

Deuteronomy Chapter 32

Verses 1-43

In addition to the two songs (in Deuteronomy chapter 32 and 33), Moses is also identified as the author of the Psalm of the Sea following the crossing of the Red sea (Exodus chapter 15), as well as the Song of the Old Man (Psalm 90).

Verses 1-3

The introduction to the song. "Heavens, and ... earth" (see 4:26; 30:19; 31:28):

The song functions as a part of the witness to the renewal of the covenant.

"My doctrine ... my speech":

This refers to the content of the song, which follows.

Doctrine is one of several words in the song that is also used in wisdom literature (Prov. 1:5).

"Name of the LORD" has various implications (in Deuteronomy 5:11; 12:5), and here it gathers together the various attributes of God indicated by His name, which will be set forth in the verses that follow.

Moses begins with a solemn appeal to heaven and earth, concerning the truth and importance of what he was about to say.

His doctrine is the gospel, the speech of God, the doctrine of Christ; the doctrine of grace and mercy through him, and of life and salvation by him.

Deuteronomy 32:1 "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth."

"Give ear, O ye heavens ... hear, O earth":

All of creation was called to be an audience to hear the message to Israel as in (30:19), because the truth Moses was about to proclaim concerned the whole universe.

It did so because it involved the honor of God the Creator so disregarded by sinners, the justification of God so righteous in all His ways, and the manifestation in heaven and earth of God's judgment and salvation (verse 43).

This is the beginning of Moses' song.

This song was written down, and was to be sung by the people of Israel.

Notice, Moses calls the heavens and earth to make note of this.

Moses will stand before the people, and recite this song.

Deuteronomy 32:2 "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass:"

“My doctrine”:

Moses imparted instruction that if received would, like rain dew, raindrops, and showers to the earth, bring benefit to the hearts and the minds of the hearers.

This is speaking of a gentle rain.

This rain would be a welcome sight to plants in need of moisture.

This is saying that, the doctrine Moses has given them from God is not to beat them down, but to help them grow.

Verses 3-6

He is a Rock.

This is the first time God is called so in Scripture.

The expression denotes that the Divine power, faithfulness, and love, as revealed in Christ and the gospel, form a foundation which cannot be changed or moved, on which we may build our hopes of happiness.

And under his protection we may find refuge from all our enemies, and in all our troubles.

As the rocks in those countries sheltered from the burning rays of the sun, and from tempests, or were fortresses from the enemy.

His work is perfect: that of redemption and salvation, in which there is a display of all the Divine perfection, complete in all its parts.

All God's dealings with his creatures are regulated by wisdom which cannot err, and perfect justice.

He is indeed just and right; he takes care that none shall lose by him.

A high charge is exhibited against Israel.

Even God's children have their spots, while in this imperfect state.

For if we say we have no sin, no spot, we deceive ourselves.

But the sin of Israel was not habitual, notorious, un-repented sin; which is a certain mark of the children of Satan.

They were fools to forsake their mercies for lying vanities.

All willful sinners, especially sinners in Israel, are unwise and ungrateful.

Deuteronomy 32:3 "Because I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe ye greatness unto our God."

"Ascribe ye greatness unto our God" (compare 3:24; 5:24; 9:26; 11:2; Psalms 150:2).

This command refers to the greatness of God revealed in His acts of omnipotence.

Moses had never stopped proclaiming the great I AM to the people.

We remember, God had revealed Himself to Moses in the burning bush.

He also told Moses His name was I AM.

It is the greatness of God that Moses wants them to realize and accept.

The word "ascribe" means to give.

Moses is encouraging them to praise God themselves.

Verses 4-9

A faithful God and a faithless people are pictured.

"The Rock":

The word is placed first in the Hebrew for emphasis.

It emphasizes the stability and permanence of the God of Israel.

His unchanging nature is contrasted with the fickleness of the covenant people.

“Most High” is a title that emphasizes God’s sovereignty and authority over all nations, whereas in relation to His own people He is called “the LORD (Yahweh, as in Exodus chapters 3 and 6).

In (Genesis chapter 10), He allotted to the nations their “inheritance” (portion), of the earth as their home, and fixed the boundaries of peoples in relation to Israel’s numbers.

