

## DEUTERONOMY

### Lesson 39 - Chapter 28 Continued

We began the very long chapter 28 of Deuteronomy last week and we'll finish it up this week. Settle in and get comfortable, because we have a great deal to accomplish tonight. The first section that was verses 1 – 14 entail a reciting of the blessings that Israel would receive from the Lord if they will listen to and obey Him. The usual way Israel would “listen” to God was by learning the commandments and laws Moses had taught them and then by **DOING** them! Too often we modern Christians think that in order to know for certain what Yehoveh wants of us we need some kind of personal spiritual revelation about each of the countless circumstances we encounter in our lives (a thing often referred to in sermons as seeking God's specific will). Scripture teaches us that almost everything regarding God's will for us has already been established in the Word of God, and so it is there that we need to turn for most of our answers. But our hope is usually to find a good loop-hole to avoid what it is that we know we ought to do (or not do).

The remainder of this chapter deals with the opposite of blessings, which are called “curses”. A good way to think of these curses is as divine threats. In fact the ancient Sages, and later the Rabbis, have given a title to this list of curses in Deuteronomy 28: **Tokhehah**, which means “warning”. And the warning is that just as obedience brings a well-defined series of possible blessings upon Israel, so disobedience brings a well-defined series of possible curses.....consequences.....upon Israel.

We read about these curses last week and won't do it again, but you can refer to the verses starting at 15 for this list of curses. I highly recommend that you follow along with your Bibles open to Deuteronomy 28 so you don't get lost.

I'll warn you ahead of time that we are going to crash headlong into some immutable God-principles that have been practically doctrinized away in our era, and so it may challenge some things that you've always taken for granted didn't apply to you.

Remember that what is happening here is that Moses is re-teaching the laws of the Mt. Sinai Covenant to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Exodus generation, and expounding on those laws in a sermon-style. The first generation of the Exodus is now dead and buried as the result of a curse from God upon them because they refused to go forward and take the Promised Land early on in their Wilderness Journey. It was that 1<sup>st</sup> generation who trembled as they saw the smoke billowing

up from the summit of Mt. Sinai, heard God's thundering voice that made them instinctively drop to their knees and cry out in fear, witnessed the giving of the covenant to Moses, and unanimously declared that all that God has said they would do. Thirty eight years later Moses is now presenting the terms of that same covenant to the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation (the sons and daughters of those who walked out of Egypt) and telling them that they need to vow to accept its terms just as their fathers did.

There is a great principle here: we are each redeemed NOT by what our fathers and mothers agreed to and did, but by what we agree to and do. We can be raised in the most wonderful Believing Christian home, go to church with our parents, join in the congregational prayers and fellowships, and speak all the Christian lingo; and that counts for exactly nothing when it comes to our personal salvation. We must each declare our allegiance to the covenant that God has made available to us. If we do not then we are NOT made a member of the covenant and we live outside of its terms. It was like that for Israel, it is still like that for us today.

The first 6 curses are general in nature and are the precise mirror opposites of the 6 blessings listed in verses 1-6. Verse 3 corresponds to vs. 16: whereas obedience to the covenant terms that Israel has agreed to (the Mosaic Covenant) brings blessings to you whether you are in the city or countryside, disobedience brings curses upon you in the city or the countryside. Verse 4, fruitfulness, corresponds to verse 18, the blessing of abundance verses abundance being held back. Verse 5 corresponds to verse 17, and so on. What's the obvious lesson? Obedience and disobedience brings opposite results.

Starting in verse 20 the curses are expanded upon and made more specific. Depending on your Bible translation 3 descriptive words are used for what God will do to defeat a rebellious Israelite (or a rebellious nation of Israel) in everything they try to accomplish: the translation of the list I most like to use is that Yehoveh will cause **curse, cumbrance, and confusion**; and the reason I like these 3 terms better than others is because they all start with the same letter ("C"). This reflects exactly how the Hebrew reads, because the list of the 3 descriptive words in Hebrew also all begin with the same Hebrew letter (a *mem*); and just like in English the purpose of doing that is to make it more memorable.

The first consequence of the 3 is (in Hebrew) me'erah, which means "curse" in the sense of enduring a calamity. The 2<sup>nd</sup> is *mehumah* and it means confusion and it refers to the panic and chaos typically caused by war and intense social upheaval. The 3<sup>rd</sup> is *mig'eret*, it means cumbrance, a heavy burden. It carries with it the idea of frustration and an inability to make progress. And what brings about these conditions is that Israel has committed great evil by forsaking the Lord.

