

Outline of the Book of Deuteronomy

Introduction:

Deuteronomy opens with Israel in “*the land of Moab*” awaiting instructions to enter Canaan (Deut. 1:5). All men, women, children, elders, officers, and sojourners with them had assembled to hear Moses speak (Deut. 29:10-12). The prophet of God delivers three sermons in the people’s hearing (first from Deut. 1:6 to 4:40; second from chapter 5 to 26, and last from chapter 27 to 31). Moses concludes the book with the “Song of Moses” (Deut. 32 all) and a blessing directed at Israel (Deut. 33 all). Moses reveals the harsh fact that Israel has failed God (Deut. 9:6ff) and will continue to fail Him (Deut. 31:16ff). Moses thereby had little to no faith in the people’s conviction (Deut. 9:24; 31:27). The theme of the book is revealed in God’s love, patience, and forbearance with Israel. Though they have miserably failed Him and will continue to do so He tells them that He is giving them the promised land of Canaan (Deut. 34:4). Deuteronomy answers the question as to why God is so gracious to a rebellious people. When this question is answered we will have a better understanding of the workings of God’s grace in man’s life today.

Date of Deuteronomy

Moses writes, “*And the days in which we came from Kadesh-barnea, until we were come over the brook Zered, were thirty and eight years; until all the generation of the men of war were consumed from the midst of the camp, as Jehovah swore unto them. Moreover the hand of Jehovah was against them, to destroy them from the midst of the camp, until they were consumed*” (Deut. 2:14-15). The crossing of the brook Zered brought Israel to the borders of Ammon. It too marked the separation of the unfaithful Israelites who faltered at the first visit to Kadesh. Note that Moses marks a **38 year time frame** in which Israel left Kadesh-barnea to the coming over the brook Zered that the rebellious generation be done away with. At Deuteronomy 1:3 Moses marks the eleventh month of the 40th year as the time from leaving Egypt to their current place in Moab. They had spent three months getting to Sinai from Egypt (comp. Ex. 12:2 to Ex. 19:1). Israel spends approximately twelve months at Sinai receiving the law (Numb. 10:11-13). Thirty eight years later Israel finds themselves in the plains of Moab (Numb. 33:38; Deut. 2:14) yet to have entered Canaan. **Deuteronomy opens at the 40th year and eleventh month.** Smith and Fields date the book of Deuteronomy in the year 1407 B.C. (“Old Testament History” pg. 286). The message of Moses to the people lasted about 30 days (see Deut. 1:3; 34:8; Josh. 2:22; 4:19).

Moses Exposes Israel’s Sin

The message of Deuteronomy may be viewed by some as the most negative of all sermons. Moses exposed Israel’s failures without hesitation or fear of man. Moses exposes the people’s sin at Sinai when they made the golden calf and called upon it as their god (Deut. 9:16). Moses reminds Israel that God had commanded them to take the journey from Horeb to Kadesh-barnea that they may “*go up and take possession*” of Canaan (see Deut. 1:19-20). Israel; however, “*would not go up, but rebelled against the commandment of Jehovah your God*” (Deut. 1:26). God thereby made them wander in the wilderness for forty years that He may “*prove them, to know what was in their hearts, whether they would keep his commandments or not*” (Deut. 8:2). Again, Moses reveals Israel’s failures in the wilderness wanderings with their murmuring against God (Deut. 9:22) and Korah’s rebellion (Deut. 11:1-7). Though the past generation had failed to keep God’s commandments the Lord continued to put His will before the people (see Deut. 9:1). The Lord continued to promise Israel the land of Canaan as a gift (see Deut. 1:8; 3:18-22; 8:6-10 etc.).

Why did God offer this Gift to a Rebellious People?

It seems odd that God would offer Israel the blessings of His promised Canaan after reading of their morally degraded state. First, this may mean that God’s love, promises, and gifts are unconditional or secondly it may mean that they are conditional. A study of the book of Deuteronomy will aid in one’s understanding of how God’s love, gifts and promises are distributed. Deuteronomy 9:4-6 that “*Jehovah thy God gives thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiffnecked people.*” God was giving Canaan to Israel because of the PROMISE He had made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob rather than any righteousness of

