Israel as they would leave the Plains of Moab, cross the Jordan River, and take the Promised Land in accordance with what the LORD promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

2. The Extent of the Covenant (29:14-21)

a) For Those Who Hear the Words of the Covenant (29:14-18)

Everyone there with Moses needed to understand the extent of the covenant for those who hear the words of the covenant. Verse 14. *“Now not with you alone am I making 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 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; ¹⁷ moreover, you have seen their abominations and their idols of wood, stone, silver, and gold, which they had with 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 and serve the gods of those nations; that there will not be among you a root bearing poisonous fruit and wormwood.”* (29:14-18).

The covenant was not just for the Israelites with Moses on the plains. It was for every generation of Israel that would follow until the end of human life on earth. The curse of the LORD for those who are not faithful to Him will be great. See the last part of the last verse, *“there will not be among you a root bearing poisonous fruit and wormwood.”* What does that mean? It means the food of the

ground will be gone, and Israel will starve. Israel will not even be able to find poisonous food to eat. It is a significant threat to those who will not be faithful to the LORD.

b) For Those Who Hear the Curse of the Covenant (29:19-21)

(1) What the Person Does (29:19)

Moses then states the extent of the covenant for those who hear the curse of the covenant. What the person does is seen in verse 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.”* (29:19).

The LORD promised that a faithful Israel would live on a well-watered land that produced great crops of every kind. But the LORD’s curse also stated that the unfaithful Israel would struggle because the LORD would allow the land to stand dry without rain. When will the LORD do this? When the arrogant nation of Israel says, *“I have peace though I walk in the stubbornness of my heart in order to destroy the watered land with the dry.”* One individual of Israel, stubborn of heart, can destroy all the blessings of Israel.

(2) What the LORD Does (29:20-21)

When a stubborn individual rejects the LORD, Moses explains what the LORD does. Verse 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.” 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.”* (29:20-21).

It is a horrible thing never to be forgiven by the LORD. The LORD will blot that person’s name out for all eternity. The covenant brings blessings to the faithful, but it also brings curses to the unfaithful. It is a stout warning to everyone listening to Moses.

C. The Journey of the Covenant – To the Next Generation (29:22-29)

1. The Sight of the Destroyed Land of Israel (29:22-24)

But the journey of the covenant extends to the next generations. The curses extend as well. Moses speaks of the curse in the sight of the destroyed land of Israel in the future. Verse 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, 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.’ ²⁴ All the nations will say, ‘Why has the LORD done thus to this land? Why this great outburst of anger?’” (29:22-24).

Picture the scene. Moses is giving the last instruction to the Nation of Israel before it crosses the Jordan River to take the Promised Land for the first time, and the LORD is announcing the curse that will one day come to Israel and the land. The LORD already sees the future destruction of the land. When will it happen? It could be when the Northern Kingdom falls to the Assyrians hands seven-hundred and two years in the future. It could be when the Southern Kingdom falls to the Babylonian hands eight-hundred and thirty-eight years in the future. But we know about those times in the life of Israel. The destruction of the land did not match the LORD’s warning in this passage. Then when will the destruction happen? The only next place where it can occur in the Scripture is found in the Book of Revelation, but that is still in our future.

2. The Reason for the Destroyed Land of Israel (29:25-28)

What will be the reason for the destroyed land of Israel far in the future? Verse 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.’ ²⁶ They went and served other gods and worshiped them, gods whom they have not known and whom He had not allotted to them. ²⁷ Therefore, the anger of the LORD burned against that land, to*

bring upon it every curse which is written in this book;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.” (29:25-28).

The reason for the destruction of the land will be because the people of the nation abandon their love for the LORD God, Who made this covenant with Israel. Israel will lose her Promised Land in 722 BC and 586 BC. It will not retrieve it until 1948 AD. But even then, it will not return to the LORD and trust in Him. It has not to this day. As written in the Revelation, their synagogues where they worship are “*synagogues of Satan*.” They rejected the LORD when He came as a babe, and they crucified Him on a cross. Today, in Israel, she lives on the Promised Land, at least a portion of it, but she does not worship the LORD her Savior.

