

THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

DEUTERONOMY 27-30

In Deuteronomy 27 Moses schedules a *Promise Land Pep Rally*. In just a few days Israel will cross the Jordon River. When they do they'll proceed to the heart of the land - *the Valley of Shechem*. North of this slender valley is *Mount Ebal* - south is *Mount Gerizim*.

Here's a **photo** looking westward... **Gerizim** is on the left and **Ebal** is on the right. Today, the modern town of Nablus, the largest city on the West Bank, sits in the middle. Both mountain peaks rise 3000 feet ASL. Imagine a million people on each mountain. Half the tribes stand on one mountain - half stand on the other.

Think of a High School pep rally... The goal is to get the student body fired up for Friday's game. Kids in the bleachers on one side of the gym shout to the kids in the bleachers on the other side, "**We got spirit, yes we do, we got spirit, how about you!**" Back and forth, with each exchange, the volume and intensity rise.

That's what's happening over the Valley of Shechem. God gives Israel a series of blessings and curses. From Mount Ebal the curses are shouted, from Mount Gerizim the blessings. **The event actually occurs in Joshua 8**. But the plans for the pep rally are first discussed by Moses here in Deuteronomy 27...

"Now Moses, with the elders of Israel, commanded the people, saying: 'Keep all the commandments which I command you today. And it shall be, on the day when you cross over the Jordan to the land which the LORD your God is giving you, that you shall set up for yourselves large stones, and whitewash them with lime.'" Give yourself a durable and readable surface.

Then **"write on them all the words of this law, when you have crossed over, that you may enter the land which the LORD your God is giving you, 'a land flowing with milk and honey,' just as the LORD God of your fathers promised you."** Their first act in the Promised Land was to erect a memorial to God's Law. This is the end of their wandering, and the beginning of a new age tied to God's Law. Israel's obedience will now dictate their blessing. Disobedience will cause them hardship.

They're to set up these white stones on Mount Ebal, along with a stone altar. The Ten Commandments were originally written on stone - now a stone memorial, a whitewashed billboard, will showcase those ten commandments for everyone in Israel to see and read.

And verse 5 tells them, **"you shall not use an iron tool on them. You shall build with**

whole stones the altar of the LORD your God..." Then verse 8, "You shall write very plainly on the stones all the words of this law."

The altar was to be made with uncut stones. No iron tool was used - nothing *man-made* or *fleshy-fashioned* went into this memorial. Nothing about it spoke of human craftsmanship or ingenuity, rather the *whole, raw, unshaved stones* symbolized the work of God.

Verse 9, "Then Moses and the priests, the Levites, spoke to all Israel, saying, "Take heed and listen, O Israel: This day you have become the people of the LORD your God. Therefore you shall obey the voice of the LORD your God, and observe His commandments and His statutes which I command you today." *This day you have become the people of God.* What makes you a child of God is that you keep God's commandments. This is what the NT affirms, 1 John 2, "by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments..."

"And Moses commanded the people on the same day, saying, "These shall stand on Mount Gerizim to bless the people, when you have crossed over the Jordan: Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin; and these shall stand on Mount Ebal to curse: Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali." Six tribes on Mount Gerizim shout the blessings. Six tribes on Mt. Ebal the curses! "Gerizim" means "fruitful harvest." "Ebal" means "barrenness."

Commentator Adam Clarke writes of the two peaks, "Gerizim abounds with springs, gardens, and orchards, and it's covered with a beautiful verdure, while Ebal is as naked and barren as a rock." It was visually fitting to utter the blessings from Gerizim and curses from Ebal.

I've never been to the Valley of Shechem, though I hope to go one day. It's the West Bank, in Palestinian territory... But a monumental event in Hebrew history occurred here 3400 years ago. A prophecy of Israel's future echoed from the summits. They say the valley has amazing acoustics, it's a natural amphitheater. What's said on the mountain tops is heard in the valley.

Understand, the colossal significance of today's chapters. Deuteronomy 27-28 reveal **God's OT plan of evangelism.** God intended to convert the pagan nations by how He treated Israel. If they obey His Law, God will lavish on Israel unprecedented prosperity.