Deuteronomy 32:4 "[He is] the Rock, his work [is] perfect: for all his ways [are] judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right [is] he."

“The Rock”:

This word, representing the stability and permanence of God, was placed at the beginning of the verse for emphasis and was followed by a series of phrases which elaborated the attributes of God as the Rock of Israel.

It is one of the principal themes in this song (see verses 15, 18, 30-31), stressing the unchanging nature of God in contrast with the fickle nature of the people.

All of God’s “work is perfect”:

His way is perfect (2 Sam. 22:31); His knowledge is perfect (Job 37:16).

God has never made a mistake; He will not mar that record when guiding His children (Psalm 18:2).

Moses would surely associate the Rock as God.

The Rock that brought forth water enough for nearly three million people symbolized the Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 10:4 "And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ."

In the book of John, Jesus called Himself the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

John 14:6 "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

We find also, that Jesus is the Judge.

John 5:22 "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:"

We can see from all of this that the One you and I call Jesus, is the Rock, He is Judge, He is Truth.

We could name a thousand things more that He is. He is our All in all. He is the Doer part of the Godhead.

Deuteronomy 32:5 "They have corrupted themselves, their spot [is] not [the spot] of his children: [they are] a perverse and crooked generation."

“A perverse and crooked generation”:

Israel, in contrast to God, was warped and twisted.

Jesus used this phrase in (Matt. 17:17), of an unbelieving generation and Paul in (Phil. 2:15), of the dark world of mankind in rebellion against God.

Israel was a perverted, rebellious house, which would not be ruled by the God of all the world.

They ran after false gods, and made themselves dirty in the sight of God.

We Christians must remember; Jesus is coming back for a church that is without spot or wrinkle.

We should live accordingly.

Deuteronomy 32:6 "Do ye thus requite the LORD, O foolish people and unwise? [is] not he thy father [that] hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee?"

“Thy Father”:

The foolishness and stupidity of Israel would be seen in the fact that they would rebel against God who as a Father had brought them forth and formed them into a nation.

As Father, He was the progenitor and originator of the nation and the One who had matured and sustained it.

This idea of God as Father of the nation is emphasized in the Old Testament (compare 1 Chron. 29:10; Isa. 63:16; 64:8; Mal. 2:10), while the idea of God as Father of individual believers is developed in the New Testament (compare Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6).

Moses wants them to realize that, their very existence is because of God.

He created them.

He also purchased them back from the world (Egypt), with the ten plagues.

They are His.

They would still be in Egypt, had He not delivered them and brought them to this place.

It is the LORD which established them as His people.

Verses 7-14

Moses gives particular instances of God's kindness and concern for them.

The eagle's care for her young is a beautiful emblem of Christ's love, who came between Divine justice and our guilty souls, and bare our sins in his own body on the tree.

And by the preached gospel, and the influences of the Holy Spirit, He stirs up and prevails upon sinners to leave Satan's bondage.

In (verses 13-14), are emblems of the conquest believers have over their spiritual enemies, sin, Satan, and the world, in and through Christ.

Also of their safety and triumph in him.

Of their happy frames of soul, when they are above the world, and the things of it.

This will be the blessed case of spiritual Israel in every sense in the latter day.

Deuteronomy 32:7 "Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will show thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee."

“Remember the days of old”:

A call to reflect on past history and to inquire about the lesson to be learned.

The deliverance of Israel from Egypt and their establishment as God's people is to be remembered from generation to generation.

The father is to relate this fact to his son for all generations.

Verses 8-9

The Most High”:

This title for God emphasized His sovereignty and authority over all the nations (see Gen. 11:9; 10:32; 14:18; Num. 24:16), with the amazing revelation that in the whole plan for the world, God had as His goal the salvation of His chosen people.

God ordained a plan where the number of nations (70 according to Gen, chapter 10), corresponded to the number of the children of Israel (70 according to Gen. 46:27).

Further, as God gave the nations their lands, He established their boundaries, leaving Israel enough land to sustain their expected population.

Deuteronomy 32:8 "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel."

In the times of Noah and his sons, in the days of Peleg, who had his name (that is "Division") from thence (Gen. 10:25).

"The Most High" is a well known and proper, epithet of God.

The dividing of the earth to the several nations of it, and giving to everyone their part and portion to possess and inherit, was the work of God.