3. The Prophecy of the Destroyed Land of Israel (29:29)

And so, Moses has given the prophecy of the destroyed land of Israel. Verse 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.*” (29:29).

The secret of the future of Israel was known by the LORD, and it was His. But it was also the property of His nation. The covenant, with its blessings and curses, laid the roadmap for Israel. She could choose her future by how she followed the laws of the covenant.

Chapter 30

D. The Journey of the Covenant – To the Restored Generation (30:1-20)

1. The Prophecy of Israel’s Return to the Promised Land from the World (30:1-5)

But the story of the journey of the covenant is not over. It will extend to the restored generation. Therefore, Moses speaks the prophecy of Israel’s return to the Promised Land from the world. Chapter 30, verse 1. “*So it shall be when all of these things have come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind in all nations where the LORD your God has banished you,*² *and you return to the LORD your God and obey Him with all your heart and soul according to all that I command you today, you and your sons,*³ *then the LORD your God will restore you from captivity, and have compassion on you, and will gather you again from all the peoples where the LORD your God has scattered you.*⁴ *If your outcasts are at the ends of the earth, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you back.*⁵ *The LORD your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it; and He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers.*” (30:1-5).

We have the fortunate ability to gaze into the history that has taken place since this curse prophecy was given by Moses. When Israel loses the Promised Land, the people will be scattered throughout the known world. When they are allowed to return to the Promised Land, it will not belong to them. The land will be taken and owned first by the Assyrians and then the Babylonians. Upon return to the land, the land will belong to the Persians. The Persians will lose it to the Greeks. The Greeks will scatter the Israelites from the land in large groups. The Greeks will lose it to the Romans. During the Roman control, the Israelites on the borrowed land will be scattered further into the known world. It will be known as the Great Diaspora. The Romans will lose it to the Muslims. The Muslims will lose it to the British. Finally, in 1948, the British will gift it back to Israel, and for the first time, she will own the land again. But, a mere fraction of the Jews will live in Israel. Even today, there are more Jews scattered in the world than living in Israel. Many people in the world do not know they are of Jewish blood. For instance, the area surrounding Germany was a major pocket where Jews ran in the early years. Many changed their names and their religion in order to save their lives. One example is Madeleine Korbel Albright, the United States Secretary of State from 1997 to 2001, who immigrated from Czechoslovakia with her parents when she was two years old. She was raised Roman Catholic and later became Episcopalian. It was not until late in her life that she discovered she was of Jewish blood when her father's Foreign Ministry birth certificate

surfaced stating she was Jewish. Because of the length of time that the Jews were assimilated into Germany, there is hardly a German that does not have some spec of Jewish blood in their past.

Be that as it may, the Jews have yet to be called back to the Promised Land. But that will happen one day. After the peace treaty is signed between Israel and the leader beast of the future revived Roman Empire, every Jew in the world will begin to return to the land of Israel whose people will be living in peace for the first time since Solomon's days. But, three and a one-half years into the treaty, the beast leader will invade Israel and attempt to kill them all. They will once again scatter to the ends of the world. They will only return to Israel after the Battle of Armageddon when the LORD takes the throne in Jerusalem.

2. The Prophecy of Israel's Preeminence in the Promised Land among the World (30:6-10)

When the LORD is on His throne in Israel, the Nation of Israel will be the nation of nations. Here Moses speaks the prophecy of Israel's preeminence in the Promised Land among the world. Verse 6. *"Moreover the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live. 7 The LORD your God will inflict all these curses on your enemies and on those who hate you, who persecuted you. 8 And you shall again obey the LORD, and observe all His commandments which I command you today. 9 Then the LORD your God will prosper you abundantly in all the work of your hand, in the offspring of your body and in the offspring of your cattle and in the produce of your ground, for the LORD will again rejoice over you for good, just as He rejoiced over your fathers; 10 if you obey the LORD your God to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this book of the law, if you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and soul."* (30:6-10).