But if Israel disobeys, God will heap such curses on them that it will also attract the world's attention.

The nations will either say, "Look at Israel's wealth and treasure. Their God must truly be the one, true God." Or they'll say, "Look at Israel's troubles. Their God is just

and righteous, He means what He says. Surely, their God is the one, true God.” Either way, God will be glorified through Israel, *for better or for worse*.

Now the Levites were like cheerleaders. They fire up the crowd, verse 14, “(they) speak with a loud voice and say to all the men of Israel: ‘Cursed is the one who makes any carved or molded image, an abomination to the LORD, the work of the hands of the craftsman, and sets it up in secret.’ Cursed is the instigator of idolatry! “And all the people shall answer and say, ‘Amen!’

Cursed is the one who treats his father or his mother with contempt.’ And all the people (especially the parents of teenagers) shall say, ‘Amen!’...

Cursed is the one who moves his neighbor's landmark.’ In an agrarian society where wealth was measure by land holdings don’t monkey with a family’s property line. “And all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’

Cursed is the one who makes the blind to wander off the road.’ Or abuses anyone with a disability or handicap. “And all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’

Cursed is the one who perverts the justice due the stranger, the fatherless, and widow.’ People who can’t afford to hire a good lawyer still deserve justice. And all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’... Cursed is the one who lies with his father's wife, because he has uncovered his father's bed.” Incest is cursed behavior. It’s shouldn’t occur. “And all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’

And remember the word “Amen” isn’t just a filler phrase. It’s a strong affirmation... “Amen” means “*So be it!* or *Right On*, or *Absolutely*, or *Yes Sir-ree, Bob...*”

“Cursed is the one who lies with any kind of animal.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’ *Amen and amen.*

Cursed is the one who lies with his sister, the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother.’ Sex with a step-sister is incestuous and behavior cursed by God. And all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’

Cursed is the one who lies with his mother-in-law.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’ And I’m sorry, but this is one sin I just can’t fathom... *your mother-in-law, are you crazy?* You’re not only cursed, you’re stupid.

Cursed is the one who attacks his neighbor secretly.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’ Cursed is the one who takes a bribe to slay an innocent person.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’ Then to sum it up, verse 26, “Cursed is the one who does not confirm all the words of this law.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’

Chapter 28... The Halley’s Bible Handbook states, “The twenty-eighth chapter of Deuteronomy placed alongside the history of the Hebrew nation, constitutes one of the

most astounding and indisputable evidences of the Divine inspiration of the Bible.” And I agree! The blessings and curses of this chapter form an uncanny parallel to the ups and downs of Hebrew history. It’s like reading a history book before it happens. *Chapter 28 begins with the blessings and ends with the curses.*

“Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the LORD your God will set you high above all nations of the earth.” And it’s amazing how God has elevated Jewish people to positions of prominence far beyond their proportionate numbers. Did you know, of the world’s 8 billion, 142 million people, just 16 million are Jews? That’s one-fifth of one percent. Yet a whopping 22% of Nobel Prize winners have been Jewish.

President Trump’s two leading Middle East envoys, Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, are Jewish. Albert Einstein, Sigmund Freud, Karl Marx - even Groucho Marx - were Jewish. Henry Kissinger, Stephen Spielberg, Robert Zimmerman (aka Bob Dylan), Harrison Ford, Gal Gadot, Pink, Dustin Hoffman, Scarlett Johansson, Mark Zuckerberg, Drake are all Jewish. Arthur Blank, owner of the Falcons, and Sandy Koufax, greatest baseball pitcher of all time are Jewish.

Astonishingly, many of our politicians and celebrities come from the ranks of the Jews. As Moses said, “God will set you high above all the nations of the earth.”

Verse 2, “And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you...” Israel will be buried under an avalanche of blessing. They can’t escape His blessing.

“Because you obey the voice of the LORD your God: Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the country. Blessed shall be the fruit of your body, the produce of your ground and the increase of your herds, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks.” Children, crops, and cattle will be multiplied to you. “Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out.

