**Deuteronomy 30:1–5**

[*https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/deut/deut-30/deuteronomy-301-5/*](https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/deut/deut-30/deuteronomy-301-5/)

*Moses encourages the Israelites by telling them that when future generations rebel and are exiled, their Suzerain/ruler God would restore them from captivity, have compassion on them, and bring them back into the Promised Land when they repent and turn from their evil ways.*

In this section, Moses continues his discussion about the LORD’s judgment upon His covenant people as a result of disobedience to the covenant of a future generation. This speech by Moses is being given to the second generation who departed Egypt, after those of military age had died in the wilderness, those age 20 and older ([Deuteronomy 2:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+2.16&t=NASB95)). They are at this point still in Moab, a country adjoining Canaan to the east, preparing to enter and take the land of Canaan (Israel). They have not yet taken the land at this point, but Moses is making it clear that a) they will prevail and b) future generations will forget the covenant and fall into disobedience. At that point, they will incur the provisions of the covenant (to which they agreed) that pertain to a disobedient Israel.

Moses moves on to what would happen *when all these things* had *come upon* Israel (v. 1). Included in the discussion was *the blessing and the curse which* Moses *set before* them in the previous chapters of the book. Included in the curse was that the Suzerain (Ruler) God would scatter them among the nations when they served and worshiped other gods ([Deuteronomy 29:22–28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+29.22%E2%80%9328&t=NASB95)). Moses declared here that, at some time during the exile, Israel would *call these things to mind in all nations where the LORD* their *God*had *banished* them. This seems to indicate that at some point during their exile, every nation containing exiled Israelites will have Israelites that remember these promises. God would *call these things to mind.*

Moses goes on to describe that, as a result of recalling what the LORD said concerning His blessing and curses, Israel decided to *return to the LORD* their *God* (v. 2). Returning to the LORD meant that they were willing to *obey* *Him* *with all* their *heart and soul* *according to all that* Moses commanded them. The *heart* (Heb.*“*lēbāb”) is the seat of the intellect, will, and emotions. The *soul* (Heb. “nepesh”) refers to the self. Used together, they represent the entire person. Here, they referred to Israelites (including their *sons*) who would, without reservation, commit to obey Him with every aspect of their life.

If this commitment to complete obedience to the LORD did happen, *then the LORD* their *God*would *restore* them *from captivity*, *and have compassion* (Heb.*“*rāḥam,” “have mercy”)*on* them (v. 3). He would take them from the land of their exile and return them back to the Promised Land. That is, God would *gather*Israel *again from all the people where* He had *scattered* them.

This might be the primary reason for an additional covenant, to be added to the covenant made at Horeb (Sinai) ([Deuteronomy 29:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+29.1&t=NASB95)). In the restatement and renewal of the Horeb covenant, Moses recounted that if Israel broke the covenant, they would “perish quickly” from the land ([Deuteronomy 4:25-31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+4.25-31&t=NASB95)). Moses declares that “The LORD will scatter you among the peoples” when they disobey, and break the covenant to follow God, and love their neighbors as themselves ([Deuteronomy 4:27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+4.27&t=NASB95)).

In this added covenant, stated in [Deuteronomy 29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+29&t=NASB95) and 30, God makes what appears to be a new promise: to restore rebellious Israel to the land if they will repent. God also emphasizes in this added covenant that following Him is a matter of the heart, and promises that He will circumcise the hearts of a repentant Israel. When the rebels return and repent, God will *gather*them*again from all the peoples where the Lord your God has scattered*them as a result of their violation of the covenant to which they agreed.The LORD’s covenant people would, as a result, be reunited as one nation, living in one place, under the guidance of one Suzerain God.

This would be true even if Israel’s *outcasts* were *at the ends of the earth*, or at the farthest horizon. The phrase *ends of the earth* is “the farthest edge of the heavens” in the Hebrew text. No matter how far the people were from the Promised Land, it would come about that *from there the LORD* their *God*would *gather* them, *and from there He* would *bring* them *back*(v. 4). This is an amazing promise, and appears to be a new provision in this additional covenant ([Deuteronomy 29:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+29.1&t=NASB95)).

The Suzerain (Ruler) God is not limited by space and time because He is the one *who made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them* ([Psalm 146:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+146.6&t=NASB95)). Therefore, nothing is too great for Him to gather His people from there. Even though this promise seems far-fetched, it is God who is promising it, and nothing is too difficult for God.

Moses summarized this section by telling Israel that *the LORD* their *God* would *bring* them *into the* *land which* their *fathers possessed*(v. 5). Instead of living on other people’s land, they would *possess it*. Not only would He allow His people to possess the Promised Land again, He would *prosper* Israel *and multiply* them *more than* their *fathers*.

Despite Israel’s unfaithfulness, the Suzerain God remains faithful to His word. He promised to give the land of Canaan to Abraham and his descendants ([Genesis 12:1–3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+12.1%E2%80%933&t=NASB95); [15:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+15.18&t=NASB95);) and would always make sure they inherited that land. God also promised great blessings to Israel, because Abraham had listened to His voice (22:15-18). Though Israel’s disobedience might cause God to temporarily remove them from the land of promise, He would one day restore them and bring them back into the land and cause them to prosper.

God is consistent throughout the Scriptures. God’s acceptance is given unconditionally to those who believe ([Genesis 15:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+15.6&t=NASB95); [John 3:14-16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+3.14-16&t=NASB95)). God then instructs and equips those who are His to know the difference between a good choice (that will bring blessing) and a bad choice (that brings negative consequences). Then God allows them to decide. Those who choose to follow God’s ways are always blessed in many ways. Those who choose to reject God’s ways are cursed, meaning they reap negative consequences stemming from their bad choices. However, God’s people are never rejected, because God’s gifts and calling are irrevocable ([Hebrews 11:29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+11.29&t=NASB95)).

Moses makes clear that it is always a good idea to repent. If Israel repents, God will have mercy on them because He is “compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth” ([Exodus 34:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+34.6&t=NASB95)). In the same way, if New Testament believers confess their sins and turn from known sin, God is faithful to forgive ([Matthew 6:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+6.14&t=NASB95); [1 John 1:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1John+1.9&t=NASB95)). Willful sin results in God’s wrath ([Hebrews 10:26-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+10.26-27&t=NASB95)). Both the apostle Paul and James describe God’s wrath falling upon unrighteousness as God giving humans over to be slaves to their own passions. Thus, the wrath of God is Him allowing us to have what we desired ([James 1:14-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+1.14-15&t=NASB95); [Romans 1:24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+1.24&t=NASB95), [26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+1.26&t=NASB95), [28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+1.28&t=NASB95)).

God will allow Israel to make bad choices. A future generation will do so, and reap the adverse consequences of violating the covenant to which they agreed. They will, accordingly, be expelled from the land. But when they repent, they will be returned. In the next section we will see that God will bestow a great spiritual blessing upon them when they repent and return.

**Biblical Text:**

**1So it shall be when all of these things have come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call *them* to mind in all nations where the Lord your God has banished you, 2and you return to the Lord your God and obey Him with all your heart and soul according to all that I command you today, you and your sons, 3then the Lord your God will restore you from captivity, and have compassion on you, and will gather you again from all the peoples where the Lord your God has scattered you. 4If your outcasts are at the ends of the earth, from there the Lord your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you back. 5The Lord your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it; and He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers.**