For though it was done by the sons of Noah, yet by the order, appointment, and direction of the Most High, who rules in heaven and in earth (Gen. 10:32).

Men might not and did not take what they pleased, or seize on as much as they could, but each had their parcel allotted and portioned out to them, by the LORD himself.

So the Targum of Jonathan.

"When by lot the Most High divided the world to the people that sprung from the sons of Noah".

"Separated the sons of Adam":

I.e. divided them in their languages and habitations according to their families.

"He set the bounds of the people": I.e. he disposed of the several lands and limits of the people, so as he did reserve a convenient and sufficient place for the great numbers of the people of Israel, whom he designed to make as numerous as the stars of heaven.

And therefore he so guided the hearts of several people.

That the posterity of Canaan, which was accursed of God (Gen. 9:25-27).

And devoted to ruin, should be seated in that country which God intended for the children of Israel, that so when their iniquities were ripe, and God's time came, they might be rooted out, and the Israelites might come in their stead (compare Deut. 30:5; Gen. 34:30; Psalm 105:9-12).

Back in the days of Abraham, God had promised this land as an inheritance for the descendants of Abraham.

God knew ahead of time where they would live, and how much land would be required.

He blessed this land, and prepared it for an inheritance for His chosen family.

Genesis 17:8 "And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."

Deuteronomy 32:9 "For the LORD'S portion [is] his people; Jacob [is] the lot of his inheritance."

This is the reason why the LORD so early provided a portion or inheritance for the children of Israel in the land of Canaan.

Because they were his part, his portion, his inheritance, which he chose by lot for himself, or allotted to himself.

Whom he chose to be his special and peculiar people.

For though all the world is his, he only reserved a part for himself, which he separated from all the rest, and considers as his portion and inheritance (see Psalm 33:12).

Thus the spiritual Israel of God, as they are his people, whom he has chosen, taken into covenant, given to Christ, and are redeemed and saved by him.

They are his part or portion, separated by distinguishing grace from the rest of the world.

And are the inheritance of Christ, who is appointed heir of all things, and is an unalienable inheritance.

And is obtained by lot, or rather is measured out by a rod or line.

By the line of electing grace, by which the church and people of God are circumscribed, marked out, and distinguished from others.

And by the line and rule of the sacred Scriptures, which are the measure and standard of faith and practice, of worship and discipline to them.

Exodus 19:5-6 "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth [is] mine:" "And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. These [are] the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel."

Verses 10-14

This whole description of what God did for Israel is figurative.

Israel is like a man in the horrible desert in danger of death, without food or water, who is rescued by the LORD.

The goodness of God is depicted.

He is pictured as a Father-figure, caring for His people in every dimension of their lives, bringing them out of the land, and guiding and providing for them during their travels.

Deuteronomy 32:10 "He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye."

"The apple of His eye" expresses something enormously precious, a part of the body that is innately protected (Prov. 7:2).

The specific meaning is the pupil of the eye, the most important and most protected part.

Because Israel is so precious to God, there will be judgment on any nation that mistreats her due to politics, preference, or popularity (Psalm. 17:8; Zech. 2:8).

Literally "the little man of His eye".

Just as the pupil of the eye is essential for vision and, therefore, closely protected, especially in a howling wind, so God closely protected Israel (compare Psalm 17:8; Prov. 7:2).

Israel was in a desert land with no food and water.

God fed them miraculously the manna, which fell from heaven.

The Rock brought forth water, and quenched their thirst.

The LORD actually birthed a people of God in this wilderness journey.

God Himself, went with them to lead them in the smoke and fire.

He was their protection.

The countries around them feared the God of Israel.

God wanted Israel to show Him to the world. His eye was on Israel, His people.

Deuteronomy 32:11 "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings:"

"Fluttereth over her young":

The LORD exercised His loving care for Israel like an eagle caring for its young, especially as they were taught to fly.

As they began to fly and had little strength, they would start to fall.

At that point, an eagle would stop their fall by spreading its wings so they could land on them, so the LORD has carried Israel and not let the nation fall.

He had been training Israel to fly on His wings of love and omnipotence.

In this case, the eagle's care of her young is symbolic of the care of God for His people.

Her wings protect her young from the storm and the rain.