their own (see Deut. 1:8; 6:10; 9:5; 29:15; 30:20; 34:4). The New Testament teaches the same principle. The Apostle Paul wrote, *“For by grace have ye been saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, that no man should glory”* (Eph. 2:8-9). God offers His gifts to man by promise because He loves us rather than it being due to our righteous ways. We are all sinful men and truly deserve the wages of sin (Rom. 3:23; 6:23). A grave mistake; however, is made by the “religious” world when they conclude that man is a sinner, God loves, therefore let us continue in sin. The apostle Paul said, *“Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?”* (Rom. 6:1-2). James said, *“faith, if it have not works, is dead in itself”* (James 2:17). To reconcile the confusion on the part of our denominational friends we may sum this subject up in the following way. When one loves God they will do all within their power to keep his commandments (Jn. 14:15). When one claims to “believe” in Jesus (Jn. 8:24) they will prove this faith by keeping God’s commandments (Jn. 3:36; Heb. 11:1ff). When one says that they “fear” God they will evidence this fear in their obedience (see Deut. 5:29; 6:2; Rev. 14:17 comp. to John 15:5-10). Man’s eternal abode is dependant upon whether he or she loved, feared, and believed in God. The author of Hebrews makes the lesson of God’s conditional salvation clear by connecting the events of Exodus through Deuteronomy with man’s obligation to obey God today. Yes, our salvation is conditioned upon our obedience.

The book of Deuteronomy sets firm within our minds the conditional will of God for man to be obedient in order to receive His gifts. Israel was told to *“contend in battle”* to receive God’s gifts at Deuteronomy 2:24. Israel was told to *“keep the commandments of Jehovah thy God”* in order to receive *“the good land which God hath given thee”* (Deut. 8:6-10 see also Deut. 6:4; 10:20; 19:9; 26:16-19; 30:2, 6, 10, 16, 20). Moses speaks clearly saying that *“God requires”* man to fear, love, serve, and keep all His commandments (Deut. 10:12-13). This obedience was a requirement for Israel to obtain God’s gift of Canaan (see Deut. 4:1-2; 11:22-23; 27:9-10). Those who do not keep all God’s commandments are cursed (Deut. 27:26; 28:15-58ff) and those who keep God’s word are blessed (Deut. 28:1-2). The promises, thereby, that God gave to Abraham would only be realized and received by those who had the faith of Abraham (see Gen. 15:6; 18:19; 22:18; Rom. 4:1ff).

The Importance of Maintaining the Purity of God’s People

The Lord God Almighty said, *“Thou shalt be perfect with Jehovah thy God”* (Deut. 18:13). Seeing that God’s gifts are conditioned upon man’s obedience Moses warned Israel on a multitude of occasions to *“put away the evil from the midst of thee”* (Deut. 21:9, 21; 22:21, 24). Moses fixes firmly in the minds of the Israelites that they are to utterly detest and abhor unlawful things that are an abomination to God (Deut. 7:26). False prophets who sought to draw the hearts of the people away from God were not to be listened to, spared, pitied, or concealed but rather killed (Deut. 13:1-9). Israel was about to enter into a land that was filled with abominable acts including idolatry (see Deut. 9:5). Due to Canaan’s idolatry and wickedness God commanded some of the most brutal language in the Bible (see Deut. 20:16-18). The possibility of Israel being infected with sinful teaching and practices was real (Deut. 20:18). Blessings and curses were at stake!

What Can We Learn from Deuteronomy Today?

We learn that we, like Israel of old, are sinful people (see Deut. 9:6, 24; Rom. 3:23; I Jn. 1:8). We also learn that God continues to demand that we be perfect (Deut. 18:13; Matt. 5:48) and holy (I Pet. 1:15-16) just as He is. The Lord has continued His **promise** that was originally offered to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (see Gen. 12:1ff) and realized in Jesus Christ (see Gal. 3:8, 16). That promise is the **gift** of salvation (see Acts 13:32, 37-38; Gal. 3:14; Eph. 2:8) and discovered in the forgiveness of sins (see Acts 2:38). Nothing has changed today with God (see Heb. 13:8). The Lord continues to express the conditional nature of His salvation and the forgiveness of sins (see Acts 22:16; Eph. 1:7; Heb. 3:12 – 4:11). Moses wrote, *“And now, Israel, what doth Jehovah thy God require of thee, but to fear Jehovah thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve Jehovah thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, to keep the commandments of Jehovah”* (Deut. 10:12-13). Jesus revealed this as the great commandment for all humanity to give heed to (Matt. 22:37).

