

DEUTERONOMY 28-33

WEEK IN REVIEW + FAMILY GUIDE

WEEK IN REVIEW

Moses makes his final appeal to the Israelites as they are on the verge of entering into the Promised Land. He has already gone through a review of the history and law, and he is now calling them to faithful obedience. This final section of Deuteronomy covers the blessings for obedience to the law, and curses for disobedience. **Blessings** are good gifts for making good choices and **curses** are bad things that happen for wrong choices. The Israelites were instructed to go on one of the two mountains on the sides of Shechem and build an altar with the words of the law on it. Half of the Israelites stood on Mount Gerizim to bless the people and the other half stood on Mount Ebal to curse the people. They would read out each of the curses and shout “amen,” showing they agreed. The last thing they declared was “Cursed is anyone who does not uphold the words of this law by carrying them out.” We know that the Israelites will not be able to do this.

Why did God use a system of blessing and cursing with Israel? This system was tied to the Mosaic covenant that God made with His people on Mount Sinai. As a reminder, a **covenant** is a really strong promise that should not be broken. This specific covenant was **conditional**, meaning the result of this promise was dependent on their action. If they believed and obeyed God, they would prosper. If they disobeyed God, they would perish. It was also meant to shape the spiritual and moral formation of Israel, reflect God’s holiness and justice, and for them to be a witness to the nations. The law serves as a reminder that they are all guilty before God and under the curse. The Apostle Paul talks about the law in the book of Romans. Paul gives a defense of the law, the weakness of the law, and how we are released from the law as believers in Jesus. The law didn’t bring death; sin did. However, the law can not change our heart, only the Spirit can.

Deuteronomy ends presenting the Israelites with a choice: life or death. Obedience to God leads to life. Disobedience to God leads to death. Like the Israelites, we also have the choice between life and death. We can choose to walk in obedience to the Lord and His Word which leads to life, or we can choose to turn away from God and forsake Him which leads to death. We choose life by choosing to follow Jesus, which will always lead to life in abundance. As the Israelites go into the Promised Land and Joshua takes Moses’ place, there is a reminder that God will be with them. Deuteronomy 31:8 says, “The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.” Just like God was with the Israelites, God promises to never leave us nor forsake us!

FAMILY GUIDE

BIG IDEA:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Obedience to God's word leads to life and disobedience leads to death
KEY STORIES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Blessings for obedience● Curses for disobedience● Renewing the covenant● Joshua takes Moses' place
KEY VERSES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Deuteronomy 28:1<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ "If you fully obey the Lord your God and carefully follow all his commands I give you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations on earth."● Deuteronomy 30:15<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ "See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction."● Deuteronomy 31:8<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ "The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged."
WORDS TO KNOW:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Blessing<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Good gifts for making good choices● Curses<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Bad things that happen for wrong choices● Covenant<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ A really strong promise that should not be broken● Conditional<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The result of something is dependent on action

Reflection Questions

1.	What is the Mosaic covenant? What does it mean that it was conditional?
2.	What was the purpose of the law?
3.	Did God's people follow the law faithfully?
4.	What is something that you have learned from the book of Deuteronomy?