The LORD will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before your face; they shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways.” As we study the exploits of Joshua, Gideon, Deborah, Samson, Samuel, David... *this will ring true!*

The LORD will command the blessing on you in your storehouses and in all to which you set your hand, and He will bless you in the land which the LORD your God is giving you.” In the reign of King Solomon, Israel was a world empire - the most prosperous on the planet.

Verse 9 “The LORD will establish you as a holy people to Himself, just as He has

sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in His ways. Then all peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they shall be afraid of you.” In 1 Kings 10 the Queen of Sheba pays Solomon a visit, and she marvels...

"It was a true report which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom. However I did not believe the words until I came and saw with my own eyes; and indeed the half was not told me. Your wisdom and prosperity exceed the fame of which I heard. Happy are your men and happy are these your servants, who stand continually before you and hear your wisdom! Blessed be the LORD your God, who delighted in you, setting you on the throne of Israel! Because the LORD has loved Israel forever, therefore He made you king, to do justice and righteousness."

The Queen saw Israel's prosperity and credited their God. It was God's OT plan of evangelism at work.

"And the LORD will grant you plenty of goods..." and again Moses mentions *children*, and *cattle*, and *crops*.

Verse 12, "The LORD will open to you His good treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your hand." Obey the Lord and you'll never worry about a drought.

"You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow." The nations will come to you for a loan. "And the LORD will make you the head and not the tail; you shall be above only, and not be beneath, **if** (and this will prove to be a very big IF) if you heed the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you today, and are careful to observe them.

So you shall not turn aside from any of the words which I command you this day, to the right hand or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them."

But in verse 15 the curses begin, "But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you..."

If they obey God's Law they'll be unable to escape God's blessings, but if they disobey they'll be unable to escape His curses!... Once a friend of mine told me of a documentary he watched on the Holocaust. Under each grizzly photo was a verse from Deuteronomy 28.

God is warning Israel of the tragic outcome awaiting them if they turn aside from His commandments.

“Cursed shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the country. Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl.” Famine will be a frequent occurrence.

“Cursed shall be the fruit of your body and the produce of your land, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks.” The *children, cattle, and crops* will **be cursed**. “Cursed shall you be when you come in, and cursed shall you be when you go out.”

The LORD will send on you cursing, confusion, and rebuke in all that you set your hand to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, because of the wickedness of your doings in which you have forsaken Me.” Add the plague, consumption or *tuberculosis*, fever, swelling, burning fever, the sword, scorching or arson, mildew... these curses will pursue Israel, *and they have*. Verse 23, **And your heavens which are over your head shall be bronze, and the earth which is under you shall be iron.**” Their formerly fertile fields will become fallow. The skies like bronze, will yield no rain.

Verse 25, **The LORD will cause you to be defeated before your enemies; you shall go out one way against them and flee seven ways before them; and you shall become troublesome to all the kingdoms of the earth. Your carcasses shall be food for all the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and no one shall frighten them away.**” In 586 BC Babylon sacked Jerusalem and burned their Temple; then deported the Jews into exile.

Seventy years later God had mercy on Israel and brought them back to their land, but again Israel violated God’s Law and the curses returned. In 70 AD, Jerusalem was conquered again, this time by Rome. The Temple was burned. A half-century later Rome drove the remaining Jews into foreign lands. Jews became a dispersed people - scattered worldwide. For centuries it was illegal for a Jew to live in Jerusalem.

And for the next two millennia - until our day - the Jews have been hated and persecuted everywhere they’ve tried to settle. They’ve been cursed, as Moses said, **“when they come in... and when they go out.”**

When the Jewish leaders rejected Jesus, and called for His crucifixion, they sealed their fate. Their ominous cry rang out, **“His blood be on us and on our children.”**

The rejection of their Messiah unleashed the full brunt of the curses in Deuteronomy 28. And for 2000 years the Jews have been pushed from ghetto to ghetto - banished from country to country. They were victims of Europe’s crusades, Spain’s inquisition, the pogroms in Russia, the death camps of Nazi Germany. Names like Aushwitz, Dachau, Ravensbruck conjure up horrific images. Six million Jews died in what we call, **“The Holocaust.”** The word means **“burnt offering.”**