The Book of Deuteronomy teaches us that God is merciful, loving, patient, forbearing, and longsuffering with all sinful men (Deut. 34:4; II Pet. 3:9). God; however, is not ever suffering with sinners (Rev. 2:20). His love, gifts, and promises belong to those who illustrate their love, faith, and fear in Him. Those who reject his mercy and patience through disobedience will be judged and cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:10-15; 21:8). Those who are obedient to God, through a spirit of conviction, shall receive an eternal heavenly home (Rev. 21:1-7).

Outline of Deuteronomy

Chapter One

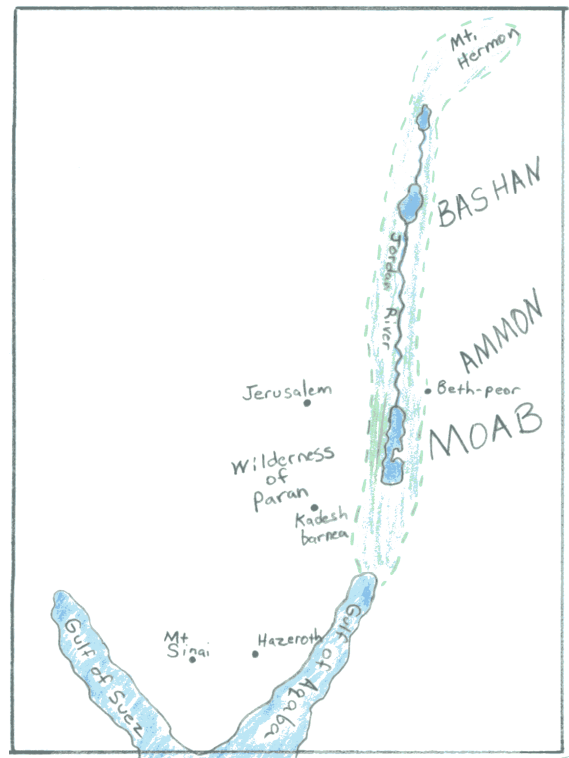
I. Geographic location of Moses' Three Sermons (1:1-5):

A. *“These are the words which Moses spake unto all Israel beyond the Jordan in the wilderness, in the Arabah over against Suph, between Paran, and Tophel, and Laban, and Hazeroth, and Di-zahab”* (1:1).

1. Moses records, *“These are the words...”* to indicate what is about to be said in relation to what has already been said.
2. The geographic location of these three sermons is given here and again at Deuteronomy 4:46. Moses refers to the wilderness of Arabah as *“the valley over against Beth-peor”* at 4:46. The “Arabah” = “The term was applied specifically in part or wholly to the depression of the Jordan Valley, extending from Mt. Hermon, a 9100 ft elevation in the Anti-Lebanon Range, due S beyond the Sea of Chinnereth (Galilee), and including both sides of the river Jordan, the Dead Sea, and the region slightly to the southwest as far as the head of the Gulf of Aqabah” (ISBE v. 1, pp. 218). The location of many of the listed places is in question. One thing that is known is that Moses is in *“the land of Moab”* (Deut. 1:5).

Consider the following:

- a. Suph: “Some scholars have followed the LXX, Targum, Vulgate, and AV in understanding Suph as a shortened form of Heb. yam suph, which when used in connection with the Arabah (e.g., Numb. 21:4) designates the Gulf of Aqabah” (ISBE v. 4, 665).
- b. Paran: A general term that includes the wilderness area of Sinai and reaching up to Kadesh-barnea.
- c. Tophel: Unknown
- d. Laban: Unknown
- e. Hazeroth: “It was there that Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses' marriage to the Cushite woman and against his position as the sole mediator between God and Israel (Numb. 12:1ff)... The probable location is 30 miles NE of Jebel Musa (Mt. Sinai?), on the way to Aqabah” (ISBE v. 2, pp. 636).
- f. Dizahab: “The location is unknown... Dizahab might possibly be identified with Edh-Dheibeh E of Heshbon; but this again is an indifferent campsite” (ISBE v. 1, pp. 979).
- g. Consider the map to the right:



B. *“It is eleven days' journey from Horeb by the way of mount Seir unto Kadesh-barnea”* (1:2).

1. What do you suppose went through people's minds when they read this statement? Oddly, it takes only eleven days to reach Kadesh-barnea from Seir (Sinai). The reason I say, 'Oddly,' is because it took Israel 40 years to reach Kadesh due to their sin of not entering Canaan. Moses said to Israel, in relation to their not taking Canaan as God commanded, *“Ye have sinned against Jehovah; and be sure your sin will find you out”* (Numb. 32:23).
2. It seems that the purpose of reminding Israel of the eleven day journey as oppose to the forty years it took them to get there was that they were to be reminded of their failures to keep God's laws. Throughout much of Deuteronomy Moses reminds the people of their failures that they would better appreciate the blessings of obedience.
3. Deuteronomy sets out to illustrate the importance of knowing and keeping God's laws.