She carries them, until they learn to fly.

This wilderness wandering was full of the supernatural care of the LORD for His people.

He took them places they could not have gone, such as through the Red sea.

During this journey, God taught them His ways.

Deuteronomy 32:12 "[So] the LORD alone did lead him, and [there was] no strange god with him."

“No strange god”:

Moses makes clear that God alone carried Israel through all its struggles and victories, thus depriving the people of any excuse for apostasy from the LORD by interest in false gods.

When the fire or smoke, lifted from the tabernacle and moved, the people followed.

He was their God, and they were His people.

There were no false gods among them.

Deuteronomy 32:13 "He made him ride on the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increase of the fields; and he made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock;"

“Honey out of the rock”:

A reference to honeycombs located in the fissures of the faces of a cliff is used because Canaan had many wild bees.

“Oil out of the flinty rock”:

Likely a reference to olive trees growing in rocky places otherwise bereft of fruit-growing trees.

These metaphoric phrases regarding honey and oil point to the most valuable products coming out of the most unproductive places.

The LORD was their provider.

They had no need for food.

God fed them.

He caused Israel to defeat the nations before them.

They received their inheritance of the land of milk and honey.

Deuteronomy 32:14 "Butter of kine, and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs, and rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats, with the fat of kidneys of wheat; and thou didst drink the pure blood of the grape."

Made of milk, which kine or cows give.

Jarchi says, this is the fat that is gathered on the top of milk, he means cream, and which indeed was the butter of the ancients, and is here meant.

"And milk of sheep":

Which they give, though not in such plenty as the kine, yet what is very wholesome and nourishing.

The philosopher observes, that sheep give more milk in proportion to the size of their bodies than cows.

And Pliny says their milk is sweeter and more nourishing, and the butter made of it is the fattest: with fat of lambs; or fat lambs, rich and delicious food.

"And rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats":

A fruitful country abounding with pasturage.

Where rams and goats of the best sort were and the breed of them was coveted and had in the land of Canaan.

The kine of Bashan are mentioned elsewhere (Psalm 22:12).

"With the fat of kidneys of wheat":

That is, the best wheat, the grains are plump and full":

And Aben Ezra observes, that a grain of wheat has some likeness to a kidney (see Psalm 81:16).

"And thou didst drink the pure blood of the grape":

Wine not mixed with water, but pure as it comes from the grape, which was of a red or bloody color (see Psalm 75:8 Isaiah 27:2).

It is interesting to me, that the juice from the grape here, is spoken of as blood.

Perhaps that is why grape juice symbolizes the blood of Christ in the communion services.

The idea here, is that God provided the desires of their hearts for wonderful food and drink.

Verses 15-18

Here are two instances of the wickedness of Israel, each was apostasy from God.

These people were called Jeshurun, an upright people.

But they soon lost the reputation both of their knowledge and of their righteousness.

They indulged their appetites, as if they had nothing to do but to make provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts of it.

Those who make a god of themselves, and a god of their bellies, in pride and wantonness.

And cannot bear to be told of it, thereby forsake God, and show they esteem him lightly.

There is but one way of a sinner's acceptance and sanctification.

However different modes of irreligion, or false religion, may show that favorable regard for other ways, which is often miscalled candid.

How mad are idolaters, who forsake the Rock of salvation, to run themselves upon the rock of perdition!

Deuteronomy 32:15 "But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered [with fatness]; then he forsook God [which] made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation."

"Jeshurun":

The word means “righteous” (literally “the upright one”), i.e., a name for Israel which sarcastically expresses the fact that Israel did not live up to God’s law after entering the Land.

God uses this name to remind Israel of His calling and to severely rebuke apostasy.

“Waxed fat, and kicked”:

Like an ox which had become fat and intractable, Israel became affluent because of the bountiful provisions of God but, instead of being thankful and obedient, became rebellious against the LORD (compare 6:10-15).

Jeshurun is taken from righteousness.

This then, is speaking of the nation of Israel, which had been chosen of God to be righteous. Suddenly all of their problems are solved.

They have food and drink in abundance, and their crops are bountiful.

This is speaking of a time, when they are no longer in need of any earthly thing.

They have grown rich and fat.

They suddenly do not feel the need to be dependent on the LORD. They are like many of us.