On the way to becoming the preeminent nation of the world, *"The LORD your God will inflict all these curses on your enemies and on those who hate you, who persecuted you."* In the Revelation, we learn of the curses inflicted on the beast and his nation. They will begin with loathsome and malignant sores followed by the sea turning to blood. Then the rivers and springs will become blood. The sun will scorch the men with fire. Darkness will cover their land. The people will gnaw their tongues in pain. The king from the west will invade to kill. The beast and his two associates will call for all to come to fight against the LORD in the valley of Armageddon. There, the enemies of Israel will rot where they stand at the appearance of the LORD. By that time, Israel will be faithful to the LORD again and keep His commandments and statutes.

3. The Journey of the Covenant – To All Generations (30:11-20)

a) Observe the Place of the Covenant (30:11-14)

(1) It is Not Difficult for Israel (30:11-13)

Continuing with the journey of the covenant, Moses offers it to all generations. He asks the nation to observe the place of the covenant and states that it is not difficult for Israel. Verse 11. *"For this commandment which I command you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it out of reach. 12 It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will go up to heaven for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?' 13 Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will cross the sea for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?'"* (30:11-13).

Israel does not need to search for the LORD; He is near Israel. The covenant is with Israel in the Plain of Moab, and it will be with her everywhere she goes. It is an easy covenant to keep. It is not too difficult.

(2) It is Near Israel (30:14)

But where is the word of the covenant with Israel? It is near Israel. Verse 14. *"But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may observe it."* (30:14). The LORD is within each person of the Nation of Israel, in each heart and each mouth.

b) Choose the Consequences of the Covenant (30:15-18)

(1) Living in Agreement with the Covenant Brings Life (30:15-16)

Just as Israel must choose the place of the covenant, she must also choose the consequences of the covenant. She can avoid the consequences because living in agreement with the covenant brings life. Verse 15. *"See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, and death and adversity;¹⁶ in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, that you may live and multiply, and that the LORD your God may bless you in the land where you are entering to possess it."* (30:15-16).

The Nation of Israel standing with Moses that day will cross the Jordan River and take the Promised Land. The LORD puts the future of the nation in the hands of the people. If it chooses to live in agreement with the covenant, Israel will be blessed in the Promised Land.

(2) Living in Disagreement with the Covenant Brings Death (30:17-18)

But Israel cannot avoid the consequences because living in disagreement with the covenant brings death. Verse 17. *"But if your heart turns away and you will not obey, but are drawn away and worship other gods and serve them,¹⁸ I declare to you today that you shall surely perish. You will not prolong your days in the land where you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess it."* (30:17-18).

Moses will not let the people of the Nation of Israel enter the Promised Land without warning them of their fate if they disagree with the covenant. It will bring death to them.

c) Choose the Life of the Covenant (30:19-20)

From the place of the covenant to the consequences of the covenant, Israel must choose the life of the covenant. Verse 19. *"I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants,²⁰ by loving the LORD your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days, that you may live in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them."* (30:19-20).

God and all His angels in heaven, as well as all of the people and animals on earth, were witnesses of this covenant offered by the LORD to Israel. While it is offered to the nation, it is really an offer to each person. Each person must accept the terms. In the rest of the Scripture, we will discover that some people will accept the terms, but many will not.

Chapter 31

XI. Moses' Summary of His Last Duties (31:1-32:55)

A. A Message for Israel (31:1-6)

1. The Limitations of Moses (31:1-2)

Now, for Moses' summary of his last duties, he has a message for Israel. It concerned the limitations of Moses. Chapter 31. Verse 1. *"So Moses went and spoke these words to all Israel.² And he said to them, 'I am a hundred and twenty years old today; I am no longer able to come and go, and the LORD has said to me, 'You shall not cross this Jordan.'"* (31:1-2).

At age one hundred and twenty years old, he had traveled as far with the nation as the LORD would allow. The nation will cross the Jordan River, but Moses will not.

