

Deuteronomy 32:44-47

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After reciting his song to the Israelites (vv. 1-43), Moses exhorts them to covenant faithfulness, calling them to take everything to heart to live long in the Promised Land.

This section begins with the voice of the narrator telling us that *Moses came and spoke all the words of this song in the hearing of the people, he, with Joshua the son of Nun* (v. 44). This verse, the conclusion to the Song of Moses, is very similar to [Deuteronomy 31:30](#) that serves as its prelude. Moses was commanded to speak the words of the song with *Joshua, the son of Nun*, who was assisting him. Joshua's participation in the teaching was appropriate because he was the one who would take over the leadership of Israel and enjoy the privilege of leading the people of God to the land of promise (31:7). This *song* would thus serve as a witness for the Suzerain God when the Israelites violated His covenant. Moses spoke *all the words of the song in the hearing of the people*, informing all of the Israelites of the character and works of their covenant LORD and their obligations to obey Him.

Moses found it necessary to reiterate the importance of the covenant words for Israel's life. So, *when Moses had finished speaking all these words to all Israel* (v. 45), he exhorted them to *take them to your heart* (v. 46). Remember that the *heart* represents the inner man—intellect, will, and emotions. Moses was exhorting the people to make *all the words with which I am warning you* today the absolute standard by which they lived their lives.

The Israelites were not to take this teaching lightly. They were to take it seriously because following God's commandment faithfully was the only way they would receive His blessings. To ensure that the blessings continued indefinitely into the future, the Israelites were to *exhort their sons to observe all the words of this law carefully*. The descendants of the generation hearing this song needed to be educated about the Law's stipulations and the urgency about obeying them. There was no other way to be blessed by God other than accepting His covenantal laws and obeying *even all the words of this law*, being a reference to the whole book of Deuteronomy (see [Deuteronomy 17:19](#); [27:3](#), [8](#); [28:58](#)).

Therefore, Moses concluded this section by telling the people that the *law* mentioned here *is not an idle word for you* (v. 47). The word *idle* (Heb. “rêq”) refers to something that is empty or vain. Here, Moses means that God’s law is not empty of meaning and significance in their lives. On the contrary, *indeed it is your life*. Instead of the words of the Law being insignificant, it was their *life*. When an Israelite followed the covenantal law, he would live his life as the Suzerain (Ruler) God meant it to be lived. In fact, obedience to God’s laws *will prolong your days in the land, which you are about to cross the Jordan to possess*. Obedience to the LORD’s Law brings blessings.

David later proclaimed the importance of God’s covenantal laws by saying that,

“The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.”
([Psalm 19:7-8](#))

Biblical Text:

⁴⁴ Then Moses came and spoke all the words of this song in the hearing of the people, he, with Joshua the son of Nun. ⁴⁵ When Moses had finished speaking all these words to all Israel, ⁴⁶ he said to them, “Take to your heart all the words with which I am warning you today, which you shall command your sons to observe carefully, *even* all the words of this law. ⁴⁷ For it is not an idle word for you; indeed it is your life. And by this word you will prolong your days in the land, which you are about to cross the Jordan to possess.