C. *“And it came to pass in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month, that Moses spake unto the children of Israel, according unto all that Jehovah had given him in commandment unto them; after he had smitten Sihon the king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon, and Og the king of Bashan, who dwelt in Ashtaroth, at Edrei. Beyond the Jordan, in the land of Moab, began Moses to declare this law, saying;”* (1:3-5).

1. The eleventh month of the 40th year represented the time from leaving Egypt to their current place in Moab. They had spent three months getting to Sinai from Egypt (comp. Ex. 12:2 to Ex. 19:1). Israel spends approximately twelve months at Sinai receiving the law (Numb. 10:11-13). Thirty eight years later Israel finds themselves in the plains of Moab (Numb. 33:38; Deut. 2:14) yet to have entered Canaan. Deuteronomy opens then at the 40th year and eleventh month.
2. Moses begins the first of three sermons after having defeated the Amorites and those of Bashan. Before Moses dies and the children of Israel enter Canaan the man of God has some final words for the people.

II. **Moses Delivers the First of three sermons: A Call to Remember their Failures (1:6-46):**

A. *“Jehovah our God spake unto us in Horeb, saying, Ye have dwelt long enough in this mountain: turn you, and take your journey, and go to the hill-country of the Amorites, and unto all the places nigh thereunto, in the Arabah, in the hill-country, and in the lowland, and in the South, and by the sea-shore, the land of the Canaanites, and Lebanon, as far as the great river, the river Euphrates. Behold, I have set the land before you: go in and possess the land which Jehovah sware unto your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give unto them and to their seed after them”* (1:6-8).

1. The “*long enough*” time at Sinai was a twelve month period of time in which Israel received the law of God (see notes above). Moses reminds the people of the day that they are told to leave Sinai for the promised land of Canaan.
2. Canaan was the land promised to Abraham as God’s gift that Israel may grow into a mighty nation (cf. Gen. 12:1ff).
3. Though God had “*given*” the land to Israel they would have to go in and “*possess*” it. The land already had inhabitants (i.e., the Canaanites). God’s land gift was conditioned upon the people going in and “*possessing*” it. The “*possessing*” of Canaan is where Israel found their trouble. It would have been nice to simply walk in to Canaan without any resistance. Israel; however, was to learn to trust in God and His protection.

B. *“And I spake unto you at that time, saying, I am not able to bear you myself alone: Jehovah your God hath multiplied you, and, behold, ye are this day as the stars of heaven for multitude. Jehovah, the God of your fathers, make you a thousand times as many as ye are, and bless you, as he hath promised you! How can I myself alone bear your cumbrance, and your burden, and your strife? Take you wise men, and understanding, and known, according to your tribes, and I will make them heads over you. And ye answered me, and said, The thing which thou hast spoken is good for us to do. So I took the heads of your tribes, wise men, and known, and made them heads over you, captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds, and captains of fifties, and captains of tens, and officers, according to your tribes. And I charged your judges at that time, saying, Hear the causes between your brethren, and judge righteously between a man and his brother, and the sojourner that is with him. Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; ye shall hear the small and the great alike; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God's: and the cause that is too hard for you ye shall bring unto me, and I will hear it. And I commanded you at that time all the things which ye should do”* (1:9-18).

1. Exodus 18:13ff reveals the historical event of Moses sitting from morning till evening judging the people. Moses’ father-in-law saw the thing and said, “*The thing that thou doest is not good. Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that is with thee: for the thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone*” (Ex. 18:17-18). At times advice such as this should be rejected; i.e., people who say that you can’t do something when you know that not only can you do it but it is something that you must do. Here; however, Moses was in over his head and he knew it. Jethro suggests that Moses set up wise men over thousands, hundreds, and tens to deal with each case in need of judgment. Any case that was too difficult for them to judge would be brought to a higher court; i.e., Moses.