2. The Encouragement from Moses (31:3-6)

But Moses was not discouraged. We see the encouragement from Moses. Verse 3. *"It is the LORD your God who will cross ahead of you; He will destroy these nations before you, and you shall dispossess them. Joshua is the one who will cross ahead of you, just as the LORD has spoken.⁴ The LORD will do to them just as He did to Sihon and Og, the kings of the Amorites, and to their land, when He destroyed them.⁵ The LORD will deliver them up before you, and you shall do to them according to all the commandments which I have commanded you.⁶ Be strong*

and courageous, do not be afraid or tremble at them, for the LORD your God is the one who goes with you. He will not fail you or forsake you.” (31:3-6).

What better encouragement can anyone give anyone? The LORD, your God, is the one Who goes with Israel, and He will not fail nor forsake.

B. A Message for Joshua (31:7-8)

1. The Ability of Joshua (31:7)

In his last duties, Moses must give a message for Joshua. He will focus on the ability of Joshua. Verse 7. *“Then Moses called to Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, ‘Be strong and courageous, for you shall go with this people into the land which the LORD has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall give it to them as an inheritance.’” (31:7).*

Joshua has been chosen by the LORD to facilitate the inheritance of the Promised Land. That is Joshua’s unique ability.

2. The Encouragement to Joshua (31:8)

We then hear Moses give the encouragement to Joshua. Verse 8. *“The LORD is the one who goes ahead of you; He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.” (31:8).*

What a promise for the new leader of Israel! The LORD will be with Joshua and never fail or forsake him.

C. A Message for the Levites (31:9-13)

1. The Written Law Presented (31:9)

Moses then comes to a message for the Levites. The written law was presented to the Levites. Verse 9. *“So Moses wrote this law and gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and to all the elders of Israel.” (31:9).*

Not all Levites could carry the Ark of the Covenant. According to Numbers 4, only the specific group of Levites called the Kohaths could carry the Ark. Here are the highlights of that instruction.

“This is the work of the descendants of Kohath in the tent of meeting, concerning the most holy things. ‘When the camp sets out, Aaron and his sons shall go in and they shall take down the veil of the screen and cover the ark of the testimony with it; 6 and they shall lay a covering of porpoise skin on it, and shall spread over it a cloth of pure blue, and shall insert its poles. ... 15 When Aaron and his sons have finished covering the holy objects and all the furnishings of the sanctuary, when the camp is to set out, after that the sons of Kohath shall come to carry them, so that they will not touch the holy objects and die. These are the things in the tent of meeting which the sons of Kohath are to carry.’” (Numbers 4:4–15).

Moses gave the book of Deuteronomy, which he had just completed, to the Kohaths for preservation through all the generations to come.

2. The Written Law Read (31:10-13)

We come to the written law read with Moses charging the Kohaths to read the book at the end of every seven years at the Feast of Booths. Verse 10. *“Then Moses commanded them, saying, ‘At the end of every seven years, at the time of the year of remission of debts, at the Feast of Booths, ¹¹ when all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God at the place which He will choose, you shall read this law in front of all Israel in their hearing. ¹² Assemble the people, the men and the women and children and the alien who is in your town, so that they may hear and learn and fear the LORD your God, and be careful to observe all the words of this law. ¹³ Their children, who have not known, will hear and learn to fear the LORD your God, as long as you live on the land which you are about to cross the Jordan to possess.’” (31:10-13).*

D. A Message for Moses (31:14-22)

1. Prepare a Meeting for the Commission of Joshua (31:14-15)

The LORD has a message for Moses to prepare a meeting for the commission of Joshua. Verse 14. *"Then the LORD said to Moses, 'Behold, the time for you to die is near; call Joshua, and present yourselves at the tent of meeting, that I may commission him.' So Moses and Joshua went and presented themselves at the tent of meeting. ¹⁵ The LORD appeared in the tent in a pillar of cloud, and the pillar of cloud stood at the doorway of the tent."* (31:14-15).

Even though Moses called Joshua to the Tent of Meeting, it was the LORD Who commissioned Joshua to be the next leader of Israel. The whole nation of Israel knew Joshua was to be the leader because the pillar of cloud which the nation had followed for forty years appeared at the door of the Tent of Meeting.