And on behalf of the Church let me repent... for the role Christians have played in the persecution of the Jewish people. In the Middle Ages the Roman Church felt it was their duty to help God enact these curses. They devised ways to persecute Jews. When Crusader armies left Europe to liberate the holy land from the Muslims - on the way to Palestine - they found clusters of Jews to torture and murder. They burned whole neighborhoods. They labeled Jews as “*Christ-killers.*”

And here’s what’s happened... the Christian Church pushed the Jews away from their own Messiah. Today, most Jews have a distorted impression of Christianity. Rather than a message of redemption and love, they view Christianity as a religion of hate. *In the minds of most Jews, Billy Graham is a good Christian, while Adolf Hitler is a bad Christian, but both are Christians.*

As a Christian, I’m a spiritual Jew. I’m grafted into the Jewish covenants. My Savior is the Jewish Messiah. My future is tied to Israel’s future. And my desire is to draw Jews to Jesus by displaying His amazing grace. And that should be the attitude of every Christian!

God made sure a disobedient Israel was cursed. *The Church didn’t need to help.* Verse 27, “*The LORD will strike you with the boils of Egypt, with tumors, with the scab, and with the itch, from which you cannot be healed. The LORD will strike you with madness and blindness and confusion of heart. And you shall grope at noonday, as a blind man gropes in darkness; you shall not prosper in your ways; you shall be only oppressed and plundered continually, and no one shall save you.*” Over and over such curses came on Jews.

“*You shall betroth a wife, but another man shall lie with her; you shall build a house, but you shall not dwell in it; you shall plant a vineyard, but shall not gather its grapes. Your ox shall be slaughtered before your eyes, but you shall not eat of it; your donkey shall be violently taken away from before you, and shall not be restored to you; your sheep shall be given to your enemies, and you shall have no one to rescue them.*”

“*Your sons and your daughters shall be given to another people, and your eyes shall look and fail with longing for them all day long; and there shall be no strength in your hand.*” This is what the Nazis did when they split families apart, and packed the Jews onto trains that were headed for the concentration camps.

“*A nation whom you have not known shall eat the fruit of your land and the produce of your labor, and you shall be only oppressed and crushed continually. So you shall be driven mad because of the sight which your eyes see. The LORD will strike you in the knees and on the legs with severe boils which cannot be healed, and from the sole*

of your foot to the top of your head. The LORD will bring you and the king whom you set over you to a nation which neither you nor your fathers have known, and there you shall serve other gods - wood and stone.” This happened when the Jews were exiled to Babel - idolatry’s birthplace.

“And you shall become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword among all nations where the LORD will drive you.” The word “*Israel*” will become synonymous with “*curse*.” Verse 38-42 warns the locust will eat the seed, worms will spoil the crops and wine. Olives will drop off the trees. Jewish children will be taken captive. And Gentiles will become more prosperous than Jews.

Verse 44, “He shall lend to you, but you shall not lend to him; he shall be the head, and you shall be the tail.” ...*the opposite of what would happen if they obey God...* Verse 46 tells us all this is “*a sign*.” *Here’s what happens if you disobey God...* And because you didn’t **serve Him**, you’ll **serve your enemies**... And verse 48 you’ll serve, “*in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in need of everything...*” If they had obeyed God they would **need nothing**, instead they **need everything**...

And this is true for us! Jesus said, “*Seek first God’s kingdom and righteousness, and all you need will be added to you...*” Yet serve yourself, and turn your back on God, and you too will end up *needing everything*.

Verse 49, “The LORD will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flies, a nation whose language you will not understand, a nation of fierce countenance, which does not respect the elderly nor show favor to the young.” Babylon in 586 BC and Rome in 70 AD both marched under the emblem of an eagle... The next lines describe how their armies laid siege and toppled Jerusalem. Verse 53, “You shall eat the fruit of your own body, the flesh of your sons and your daughters whom the LORD your God has given you, in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you.” In both sieges hungry and desperate Jews resorted to cannibalism. They ate their own kids.