When things are going well, we have a tendency to forget about God.

They have forgotten the Rock of their salvation.

Verses 16-17

The identification of “strange gods” with “devils” is unusual.

As Paul writes in (1 Cor. 8:4-6), idols are not gods at all, but powers behind false gods may be demonic.

To open a door to anything other than the one true God may be opening a door to demonic activity (Psalm 78:58; Rev. 9:20).

Deuteronomy 32:16 "They provoked him to jealousy with strange [gods], with abominations provoked they him to anger."

“Strange gods”:

Israel turned to worship the gods of the people in the land.

These were gods they had not before acknowledged (verse 17).

Idleness many times, leads to sin.

Had they stayed busy trying to make a living, they might not have had time to consider false gods.

"Abominations":

These are revolting sins.

Exodus 34:14 "For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name [is] Jealous, [is] a jealous God:"

God will not share His people with a false god.

To do that, is to commit spiritual adultery.

This brings the wrath of God.

Deuteronomy 32:17 "They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new [gods that] came newly up, whom your fathers feared not."

"Devils":

Compare (Lev. 17:7; 2 Chron. 11:15; Psalm 106:37).

The term describes those angels who fell with Satan and constitute the evil force that fights against God and His holy angels.

Idol worship is a form of demon worship as demon spirits impersonate the idol and work their wicked strategies through the system of false religion tied to the false god.

These false gods were from the imaginations of their own evil minds.

The fact they were new gods; shows they were figments of people's minds.

They were not God.

They were treated, as if they were gods.

Revelation 9:20 "And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:"

Verses 18-33

For this foolish apostasy, the LORD will severely judge Israel.

This visitation of anger is in the form of a divine resolution to punish Israelites whenever they pursue idols, including the next generation of sons and daughters (verse 19).

In (verses 20-22), Moses quotes the LORD Himself.

Deuteronomy 32:18 "Of the Rock [that] begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee."

The same with the rock of salvation (Deut. 32:15).

Repeated and expressed in different words, that their wretched ingratitude might be taken notice of and observed.

Begetting is ascribed to this rock, as regeneration is to Christ (1 John 2:29).

"And hast forgotten God that formed thee":

For the rock they were unmindful of and forgot is the true God and eternal life, the essential Word of God.

Him the Jewish nation forgot.

They forgot the characters given of him in the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament.

And therefore they knew him not when he came and fulfilled the voices of the prophets they were ignorant of in condemning him.

Hence they were unmindful of his person, his offices, his works, his benefits, and the great salvation by him.

As indeed too many are that call themselves Christians.

They soon forgot the God, who created them.

God created man from the dust of the earth.

This speaks of the physical birth.

God also gave new life to the family of Jacob, when He brought them out of Egypt.

Deuteronomy 6:12 "[Then] beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage."

The Rock was their Deliverer.

They drank of the Rock of the water of life.

Verses 19-25

The revolt of Israel was described in the foregoing verses, and here follow the resolves of Divine justice as to them.

We deceive ourselves, if we think that God will be mocked by a faithless people.

Sin makes us hateful in the sight of the holy God. See what mischief sin does, and reckon those to be fools that mock at it.

Deuteronomy 32:19 "And when the LORD saw [it], he abhorred [them], because of the provoking of his sons, and of his daughters."

The disregard of the Jews to Christ, their forgetfulness of him, and their disesteem and rejection of him.

Their continuance of sacrifices, when the great sacrifice was offered up.

Their setting up other messiahs and saviors, and the idol of their own righteousness, in opposition to the righteousness of Christ.

All which not only as the omniscient God he saw, but took notice of, and considered.

And did not at once pass judgment on them.

At least did not immediately execute it, but waited some time to see how they would afterwards behave.

For it was thirty years or more after the crucifixion of Christ that the utter destruction of the Jews came upon them.

"He abhorred them":

In his heart, despised them, and at last rejected them with contempt and abhorrence, very righteously and in just retaliation (see Zech. 11:8).

As for what before observed, so for what follows.

"Because of the provoking of his sons, and of his daughters":

Which is not to be understood of the LORD being provoked to wrath by the sins of those who called themselves or were called his sons and daughters.

For these are such who were truly his sons and daughters, and different from those in (Deut. 32:20), said to be "children in whom is no faith".

