**Deuteronomy Chapters 9&10**

Chapter 9 begins with Moses telling the people they were about to enter Canaan to dispossess nations greater and stronger than they were. He then told them to expect to encounter Anakites who were renowned for their great stature. They were thought to be descendants of the Nephilim who were present in the pre-flood era. Some have speculated that they were the offspring of fallen angels and humans (see Gen. 6:4). This would have evoked a vivid image in the minds of the Israelites, reminding them of the description of the giants seen by the spies sent into Canaan years earlier. Moses assured them that God would go ahead of them like a devouring fire and He would subdue them after which they could drive them out of the land. Moses then warned them against thinking that God chose them because of their righteousness, rather He chose them because of the wickedness of the Canaanites. Moses pointed out that God actually chose them in spite of their stiff necked attitudes. He then recounted the infamous incident of the golden calf which is recorded in Exodus chapter 32 telling them to never forget that day Moses gave a detailed description of the events leading up to that event beginning with his journey to the top of the mountain, his 40 day fast and God giving him the 2 stone tablets with the 10 Commandments. God then told him to go down from the mountain because the people had cast an idol. Moses then recalled how he had again fasted for 40 days as he pleaded with God to spare the people and Aaron who had failed to lead them in Moses’ absence.

Moses also told of other times the Israelites had rebelled against God at Taberah, Kibroth Hattaavah (see Num. 11:33) and, Massah (see Ex. 17:7). The chapter ends with Moses telling how the people sinned against God again by refusing His command take possession of Canaan.

In chapter 10, Moses changes the narrative to talking about the redemption of the Israelites. He told how God had prepared 2 new tablets to replace the ones that Moses had broken. Moses took the new tablets and put them in the ark then they traveled away from Mt. Sinai. He told of the death of Aaron who was succeeded by his son Eleazer and how the Levites were appointed to serve as ministers. After telling how God had given them their inheritance even after their sins, Moses then asks “What does God ask of you but to fear Him to walk in His ways, and to love and serve Him. The chapter ends with Moses talking about the character of God saying that He was mighty, awesome and fair. He defended the weak and told the people they were to love aliens since they were once aliens themselves.

I think the lessons Moses was passing on the people were:

1. They needed to learn to depend on God. He tasked them with the impossible, they were to go into Canaan and face nations stronger than they were and it would only be by the power of God that they would succeed.
2. They were not to assume that they had earned any righteousness. David Guzik wrote of an old teaching that a dying man should pray “Lord, join my righteousness with Christ’s righteousness”. We have none to join with His. God was keeping His promise to Abraham so His actions were to not to reward the Israelites but to bring honor to His holy name (See Ez. 36:22)
3. Never forget their past sin. Moses wanted them to remember the past so that they would know the depths to which they were capable of sinking. In Ezekiel chapter 36, God tells Ezekiel to send the Israelites in captivity a similar message. He said that they would remember their wicked deeds and loathe themselves for their sins (see Ez. 36:31). In chapter 39, God again changes the narrative showing how He treats a repentant heart. He said that after He brought back Israel from captivity, they would forget their shame and unfaithfulness. God also forgets (see Psalm 103:12 and Is. 43:25)