What does that mean, to **forsake** the Lord? The CJB says that it means to abandon God. Yet what we find when we view Israel's exiles and punishments in retrospect is that in general

they did not (in their own minds) stop worshipping God or acknowledging Yehoveh as the God of Israel. We don't find Israel saying, "There is no God called Yehoveh" or "let's go and disobey Him". Instead over time they added a few other gods while hanging on to Yehoveh. They found reasons to twist the Mosaic laws and commands to suit their own pleasures and wants; or to obey the laws they liked and ignore the ones that weren't convenient. The point is that to forsake or abandon God doesn't mean that a person who at one time worshipped Him now fully renounces Him. Rather it means that a person who has agreed to the covenant terms is now breaking those terms. Biblically speaking to forsake or abandon God only means to turn our back on Him; to quit obeying and following His ways. It means to wander away and do our own thing, to put the Lord on the shelf, and to dilute our lives with things of the world that have no place in the life of one who has been redeemed. That's what it meant 3000 years ago, and that's what it still means for a Believer.

Starting in verse 21 we see 3 categories of curses emerge: those involving disease, drought, and war. The first category Moses tells Israel about is pestilence, virulent disease. Three Hebrew words (*shahefet*, ***kaddahat***, and ***dalleket***) are used to describe the human diseases, but the fact is that no one really knows what the modern equivalents of these are; therefore we'll see practically every Bible version have its own list. Whatever they are they are painful and deadly. The next couple of terms could refer to humans or crops, and either means that humans "burn", undoubtedly referring to fever, or it could be scorching heat that destroys crops.

Next in verse 23 it says that the sky (or heavens) will be as brass and the earth as iron; this is referring to the lack of rain and the resulting extreme dryness of the ground. Instead of the rain of moisture, there will be a rain of dust caused by the parched earth just as our nation saw in the Dust Bowl crisis in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and memorialized in Hemmingway's great novel, *The Grapes of Wrath*.

The aspect of war is also added; the Lord, who has promised to rout Israel's enemies if Israel is obedient, will now rout Israel at the hand of their enemies for disobedience. The phrase to "march in by a single road but flee on 7 roads" is an idiom; it simply means that while they will show up for battle in a properly organized battle line, they will scatter and run for their lives in every direction when their enemy overwhelms them. In fact the defeat will be so thorough that those who hear of it will view Israel as a horror instead of with the respectful fear God promises as a blessing back in verse 10. This reminds one of the cowardly attack by Jacob's sons upon the debilitated men of Shechem as a wholly uncalled for reprisal in response to the King's son raping Jacob's daughter Dinah. Jacob told his sons that as a result of their actions he was now a stench in the nostrils of the surrounding tribes and nations; it is only another way of saying "horror". But in all candor it also reminds one of the recent war between Lebanon and Israel whereby Israel was defeated and humiliated and the great respect and fear throughout the Arab world for Israel's military capability has turned into a real concern in the Western world of whether Israel can actually defend itself any longer and be a useful ally in the war against terror. Israel is once again on it's way to becoming a "horror" to the world, and this will

play a role in the end-times attack upon Israel.

But Yehoveh says the curses against Israel will get even worse. The number of dead Hebrew soldiers will be so great that the survivors won't even be able to bury them before their corpses are subject to the scavenger birds and wild animals. While this is a rather gross image to us, it pales in comparison to what the REAL issue was in the minds of the Hebrews: if they are not properly buried then whatever afterlife their spirits might have enjoyed will never occur; their spiritual existence ceases.

Verse 27 then begins a theme that will expand during the remainder of this chapter: Egypt. Unlike their parents this 2<sup>nd</sup> generation of the Exodus did NOT witness the terrible blows that God visited upon Egypt. They certainly heard about the eyewitness accounts of these calamities as they sat around the campfires; but here Moses is starting to paint a picture for them of those horrors that Egypt experienced, and that while God separated Israel from Egypt and allowed only Egypt to suffer these terrors, ISRAEL will suffer those same terrors should they rebel against Yehoveh. So the Lord says that they can expect to suffer from those (primarily) skin afflictions that you only wish you could die from, but instead clings to you without relief or hope all of your days. One of those skin afflictions is literally translated as "evil boils"; it should be noted that this is the exact same words used to describe that devastating skin disease that God allowed to be inflicted upon Job.