These are no other than the disciples and followers of Christ, that believed in him, both men and women, and so the children of God, his sons and his daughters by special grace.

And the "provoking" of them is the wrath of the enemy against them, as the same word is used and rendered in (Deut. 32:27).

And should be here, "because of wrath", or "indignation against his sons and his daughters".

Meaning the affliction, distress, and persecution of them, through the wrath of the unbelieving Jews.

For after the death of Christ they persecuted his apostles, they beat them and cast them into prison, and put some to death.

"Abhorred":

This means scorned in this particular verse.

They had left God, and worshipped false gods.

God will turn His back on them, even if they are His sons and daughters.

Deuteronomy 32:20 "And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end [shall be]: for they [are] a very froward generation, children in whom [is] no faith."

I will make them and others see what the fruit of such actions shall be.

"I will see what their end shall be":

God himself comes forth to announce his resolution to withdraw his favor from them, and to inflict chastisement upon them.

He would withdraw his protecting care of them, and see how they would fare without that.

And he would also send on them the tokens of his displeasure.

A very froward generation, etc., literally, a generation of perversities, an utterly perverse and faithless race.

"For they are a very froward generation":

They did not truly believe the words God had spoken to them.

They had not faith either in his promises or threatenings.

And they put no trust or confidence in his glorious perfections, in his power, love, or faithfulness.

Alas! how justly may God make the same complaint concerning many professors of Christianity!

"Children in whom is no faith":

They have not a firm reliance on the truth and importance of what God has spoken.

And on the divine attributes engaged to make it good.

Whatever is not the object of their senses, they either believe but faintly, or not at all.

Here is the great failing of most professors of the true religion, the grand source of their sins and miseries.

For it is faith only that can unite man to God, and produce love and obedience.

It is this only that can raise him from earth to heaven!

Reader, hast thou faith?

Remember, without faith it is impossible to please God.

From this verse to the 29th, Moses personates God speaking.

In this God Himself, is speaking of what He will do.

They will be like the heathens around them.

His protection of them is gone.

God will not look to them and hear their prayers.

They are the opposite of Abraham, whose faith made him righteous.

They have no faith in God, and are unrighteous.

Deuteronomy 32:21 "They have moved me to jealousy with [that which is] not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with [those which are] not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation."

“Not a people”:

As the LORD was provoked to jealousy by Israel’s worship of that which was “not God”, so He would provoke Israel to jealousy and anger by humiliation before a foolish, vile “no-nation”.

In (Rom. 10:19), Paul applied the term “not a nation” to the Gentile nations generally, Jews who worship a “no-god” will be judged by a “no-people”.

This is saying that God is so moved with jealousy about their worship of false gods, that He will strengthen their enemies to destroy them.

Their enemies are not God's people, but God will use them against His rebellious family.

The chastisement from God will be brought on Israel by the heathen people around them.

Deuteronomy 32:22 "For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains."

“A fire is kindled ... unto the lowest hell” (compare 29:20).

Once the fire of God’s anger was kindled, it knew no limits in its destructive force, reaching to even those in the grave, an indication of God’s eternal judgment against those who oppose Him.

The lowest hell is speaking of the worst possible hell there is.

Perhaps it is speaking of a fire such as came on Sodom and Gomorrah.

The wrath of God has started a fire, that cannot be put out by man.

Deuteronomy 32:23 "I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend mine arrows upon them."

“Mischiefs ... arrows”:

The misfortunes (literally “evil”) are described in (verse 24).

The arrows represent the enemies who would defeat Israel in war and are further described in (verses 25-27).

The terrible mischiefs that God sends on mankind, hit the mark.

The shield of protection is removed from them.

They have sinned a great sin.

Deuteronomy 32:24 "[They shall be] burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction: I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the dust."

This is the arrow of famine (Ezek. 5:16).

The force of which is such that it makes the skin black as if burnt (Lam. 5:10).

Onkelos paraphrases it, "inflated or swelled with famine", which is a phrase Josephus makes use of in describing the famine at the siege of Jerusalem.

This judgment was notorious among the Jews, at the siege of Jerusalem, and was very sore and dreadful (see notes on Deut. 28:53).