2. Moses gives sound advise to the wise men who would serve as judge:
 - a. Do not respect persons in judgment. To judge in favor of a rich man or friend was to pervert judgment. These judges were to examine the facts of each case and make a judgment based on the facts given.
 - b. Secondly, the judges were to give careful attention to the rich, poor, high ranking officials, and lowly citizen. No man is to be preferred above others. Let the facts be that which the judge is interested in.
 - c. Thirdly, Moses said, *“ye shall not be afraid of the face of man for the judgment is God’s.”* There would be times when the judge was threatened to give a favorable judgment to the perverted. These threats may come in the form of verbal threats or hard looks. Moses commands the judges not to be afraid but to make the right judgments in the courts for this is God’s will (lesson: Let us not fear or favor any man) (see study # 1; God’s instruction regarding man’s Judgments).
- C. *“And we journeyed from Horeb, and went through all that great and terrible wilderness which ye saw, by the way to the hill-country of the Amorites, as Jehovah our God commanded us; and we came to Kadesh-barnea. And I said unto you, Ye are come unto the hill-country of the Amorites, which Jehovah our God giveth unto us. Behold, Jehovah thy God hath set the land before thee: go up, take possession, as Jehovah, the God of thy fathers, hath spoken unto thee; fear not, neither be dismayed”* (1:19-21).
 1. Moses reminds the people of the hard journey through the wilderness to reach Canaan from Kadesh (wherein God fed them with manna from heaven and gave them water to drink).
 2. Note that the journey was made *“as Jehovah our God commanded us.”* God’s purpose for Israel was to go in and *“take possession”* of Canaan. Not only was the journey a commandment but also the taking possession of the land. Moses wrote, *“But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against Jehovah; and be sure your sin will find you out”* (cf. Numb. 32:23).
 3. As Moses stood at Kadesh-barnea the people had at long last come to the moment of their deepest desire (a land of their own given to them by God). Jehovah tells the people through Moses to *“fear not, neither be dismayed.”* The three commandments given at this point:
 - a. Take the journey from Sinai to Kadesh-barnea.
 - b. Possess the land that God has given you.
 - c. Fear not, neither be dismayed.
 4. Israel did the first command, yet when they saw that difficulties were involved in completing the second, they became fearful and were dismayed. Israel thereby failed to complete the second and third commands of God regarding taking Canaan (See study # 2; Half Hearted Service).
- D. *“And ye came near unto me every one of you, and said, Let us send men before us, that they may search the land for us, and bring us word again of the way by which we must go up, and the cities unto which we shall come. And the thing pleased me well; and I took twelve men of you, one man for every tribe: and they turned and went up into the hill-country, and came unto the valley of Eshcol, and spied it out. And they took of the fruit of the land in their hands, and brought it down unto us, and brought us word again, and said, It is a good land which Jehovah our God giveth unto us. Yet ye would not go up, but rebelled against the commandment of Jehovah your God:”* (1:22-26).
 1. As Moses spoke to Israel at Kadesh-barnea telling them that God commands that they show no fear and go in to possess the land the people decide to request spies to go into the land so that they may see what they are up against (possibly make some plans based on what is found). Moses agrees to their plan.
 2. When the spies came back they said, *“It is a good land which Jehovah our God gives unto us.”* Apparently Moses only considers Joshua and Caleb’s words (probably because they are the only words that coincide with God’s commands). The other ten spies brought back an *“evil report”* which caused all the congregation to murmur (see Numb. 13:30-14:1).