In 70 AD the Romans surrounded Jerusalem and cut off her supply lines. They wanted to starve the Jews into surrender. Great numbers of people scaled the wall to forage for food. Most Jews were captured and crucified - *as many as 500 per day*. More than 600,000 Jews starved to death in the siege. In all, over a million people died, and 97,000 Jews were taken into captivity.

I’m going to let you read verses 54-57 for yourself, a gentleman and a lady are turned into brute beasts by their own desperate hunger. *Just reading it is tough*.

Verse 58 continues to warn Israel if they disobey, God promises them “*extraordinary plagues - great and prolonged plagues, serious and prolonged sicknesses*.” The diseases of Egypt will strike them. Unknown illnesses will wipe them out. Though they

were once *as numerous as the stars*, they'll now be "*few in number*."

Verse 63, "And it shall be, that just as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good and multiply you, so the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you and bring you to nothing and you shall be plucked from off the land which you go to possess. Then the LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other, and there you shall serve other gods, which neither you nor your fathers have known - wood and stone. And among those nations you shall find no rest, nor shall the sole of your foot have a resting place; but there the LORD will give you a trembling heart, failing eyes, and anguish of soul. Your life shall hang in doubt before you; you shall fear day and night, and have no assurance of life." And for the last 2000 years this has been the Jewish plight. Even today - in their own homeland - they have no rest. Their life still *hangs in doubt*. They *fear day and night*.

Chapter 28 closes, "The LORD will take you back to Egypt in ships, by the way of which I said to you, 'You shall never see it again.' And there you shall be offered for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but no one will buy you." After the sacking of Jerusalem in 70 AD, Rome sold 97,000 Jews to the Egyptian salt mines, and the supply of slaves exceeded the demand.

And how sad... The Hebrew slaves who were set free from Egyptian bondage came full circle - only to be slaves in Egypt again. *And why?* They disobeyed God.

Chapter 29 begins with a history lesson... Moses recounts the miracles in Egypt - the covenant at Mount Sinai - God's provision in the wilderness (*in forty years neither their clothes or sandals wore out*) - the victories they won east of the Jordan. God was faithful to Israel.

And now God is making another covenant with Israel - **the Mosaic Covenant**. They've seen the impotence of the gods of Egypt. They're not to look to those gods, or become delusional. Verse 19, "*so it may not happen, when he (a Hebrew) hears the words of this curse, that he blesses himself in his heart, saying, 'I shall have peace, even though I walk in the imagination of my heart' - as though the drunkard could be included with the sober.*" Here's a person who's numb to reality. It's amazing how worldly pleasures numb us. The drunk acts like he's sober. *He gets fired, his wife divorces him, his kids hate him, his dog bites him...* yet after a bottle of wine, he's happy as a lark. He says, "*I have peace, though I walk in the imagination of my heart.*"

Don't let your feelings be the measure of your spiritual condition. Feelings are fickle. If you really want to know where you're at with God, check His Word.

And God's Word assures the man who follows other gods, verse 20, "**The LORD would not spare him; for then the anger of the LORD and His jealousy would burn**

against that man, and every curse that is written in this book would settle on him, and the LORD would blot out his name from under heaven.” God’s plagues on an idolater resemble what He did to Sodom, verse 23, “the whole land is brimstone, salt, and burning...” If you don’t want to be scorched earth, obey the Lord.

Verse 29 is a vital verse, "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law." In short, “never let what you don’t know, distract you from what you do.” Life holds a million mysteries - most of which won’t get answered this side of heaven. *God has His secrets.*

Recall Job never learned **the why** behind his calamity. *Job never read the first two chapters of Job.* The reason for his troubles remained a mystery until he died. Yet God expected Job to trust in His sovereignty.

This is a level of faith we all need to reach, where we can accept “God is God and I am not!” God doesn’t need my permission, nor does He owe me an explanation, for what He does. God can do whatever He pleases and I still need to worship Him. I love the quote, “What’s over my head is still under God’s feet.”

An *infinite God* should never be expected to explain His every move to *finite minds*. You need to trust God even when you don’t understand Him! Actually, I’m thankful God maintains some mystery. Some realities need to be undecipherable. If our puny little minds can figure out all there is to know about God; then He wouldn’t be much of a God. Remember Isaiah 55:8-9, "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts."