"And devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction":

With burning fevers, pestilential ones, with the plague.

The arrow of the LORD that flies by day, the pestilence that walks in darkness, and the destruction that wastes at noonday (Psalm 91:5).

And which also raged at the siege of Jerusalem, arising from the stench of dead bodies, which lay in all parts of the city, and is one of the signs of the destruction of it given by our Lord (Matt. 24:7).

"I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the dust":

Another of the arrows in the quiver of the LORD of hosts, or of his four judgments.

And which he used to threaten the people of the Jews with, in case of disobedience (Lev. 26:22).

And such of the Jews who fled to deserts, and caves and dens of the earth, for shelter.

Which could not escape falling into the hands of wild beasts.

And of meeting with poisonous serpents that go upon their bellies, and feed on the dust of the earth.

When God does not send the rain at the needed time, the crops do not produce and they starve.

If God removes the Ozone layer today, there would be a burning as never in history before.

We will have no protection at all.

Leviticus 26:22 "I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, and destroy your cattle, and make you few in number; and your [high] ways shall be desolate."

Man cannot even imagine the terribleness of God in His wrath.

Deuteronomy 32:25 "The sword without, and terror within, shall destroy both the young man and the virgin, the suckling [also] with the man of gray hairs."

Either without the city, the sword of the Roman army besieging it, which destroyed all that came out or attempted to go in.

Or in the streets of the city, the sword of the seditious, which destroyed multitudes among themselves.

"And terror within":

Within the city, on account of the sword of the Romans, and the close siege they made of it.

And on account of the famine and pestilence which raged in it, and the cruelty of the seditious persons among themselves.

All these filled the people with horror and terror in their houses.

And even in their bedchambers, as the word signifies, they were not free from terror.

Yea, from the temple, and inward parts, and chambers of that, which may be referred to.

Terror came, that being in the hands of the seditious.

They moved out from thence, and ravaged the city, and filled all places with the dread of them.

And many, no doubt, through fear died, as well as by the sword and other judgments; which it is threatened.

"Shall destroy both the young man and the virgin, the suckling also, with the man of gray hairs":

None of any age or sex were spared, even those unarmed.

Not the young man, for his strength and promising usefulness.

Nor the virgin for her beauty and comeliness.

Nor the suckling for its innocence and tenderness.

Nor the aged man through any reverence of his gray hairs, or on account of the infirmities of old age.

But all would be destroyed.

And never was such a carnage made at the siege of any one city in the world before or since.

No less than 1,100,000 persons perished in it, as Josephus relates.

The sword speaks of war.

This is one way God judges man.

We do know the Word says that men's hearts will fail them for fear of things that are coming upon the earth.

No one will be spared, when God's wrath descends upon the earth.

Deuteronomy Chapter 32 Questions

1. What is this chapter?
2. Who does Moses call to take note of this?
3. Verse 2 is speaking of a _____ rain.
4. The doctrine Moses has given them is not to _____, but to do what?
5. What name of God was revealed to Moses at the burning bush?
6. It is the _____ of God that Moses wants them to realize, and accept.
7. The word "ascribe" means what?
8. Moses would surely associate the Rock as _____.
9. In John 14:6, Jesus reveals Himself as the _____, the _____, and the _____.
10. Jesus is the _____ part of the Godhead.
11. Describe Israel from verse 5.
12. What kind of church is Jesus coming back for?
13. What were they cautioned to remember?
14. How long are they to remember?
15. When had God set this land aside for Israel?
16. In Exodus 19:6, they were to be to Him a kingdom of _____.

17. The LORD actually _____ a people of God in the wilderness journey.
18. How does the eagle's care of its young symbolize God's care for His people?
19. How had God led them?
20. What is interesting to the author about the juice of the grape in verse 14?
21. Jeshurun is taken from _____.
22. What is this speaking of then?
23. They have forgotten the _____ of their salvation.
24. How had they provoked Him to jealousy?
25. They sacrificed to _____, not to God.
26. What does "abhorred" mean?
27. Who are the Israelites the opposite of?
28. The chastisement from God will be brought on them by the _____ around them.
29. Why do the mischiefs, God sends on the people, hit the mark?
30. What happens, when God withholds the rain?
31. The sword speaks of _____.
32. What will cause their hearts to fail?