3. Though God's command was "*go, possess the land*" Moses records, "*Yet ye would not go up, but rebelled against the commandment of Jehovah your God.*" The fascinating thing about this whole story is that all along God has said that He has given Canaan to Israel as a gift (see study # 3; The Conditions of God's Promises).
- E. "*and ye murmured in your tents, and said, Because Jehovah hated us, he hath brought us forth out of the land of Egypt, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us. Whither are we going up? Our brethren have made our heart to melt, saying, The people are greater and taller than we; the cities are great and fortified up to heaven; and moreover we have seen the sons of the Anakim there*" (1:27-28).
1. With the events at Egypt, Sinai, and the provisional care of God through the wilderness fresh upon their minds the people, with a spirit of the deepest ingratitude exclaim, "*Jehovah hates us, he has brought us forth out of the land of Egypt to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us.*" They had at that time disobeyed God's commands regarding not fearing the enemy (see Deut. 1:21b).
 2. At this point the masses had completely lost sight of who they are (see study # 4; Have we forgotten about the Power of God?). They were God's people. A people whose fathers had experienced God's power and might (they knew of creation, the flood, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob). They personally experienced God's great power. Now, they are faced with being a people in the history of God's word. They were to either go down in history as disobedient failures or obedient people who received the promises God made to Abraham (i.e., the land of Canaan). Their choice was to go down in history as disobedient failures. They conclude that God must hate them for bringing them to this point. Interestingly, the view of some when faced with obedience to God's commands through hardship is that God must hate. Such a mindset fails to see that it is through many tribulations that a man or woman must make it to God's gift of salvation (cf. Acts 14:22). When one loses a job, a mate, a loved one... when one is diagnosed with cancer... if I lose a finger, an eye, or limb... if I experience financial hardships... if I experience hardships on the job such as being humiliated or not liked... do any of these things really mean that God hates me? Consider all the things that Joseph went through. He was hated by his brothers, thrown into a pit, sold to a caravan going to Egypt, falsely accused of sexual immorality and thrown in prison. Though Joseph went through all these things the word of God said, "*But Jehovah was with Joseph, and showed kindness unto him...*" (Gen. 39:21). God is with us each step of our way today. Though the way may seem hard we must realize that God's gifts come through hardships. It is in hardships that we learn to put all our faith and trust in Him (see Phil. 4:11ff). Moses will have more to say about God's "proving" process at Deuteronomy 8 (see study #5; God Proves Man).
- F. "*Then I said unto you, Dread not, neither be afraid of them. Jehovah your God who goeth before you, he will fight for you, according to all that he did for you in Egypt before your eyes, and in the wilderness, where thou hast seen how that Jehovah thy God bare thee, as a man doth bear his son, in all the way that ye went, until ye came unto this place. Yet in this thing ye did not believe Jehovah your God, who went before you in the way, to seek you out a place to pitch your tents in, in fire by night, to show you by what way ye should go, and in the cloud by day*" (1:29-33).
1. Numbers 14:6ff records only Joshua and Caleb pleading for the people's faithful obedience yet here we find that Moses too did so. Moses tells the people to not fear for "*he will fight for you.*" All Israel had to do is believe based upon what they had experienced in Egypt. Secondly, they were to believe based upon God "*baring thee in the wilderness as a man doth bear his son...*" (see also Ex. 19:4). Israel's faith was to be founded in the evidences of God's care that had taken place in their lives. Thirdly, they were to remember God's guidance by fire in the night and a cloud during the day.
 2. Moses admonishes Israel to think back on these things and "*believe.*" Sadly, Moses records, "*Yet in this thing ye did not believe Jehovah your God.*"
 3. God commanded them to take Canaan, possess it, and fear not. Moses tells the people that God will fight for them as He did in Egypt. Israel is to base their faith in God's participation in the battle that lay before them in the personal experiences that were before them; i.e., God's work

in Egypt and the wilderness. What happened here? While the events of Egypt, Sinai, and the wilderness provisions were fresh on their minds they have a faith failure and exclaim, “*God hates us.*”

G. “*And Jehovah heard the voice of your words, and was wroth, and sware, saying, Surely there shall not one of these men of this evil generation see the good land, which I sware to give unto your fathers, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh: he shall see it; and to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children, because he hath wholly followed Jehovah. Also Jehovah was angry with me for your sakes, saying, Thou also shalt not go in thither: Joshua the son of Nun, who standeth before thee, he shall go in thither: encourage thou him; for he shall cause Israel to inherit it. Moreover your little ones, that ye said should be a prey, and your children, that this day have no knowledge of good or evil, they shall go in thither, and unto them will I give it, and they shall possess it*” (1:34-39).

1. So far Moses tells Israel that God had given Israel three commandments: i.e., travel, possess Canaan, and be not afraid. Canaan was God’s “*gift*” to Israel. When Israel rejected, through a spirit of rebellion, these commands God did not allow them to have his gift of Canaan (see study # 3).
2. The word of God tells us that faith is evidenced by one’s obedience (cf. John 3:36; Heb. 11:1ff). Recall that the apostle Paul had exclaimed that the Gentile who refused faith and obedience to God is without excuse because he had the evidences of creation to make such a determination (cf. Rom. 1:18-23). The Jew was without excuse because unto him was given the oracles of God (Rom. 3:1-2). Moses thereby concludes that the man who knows of God and His commands and does them not is a part of an “*evil generation.*” The evil is in the form of “*rebellion*” (cf. Deut. 1:26, 43). To rebel is to “*refuse allegiance to... to resist or defy an authority... to feel or express strong unwillingness ... an act or show of defiance...*” (AHD 1031) (see study # 6; Rebellion). God said that the reason Israel did not believe was because they were **unwilling** to follow his commands (see study # 8; Bible Faith). The people heard God’s command; i.e., go, take possession of Canaan, and do not fear yet they were unwilling to do it. Gaining God’s gift of Canaan entailed doing some work. The people were too lazy and fearful to follow through with God’s commandments. If God’s gifts were not handed to them on a silver platter then they wanted no part of it. Why didn’t the people believe? Why do people not believe today? Unbelief is the product of a heart that is unwilling, lazy, and fearful to follow God’s commands. The word of God often refers to such a heart as a “*hard heart*” (i.e., a mind that hears God’s commands but is unwilling to do) (cf. Ex. 9:34; 10:3) (see study # 7; Hard Hearts).
3. The two men who were willing and unafraid of the enemy for the sake of God; i.e., Joshua and Caleb, were promised entrance into God’s land. Additionally, children who had no knowledge of right and wrong were allowed within.

