**A Call for Commitment to God**

"I hereby declare, on oath, that I absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty, of whom or which I have heretofore been a subject or citizen; that I will support and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States of America against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I will bear arms on behalf of the United States when required by the law; that I will perform noncombatant service in the Armed Forces of the United States when required by the law; that I will perform work of national importance under civilian direction when required by the law; and that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; so help me God." The preceding is the oath given by naturalized citizens of the United States during their citizenship ceremony. A similar oath of office is required for those who enter military service, however such an oath is not required of natural born citizens. I wonder how many would be willing to swear such an oath today although they are bound by the covenant entered into with the ratification of the Constitution. In our study of chapters 29 and 30, the Israelites entered into a covenant which was a repeat of the original covenant with God entered into 40 years previously at Mt. Sinai (see Ex. Chapter 24).

After completing his teaching of the law and telling the Israelites of the blessing for obedience and curses for disobedience, Moses presented the people with God’s covenant. He began by reminding them all the signs and wonders God had given while they were in Egypt. He then lamented that even though they had seen all God had done, they still did not understand. In addition to the noteworthy miracles God had performed, Moses pointed out to them that their clothes and shoes did not wear out during their 40 year journey. He also reminded them that their food had been provided by God. The people may have taken those things for granted after so long a period. We often pray for our ourselves and our families but what Moses said is a reminder for us that we should thank God daily for providing our needs. A note in my NIV study Bible reads “Worse yet, we mistakenly take the credit ourselves for being good providers instead of recognizing God’s hand in the process”. Moses then described the battles they had fought and won against Sihon and Og and how they had already taken land that would be occupied by the Transjordanian tribes.

Moses then told them yet again to carefully follow the terms of the covenant so they would prosper. He then formally announced the purpose of the assembly. All the people were gathered in God’s presence in order to enter into a covenant with God. They would declare an oath to confirm that they would be His people. Moses told them that the covenant would apply to all that were there as well as those who were not there. He may have referred to those who could not attend the assembly due to illness or uncleanliness or he could have been referring to future generations who would be bound by the covenant.

Moses then turned their attention to the idol worship they had witnessed in Egypt and other countries they had passed through. He told them to make sure that no one among them worshiped the gods of those nations and that they could not allow a root to take hold which could spread throughout the camp.

In verse 19 Moses addressed those who would think their presence in the assembly without confirming the oath in their heart would enjoy the benefits of the covenant. It is not the tongue uttering a sinner’s prayer to receive Jesus that matters but belief in the heart.

Moses then prophesied about the future generations that would abandon the covenant and worship other gods and he posed the question that observes would ask: Why has the Lord done this to this land? In making intercession for the people with God, one argument Moses used was that if God abandoned them, then other nations would think that God was powerless. When God drove the Israelites out generations later, they had many years to enjoy their inheritance which they had squandered. God’s glory had been amply displayed throughout Canaan so that when the Israelites went into captivity, it was evident that it was by their own hand. The chapter concludes with the statement that secret things belonged to God and the revealed things belonged to the people and the generations to follow. Matthew Henry wrote that God has kept much of His counsel secret, yet there is enough revealed to satisfy and save us.

In chapter 30, Moses told of how God would restore Israel after the people were dispersed among other nations. God promised to make them more prosperous than their forefathers but it was contingent upon their obeying Him with all their heart and soul. Moses said that God would again delight in them just as He delighted in their fathers.

Moses then concluded his presentation of the covenant by telling the people that the covenant was not too difficult for them or beyond their reach meaning that what God required of them was within their ability. It was also within their understanding so ignorance would ne no excuse. Paul wrote of this in Romans chapter 10: *For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, “The man who does those things shall live by them.” But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’ ” (that is, to bring Christ down from above) or, “ ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’ ” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.*

The chapter ends with Moses giving the people a choice: life or death and he implored them to choose life.