But purely physical and outward appearing afflictions won't be the end of it. God will curse people's minds such that they suffer from dementia. The terms used are madness, blindness, and utter confusion. It is psychological torment, mental illness, that is being described here and where we see the word "blindness" it does not mean the loss of eyesight. Rather it means that one will not be able to discern or comprehend or to "see" the truth any longer. This is meant to remind them of Egypt when God brought a darkness upon Egypt that was so thick that people literally lost their minds and not just their way. It was an evil, spiritual darkness that descended upon Egypt such that neither sunlight nor God's enlightenment shone upon them. Essentially it was the absence of God's presence that is being threatened. It is a very similar condition that non-Believers will face for an eternity.

Have you ever been in a situation or in a place where you sensed abject evil? Have experienced the kind of sensation that caused the hair on the back of your neck to stand on end, yet you couldn't see anything or put your finger on what it was? Have you ever been in a place where you felt that God's light did not penetrate or illuminate, and instead there was only darkness and death? And all you wanted to do was run away from it? That is the mental blindness that is being described here; but the Lord says that running away won't work because it will follow you wherever you go.

Let me paraphrase verses 30 through 35 for you: nothing will make sense anymore. All the

things you used to do that turned out well don't anymore. Your worst fears will be realized when the impossible to imagine happens. Some unknown enemy will kill your sources of food and livelihood; your sons and daughters will wind up in foreign places where some will become slaves and others will die. Logic says this will eventually end (as everything usually does) but it doesn't. People will hate you but you don't understand why. Everything you've ever worked for and have come by honestly suddenly becomes the property of another; you eventually have a nervous breakdown as a result of the stress of not being able to deal with the chaos and insanity of the situation.

Understand that to this point everything that Israel has been threatened with was going to happen within the land of Israel. The specter of these terrible things that God's wrath might pour out upon the Israelites will happen WHILE they are in their own land. But then, just when it can't get any worse, the unthinkable happens: exile.

Verse 36 is one of those mystery verses I spoke of at the beginning of this 4-chapter section because the entire tone suddenly shifts from being hypothetical ("If you do this, then this is what will happen") to being prophetic and inevitable ("This is what is GOING to happen"). This turns from being a possibility to being an assurance; Israel will be removed from the Land of Promise because they WILL rebel against Yehoveh and bring down these curses upon themselves. Notice also that 300 years before Israel ever even had thoughts of installing a king to rule over them, the Lord says that He will drive the Israelites AND THEIR KING to a nation that was unknown to their fathers; a nation that essentially did not exist in the days of the Patriarchs.

As we know the exiles of Israel to another land actually happened. We'll find Isaiah and Jeremiah especially quoting these curses of Deuteronomy 28 first to warn Israel to change their ways and then later to remind them just why these calamities happened to them. It surprises some to learn that due to Israel's disobedience and lack of faithfulness to YHWH they were only a sovereign nation for about 80 years. That's right, the modern state of Israel that is barely over 60 years of age is not far from approaching the sum total amount of time that Israel was a unified nation in all of their history. Under Kings David and Solomon Israel thrived and the 12 tribes lived under one banner. But within 3 or 4 years after Solomon's death Israel fell into civil war and became divided into two kingdoms that are referred to in a number of ways in the Bible; among these designations are the Northern Kingdom and the Southern Kingdom. The Northern Kingdom was also called Ephraim-Israel, and the Southern Kingdom was called Judah. The Northern Kingdom consisted of 10 of the 12 tribes of Israel, and it was the Northern Kingdom of Ephraim-Israel that was exiled first. About 725 B.C. the powerful Assyrian Empire (who had been chipping away at Ephraim-Israel's territory for about a decade) was used as a tool of judgment upon the Hebrews by Yehoveh, and the Assyrians completed their conquest of the Northern Kingdom. Those 10 tribes of Ephraim-Israel were removed from the land and scattered all over the vast Assyrian Empire, and most of those people were absorbed into the scores of cultures that formed Assyria. This is where the legend of the 10 lost tribes began.