H. “*But as for you, turn you, and take your journey into the wilderness by the way to the Red Sea. Then ye answered and said unto me, We have sinned against Jehovah, we will go up and fight, according to all that Jehovah our God commanded us. And ye girded on every man his weapons of war, and were forward to go up into the hill-country. And Jehovah said unto me, Say unto them, Go not up, neither fight; for I am not among you; lest ye be smitten before your enemies. So I spake unto you, and ye hearkened not; but ye rebelled against the commandment of Jehovah, and were presumptuous, and went up into the hill-country. And the Amorites, that dwelt in that hill-country, came out against you, and chased you, as bees do, and beat you down in Seir, even unto Hormah. And ye returned and wept before Jehovah; but Jehovah hearkened not to your voice, nor gave ear unto you. So ye abode in Kadesh many days, according unto the days that ye abode there*” (1:40-46).

1. “*But as for you,*” i.e., the unfaithful... these were to leave and never enter Canaan. The unfaithful of all ages have no place in God’s promised place of rest (cf. Heb. 3:8 – 4:8).
2. Moses recalls to the people’s minds how that Israel even rebelled against God’s command to turn back into the wilderness. God commanded Israel to not go up against Canaan yet they went anyway and were soundly defeated. Their calamity was a direct result of their rebellion.

3. When Israel cried out to God in a state of rebellious disbelief “*Jehovah hearkened not to your voice.*” The rebellious (i.e., those fearful and unwilling to do God’s commands) can cry to God all they so desire yet God will not hear a word (cf. Ps. 34:15-16; 66:18; 109:7; Prov. 15:29; 28:9; Isa. 1:11-15; Jn. 9:31; 16:23-27; I Jn. 3:21-22) (see study # 9; God does not hear the prayers of one who continues in Sin).

Lessons from Deuteronomy 1

- God gave Israel three commands in relation to his promise to give them the land of Canaan. First, Israel was commanded to journey from Sinai to Kadesh-barnea (Deut. 1:19). Secondly, they are commanded to “*go up, take possession*” (Deut. 1:21). Thirdly, Israel is commanded not to fear the Canaanites (Deut. 1:21). Israel obeyed the Lord’s first command to make the journey; however, they failed to take possession of Canaan due to fear and unbelief. Partial obedience to God’s Laws is never tolerated but rather it is equated to rebellion. Joshua and Caleb were the only two, aside from Moses, who are mentioned as being commended for “*wholly*” following God’s laws (Deut. 1:36). The rest of the fearing and disobedient Israelites were viewed as rebellious (Deut. 1:26).
- Rebellion is defined as “to resist, to feel or express strong unwillingness to do a thing.” We may ask, “Why was Israel unwilling to go take possession of Canaan?” Answering this question will give us an idea as to why you and I at times fall to temptation and are unwilling to fulfill God’s commandments (see study # 10; Why do I sin?). Israel was considered an “*evil generation*” (Deut. 1:35) because they were unwilling to do what God told them to do. Sometimes you and I act this way. We set goals yet do not achieve them because we become disinterested, no time, task is too hard, too tired, too much sacrifice, afraid of failure... etc. Consider Israel:
 - Israel made a false assumption about God. God’s gift was Canaan; however, it was not something that was going to be handed to them with no efforts on their part. When Israel saw that they were going to have to go to war to take God’s gift they concluded that God must “*hate us*” (Deut. 1:27). When things don’t go as we would have them should we conclude that God hates us or doesn’t care about us? When we look to the life of Joseph we are made to feel ashamed of our selves. Joseph was hated by his brothers, thrown in a pit, sold into Egypt, falsely accused of sexual immorality, thrown in prison and yet through it all he never lost his faith in God.
 - A second reason for their unwillingness to follow God’s commands was their fear of man (Deut. 1:29). God never gave man a spirit of fear (cf. II Tim. 1:7). When you and I are unwilling to stand for truth in all situations of life it may be due to our fear of man.
 - Lastly, Israel had a lack of faith in God’s promises (Deut. 1:32). God promised the land to them and he promised to fight for them (Deut. 1:20, 29-30). They had assurances of their faith through the events that recently happened at Egypt, the pillar of fire by night and cloud during the day that guided them, and God miraculously feeding them with manna. Likewise mankind is without excuse for a lack of faith for we have the evidences of creation and revelation before us (cf. Rom. 1:18ff).