2. Prepare a Prophecy for the Downfall of Israel (31:16-18)

The LORD told Moses to prepare a prophecy for the downfall of Israel. Verse 16. *"The LORD said to Moses, 'Behold, you are about to lie down with your fathers; and this people will arise and play the harlot with the strange gods of the land, into the midst of which they are going, and will forsake Me and break My covenant which I have made with them. ¹⁷ Then My anger will be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them and hide My face from them, and they will be consumed, and many evils and troubles will come upon them; so that they will say in that day, 'Is it not because our God is not among us that these evils have come upon us?' ¹⁸ But I will surely hide My face in that day because of all the evil which they will do, for they will turn to other gods.'"* (31:16-18).

Israel will not keep the covenant. She will take the Promised Land in her faithfulness. She will soon become unfaithful to their LORD by breaking the commands of the covenant.

3. Prepare a Song for the Evils of Israel (31:19-22)

The LORD told Moses to prepare a song for the evils of Israel. Verse 19. *"Now therefore, write this song for yourselves, and teach it to the sons of Israel; put it on their lips, so that this song may be a witness for Me against the sons of Israel. ²⁰ For when I bring them into the land flowing with milk and honey, which I swore to their fathers, and they have eaten and are satisfied and become prosperous, then they will turn to other gods and serve them, and spurn Me and break My covenant. ²¹ Then it shall come about, when many evils and troubles have come upon them, that this song will testify before them as a witness (~~for it shall not be forgotten from the lips of their descendants~~); for I know their intent which they are developing today, before I have brought them into the land which I swore."* ²² So Moses wrote this song the same day, and taught it to the sons of Israel." (31:19-22).

Joshua will make sure the written song of Moses will be included in the Book of Deuteronomy. The Kohaths will preserve it for generations to come even to our generation today. We will hear it in the next chapter

E. Moses' Summary of the LORD's Commission (31:23)

Then we read the summary of the LORD's commission of Joshua. Verse 23. *"Then He commissioned Joshua the son of Nun, and said, 'Be strong and courageous, for you shall bring the sons of Israel into the land which I swore to them, and I will be with you.'"* (31:23).

No commission service needs to be longwinded. All it took for Joshua's commission was written in this one verse.

F. Moses's Summary of His Last Instructions (31:24-30)

1. To the Levites – A Witness in Law Against the Rebellious (31:24-27)

From the LORD's commission, we arrive at Moses' summary of his last instruction. To the Levites, He gives a witness in the Law against the rebellious. Verse 24. *"It came about, when Moses finished writing the words of this law in a book until they were complete, ²⁵ that Moses commanded the Levites who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying, ²⁶ 'Take this book of the law and place it beside the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may remain there as a witness against you. ²⁷ For I know your rebellion and*

your stubbornness; behold, while I am still alive with you today, you have been rebellious against the LORD; how much more, then, after my death?” (31:24-27).

Moses had seen the rebellion of the priestly line. It was not new. Not all the men of the priestly line were permitted to do all the priestly duties in every area of work of service to the LORD. The Kohaths were the keepers of the book of Deuteronomy, and the book was a witness against the rebellion of the Levites.

2. To the Leaders – A Witness in Words Against the Rebellious (31:28-29)

To the leaders, Moses presented a witness in words against their rebellious. Verse 28. *“Assemble to me all the elders of your tribes and your officers, that I may speak these words in their hearing and call the heavens and the earth to witness against them.”*²⁹ *For I know that after my death you will act corruptly and turn from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days, for you will do that which is evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking Him to anger with the work of your hands.” (31:28-29).*

The leaders will lead the nation astray. It will happen in the future with the Northern Kingdom. It will later occur with the Southern Kingdom. It will happen when they lead the people to crucify the LORD on the cross. They will continue to mislead the people until the latter days when the evil of the tribulation and the great tribulation comes upon them. The tribulation will come in the anger of the LORD. But that is centuries away from the last day of Moses’ life there on the Plains of Moab.

3. To the Assembly – A Witness in Song Against the Rebellious (31:30)

To the assembly, Moses presents a witness in song against the rebellious. Verse 30. *“Then Moses spoke in the hearing of all the assembly of Israel the words of this song, until they were complete.” (31:30).*

That song we will hear in our next lesson.