About 135 years later there was a new bully on the block: Babylon. The Southern Kingdom was all that remained of Israel until about 596 B.C. when King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon invaded Judah, destroyed Jerusalem and took a great deal of the population (starting with the most learned and useful) to Babylon. This was the 2<sup>nd</sup> exile.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> and final exile of God's people is marked in time as 70 A.D., because that is when the Romans seized Jerusalem and burned the Temple. What we see today in the re-emergence of the modern state of Israel is the return from the Roman exile of the people of Judah, the Southern Kingdom. The Northern Kingdom must, according to the prophecies, return as well, and to an increasing degree that is happening.

Back to Deuteronomy; in the place of their exile the Israelites will go from being superior hosts to being inferior aliens. They will serve the needs of other gods and not Yehoveh. And in this place of exile they will take up planting vineyards, and sowing crops, but the locust shall destroy it all. Even the small joy they may have gained by making and drinking wine is taken from them. Again notice that the PLACE where all these curses of God upon the Hebrews is occurring has shifted; they were experiencing all of these calamities in Israel but now they are STILL experiencing them in some other land AFTER their exile. Being kicked-out of the Promised Land was NOT the end of the curses; the curses followed them wherever they went.

This demonstrates perhaps one the greatest lessons all of us can ever learn: there is no running from God, there is ONLY running to Him. Jonah is a great example of this lesson brought to life.

Turn you Bibles to the book of Jonah, chapter 1.

### **READ JONAH chapters 1 and 2**

I won't spend much time with discussing the ancient belief systems of the Middle East because I've presented you with much information on the subject during our years of study together. Allow me to simply refresh your memories that it was considered common knowledge that a god or gods occupied earthly territory (or often the sky above it) just like man does. In other words every nation of people had their own gods and goddesses that operated within, and whose powers were limited by, the boundaries of that nation. When one wandered across the border and entered another nation a different set of gods took over. As hard to accept as it might be the Biblical Hebrews continued to believe this (and it is well attested to in Scripture) even though they had the Torah and they had Yehoveh. Jonah had to learn the hard way that what the world claims as politically correct and common knowledge isn't necessarily the truth.



YHWH gave Jonah an assignment to go to Ninevah and tell them about the God of Israel; he didn't want to go so he decided he would run away. He would leave the territory of Israel, where Yehoveh had power, and go to Tarshish where Yehoveh did not exist or at least had no spiritual authority. Understand: Jonah was NOT renouncing the God of Israel he was just escaping from Yehoveh's national jurisdiction (or so he thought).

Jonah chapter 2 tells of Jonah's great realization that you cannot escape God because He is everywhere and His authority is universal. I guess Jonah had never read Deuteronomy 28 because it makes this point most emphatically. In Deuteronomy 28 Yehoveh was making it clear that wherever the Hebrews might go, the curses would be with them because Yehoveh was still with them. There is no escaping God.

In Deuteronomy 28:43 yet another aspect of the curses upon the lives of the Israelites is stepped upon by God: their finances. A complete role reversal is taking place; the foreigners (who came to Israel lowly and in need) now become higher and wealthier than the Israelites. Israel had been ordered by God to LEND to foreigners due to humanitarian concerns; now in their accursed state, Israel will become the borrower from those same foreigners. The humiliation is beyond the pale.

Beyond the diseases, psychological trauma and deprivation, the next series of divine threats involves conquest by other nations. The result will be starvation, poverty, and servitude to these nations and their gods.

The cause of this next group of curses is the same as all the other categories of curses: Israel disobeyed God. Or more literally, Israel did not "*shema*" God; Israel did not listen and obey. If I could wave a magic wand over the modern church and change something I think it would be to re-insert the word "obey" into our faith. Somehow obedience is now seen as irrelevant; we've bought our fire insurance so who cares if we play with matches and burn the house down? I've had a number of people explain to me that they see obedience as legalism because they believe that all we're required to do since the advent of Christ is to love. Love has replaced obedience, just as the New Covenant has replaced the Old. Yet the Scriptures say that to love God IS to be obedient to Him.

Verse 46 brings us another reference to the theme of "Egypt" (as I had told you to watch for as we worked our way through these curses). Moses says that these never ending national calamities and reversals-of-fortune shall serve as a "sign and wonder" against Israel for all time that they did not serve God. It is this same phrase that was used to explain the purpose of the 10 plagues upon Egypt.

Let me pause here and see if this Egypt reference is becoming clearer; essentially what is happening is that Israel's redemption from Egypt is being undone. God is reversing the status and condition of Israel, and returning them to Egypt and slavery because Israel is rejecting the terms of the covenant by breaking the terms.