Here’s the point of verse 29, don’t let God’s **sacred secrets** divert you from His **clear commands**. Let God have His secrets, but what He reveals we should obey. I love what Mark Twain said, “It ain’t those parts of the Bible I don’t understand that bother me - it’s the parts of the Bible I do understand, and need to obey.”

Chapter 30 is full of hope! After the blessings and mostly curses, when Israel awakes and repents, God will bring them back from where they were scattered.

In Nehemiah 1:8-9, the great wall builder, Nehemiah, quotes **Deuteronomy 30:4**. He reminds God of His promise to bring His people back. And God did in three waves: *under Zerubbabel, then Ezra, then Nehemiah.*

And now in modern times we’re watching another return of Israel to their ancient homeland. After 2000 years God is once more keeping His promise. He’s bringing Jews back to the land of Zion. At the end of World War 2 boat-loads of European Jews

- Holocaust survivors - sailed into Israel's harbors. In the 1980s airplanes packed with Soviet Jews landed in Tel Aviv. Ethiopian Jews were airlifted home. Today, scattered Jews continue to return to their ancient homeland.

Verse 5, "Then the LORD your God will bring you to the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it." After the holocaust the British first offered the Jews a potential homeland in Africa, what is today Uganda. The Jews refused, *and why?* God promised to bring the Hebrews back to the land which their "fathers' possessed" - the land of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

"He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers." This is happening today. Israel's Jewish population has *multiplied* to 7.7 million. Her agriculture and technology have produced enormous *prosperity*.

"And 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, that you may live." Eight days after birth Jewish males are circumcised. It's a mark of identity as God's people.

But to be "*circumcised of heart*" speaks of new birth, *of being born again*... Embrace Jesus as Lord, and His Spirit operates on our spirit. He circumcises, or cuts off our sin nature. We become sensitive, compliant to Him.

Yet this kind of circumcision has not yet happened to the Jewish people. Today, despite their return to the land, Israel is still a secular state. Israelis respect the Bible, and acknowledge the role religion has played in their nation's past, but the people of Israel have largely yet to experience the spiritual revival predicted here.

Yet they will! The New Covenant Jesus fulfilled consists of three promises: **a regathering to the land, a regeneration of heart, and a reestablishment of God's earthly kingdom.** And it will occur in that order: *a regathering that we watch for, a revival we pray for, and a reestablishment of a kingdom we long for...*

In the "**Fiddler on the Roof**," the old Jew, Tevye, is talking to God when he says, "I know, I know. **We are Your chosen people. But, once in a while, can't You choose someone else?**" For 3400 years the Jews have bore the burden of these blessings and curses, and they've been cursed far more than blessed.

But verses 7-10 says the day is coming when God will again curse Israel's enemies, and rejoice over His people. He will restore blessing to an obedient Israel.

Verse 11, "For this commandment which I command you today, it is not too mysterious for you," This isn't **too deep** for folks to understand. "Nor is it far off." It's not **too high** for Israel to grasp. Some people assume God and religion are complicated. It's only for pastors and theologians, *not* so! It's simpler than you think.

Verse 12, "It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will ascend into heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' "Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' "But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it." God's truth isn't in the heavens or across the sea where you can't get to it. *No!* God's salvation is as close as the tip of your tongue. It's simple and clear. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to follow God. It's so simple a child can come.

Moses spoke these words as he delivered the OC to Israel, but Paul quotes this same passage in Romans 10 in the context of the NC. A relationship with Jesus is also as close as the tip of your tongue! You don't have to learn ancient secrets or scale sacred mountains. Just repent of your sin and call on the name of Jesus.

Verse 15, "See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil..." Israel had a choice, *as do you!*

Obey and live, or disobey and die... God wants you to walk in His ways and keep His commandments, not get drawn away to worship and serve other gods...

Moses says in verse 19, “I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live; that you may love the LORD your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days; and that you may dwell in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them.” Moses made the choice plain, but provided no power to obey.

Only God can circumcise a heart, and He does it by the power of His Spirit and in the name of His Son.