To receive the blessing of the Lord, and to have no joy in it; to receive redemption and not to be grateful by means of demonstrating obedience, is to invite God's curses. What greater lesson is being demonstrated here if not that?

I cannot say it strongly enough that the curses upon Israel that we are reading about in Deuteronomy 28 are God threatening to reverse Israel's salvation history. He brought them out of Egypt where they served the great enemy, and then He redeemed them and gave them His Word, the Torah. But because over time they rejected His love and His commandments they are essentially renouncing Yehoveh; therefore they would once again be assigned to serve an enemy as slaves, and they would forfeit the privileged status of holiness that God had bestowed upon them, as well as the blessings that were there for the taking as expressed in the Mosaic Covenant. What an incalculable tragedy.

But this also raises a terribly difficult issue that the church has wrestled with for centuries and different segments of the church have come up with different solutions. The issue is that once we have been redeemed can WE, today, return to Egypt so-to-speak. That is can a person who accepts Messiah Jesus as Lord and Savior renounce that allegiance and have his or her own personal salvation history reversed? We're certainly not going to discover a new aspect of that terribly difficult question that has caused quite a bit of division within the body of Christ, but on the other hand neither can I simply look the other way when a definite pattern is laid out here in the Torah.

There is no denying that the New Testament is chocked full with warnings and examples of people who at one time declared their allegiance to Yeshua, and then either renounced it or walked away to such an extent that they found themselves right back in Egypt; the Lord released them back into the servitude of an evil master.

Do you recall Yeshua's parable of the seeds that was a metaphor for the Gospel being taught to people and that there were varying results?

<sup>NAS</sup> ***Luke 8:13 "And those (seeds that fell) on the rocky soil are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no firm root; they believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away.***



There are two important elements to this passage. The first is to understand what the phrase “fall away” means; it means that a person has become apostate. It means that someone no longer has sufficient trust to be counted as among the followers of God. It is NOT referring to misbehavior or committing a sin. Second, too many modern church doctrines gloss-over this scripture and say that “those who believed for awhile” didn’t actually ever believe; rather they were pretenders. Not only is that not what it says but you will find NOWHERE in the New Testament any reference to those who fell away from the faith as having never actually believed. By definition you can’t “fall away” from something you never had. Fall away essentially means to leave the faith in one way or another.

***<sup>NAS</sup> Romans 11:22 Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell away, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off.***

Notice here the good old Mosaic “IF, THEN” conditional nature of the covenant. IF you continue in His kindness THEN you’ll stay attached as a branch on the Olive Tree. Our New Covenant is a conditional covenant. The condition is NOT that we must behave perfectly; rather it is that we MUST trust and continue to abide in the faith OR (if we renounce what we know to be truth) we will be cut-off from the source of our faith, God.

***<sup>CJB</sup> Galatians 5:4 You who are trying to be declared righteous by God through legalism have severed yourselves from the Messiah! You have fallen away from God's grace!***

There were those in Paul’s day (and there are those today) who think that obedience to the Law PLUS trusting Messiah EQUALS Salvation. Not only is this not true, one cancels the other. If we try to mix together the self-justification of obedience to the Law with Christ’s justification on our behalf, then we wind up with NO justification at all. DO NOT confuse this with our being justified by Yeshua and then our being obedient to all of God’s Word in the appropriate response from every Believer to such overwhelming grace.

***<sup>CJB</sup> Revelation 2:4 But I have this against you: you have lost the love you had at first.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, remember where you were before you fell, turn from this sin, and do what you used to do before. Otherwise, I will come to you and remove your menorah from its place- if you don't turn from your sin!***

To have your menorah (lamp stand) removed is to lose your enlightenment. Yeshua is our enlightenment; and here He is threatening to remove Himself from our midst. Now listen to me very carefully because I do not want to be misunderstood or misquoted: indeed no man and no spiritual being of any kind can ever forcefully and against your will remove your Salvation in Jesus Christ. But Yeshua Himself (right here in Revelation) does take it away from those who loved and believed at first, but stopped of their own volition, by their own will, and turned back to sin; they lost their love for Him.

***NAS 1 Timothy 4:1 But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons,***

And here we have Paul saying bluntly that in our era (the latter times) some Believers WILL fall away from the faith. It is not only possible it is inevitable that SOME Christians will fall away from what they had believed and instead put their faith in deceitful DOCTRINES contrived by men. The idea that once we trust in Messiah that it is impossible for us to renounce our faith, or to slowly transfer that faith to a set of man-made doctrines, is refuted in the Scriptures. It is certainly true that NO BEING, human or spiritual, can take you away from Jesus against your will..... EXCEPT if that being is you. As long as we each remain in the faith by means of trusting God we are safe and protected. Misbehavior (committing sins) is NOT renouncing our faith, it is not "falling away", and that is NOT what is being expressed in these NT verses I have shown you. So don't walk out of here today worrying that if you broke a commandment of God that you are in danger of having your Salvation stripped from you; you're not. Rather the renouncing of our faith means to expressly disavow our former belief that Yeshua is Lord. These NT passages we just read indicate that we are apparently as completely free to renounce our faith as we were free to accept it. These NT warning simply follow the pattern established in Deuteronomy; amid all God has done for them Israel has turned away from God and so He has given them back to Egypt.

Now the good news is that one who was redeemed (in Deuteronomy this is Israel) and who renounces His faith CAN come to his senses; he CAN be led back to God. And when he does he CAN reclaim His redemption. We will of course, see this same thing as pertains to Israel a little later in the OT, but in the NT we have the Apostle James explain:

***CJB James 5:19 My brothers, if one of you wanders from the truth, and someone causes him to return,<sup>20</sup> you should know that whoever turns a sinner from his wandering path will save him from death and cover many sins.***

James, brother of Jesus, says that if a Believer falls away He is in danger of death. What kind of death? Obviously **eternal** death because that's the context; and because everyone, saved

or unsaved, is assigned to have their physical body die once. And James says that if someone helps a former Believer to return to the faith, he will save him from the eternal death.

I'm not here today to confirm or deny whatever doctrine you may believe on this difficult subject; but I will point out that the answer lies in the patterns.

Verse 49 of Deuteronomy continues with the prophecy of the coming curses upon Israel at their inevitable fall. A foreign nation will swoop down upon Israel quickly, in strength and speed, and show no mercy. Everything the Israelites have worked centuries to achieve will be wiped out almost overnight. People will be shut-up in their towns and face starvation and death; this is speaking of siege warfare, which of course is exactly what Israel faced against both the Babylonians and the Romans.

I don't wish to be too graphic but these final verses are quite gruesome, so let me explain what is being said. Verse 53 contemplates cannibalism. Some folks will become so hungry that they will eat their own children. In fact verse 54 makes a play on words and it explains that the most finicky of eaters, and the most aristocratic among the elite of Israel will not only stoop so low as to eat his children (and be glad for the meal), he also will not want to share any with his own starving wife!

And to make the point even more profoundly, the wife who is the most finicky of eaters and of the aristocratic elite will actually eat the remains of birth. By the way, annals from the 2 sieges on Jerusalem record that these horrible things actually happened.

The final verses of this sickening imagery are of the disease and wasting away that comes as a result of the thousands of corpses that lay stacked like firewood in the besieged city. In verse 68 the reversal of Israel's redemption is completed. The Lord will send the survivors (metaphorically) back to Egypt. In the past the Egyptian overlords accepted Israel as slaves and at least provided them a subsistence living; but the Lord God says that this time Egypt won't even accept them as slaves (so despised have they become).

And just so that there is NO misunderstanding, the last words of chapter 28 confirm that the covenant given at Horeb (another name for Sinai) and in Moab is one in the same covenant so the Israelites shouldn't be confused and think that that things have changed.

I will close for today with this thought: just as the terms of the Mosaic Covenant didn't change between Sinai and Moab, neither did they change between Moab and Calvary. God didn't give a "forever" covenant at Sinai, revoke it, and give a new "forever" one in Moab. Neither did He give us what is commonly called the New Covenant and revoke the previous. How can I know

this? Messiah says so.

**<sup>CJB</sup> Matthew 5:17 "Don't think that I have come to abolish the Torah or the Prophets. I have come not to abolish but to complete."<sup>18</sup> Yes indeed! I tell you that until heaven and earth pass away, not so much as a yud or a stroke will pass from the Torah- not until everything that must happen has happened.<sup>19</sup> So whoever disobeys the least of these mitzvot and teaches others to do so will be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. But whoever obeys them and so teaches will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.**