Chapter 2

I. Israel now takes their faithful journey to Canaan (2 all):

- A. “*Then we turned, and took our journey into the wilderness by the way to the Red Sea, as Jehovah spake unto me; and we compassed mount Seir many days. And Jehovah spake unto me, saying, Ye have compassed this mountain long enough: turn you northward. And command thou the people, saying, Ye are to pass through the border of your brethren the children of Esau, that dwell in Seir; and they will be afraid of you: take ye good heed unto yourselves therefore; contend not with them; for I will not give you of their land, no, not so much as for the sole of the foot to tread on; because I have given mount Seir unto Esau for a possession. Ye shall purchase food of them for money, that ye may eat; and ye shall also buy water of them for money, that ye may drink. For Jehovah thy God hath blessed thee in all the work of thy hand; he hath known thy walking through this great*

wilderness: these forty years Jehovah thy God hath been with thee; thou hast lacked nothing” (2:1-7).

1. Due to Israel’s fear and unwillingness to fulfill God’s commandments regarding taking possession of Israel they were sent into the wilderness to wander for 40 years (cf. Numb. 14:29ff). Moses does not reiterate the events that transpired in the wilderness wanderings such as Korah’s rebellion, Aaron’s rod budding, and Moses’ sin at the waters of Meribah.
2. Moses records in Deuteronomy things that are not found in Numbers such as the fact that Israel purchased both food and water from the Edomites.

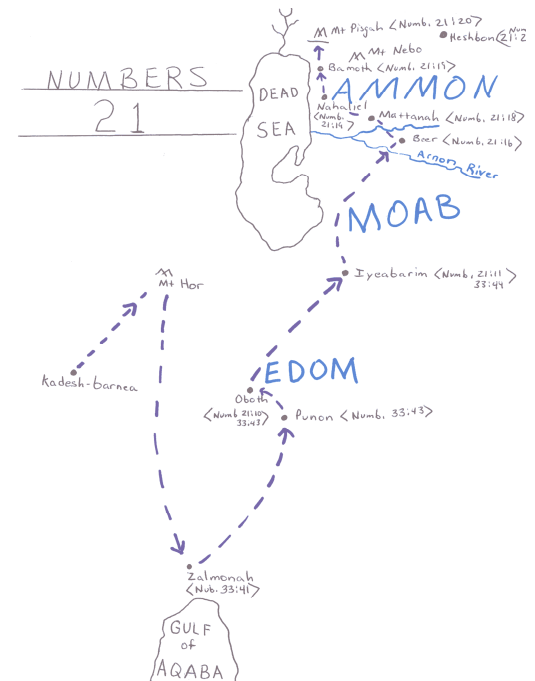
B. *“So we passed by from our brethren the children of Esau, that dwell in Seir, from the way of the Arabah from Elath and from Ezion-geber. And we turned and passed by the way of the wilderness of Moab. And Jehovah said unto me, Vex not Moab, neither contend with them in battle; for I will not give thee of his land for a possession; because I have given Ar unto the children of Lot for a possession. (The Emim dwelt therein aforetime, a people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakim: these also are accounted Rephaim, as the Anakim; but the Moabites call them Emim. The Horites also dwelt in Seir aforetime, but the children of Esau succeeded them; and they destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their stead; as Israel did unto the land of his possession, which Jehovah gave unto them.) Now rise up, and get you over the brook Zered. And we went over the brook Zered” (2:8-13).*

1. After Israel travels around Edom they head northward toward Moab. The Lord commands Moses not to wage war with Moab due to the fact that He had given it as a possession to Ar the children of Lot. The Moabites were descendants of Lot.
2. God commands Israel to travel to the brook Zered.

C. *“And the days in which we came from Kadesh-barnea, until we were come over the brook Zered, were thirty and eight years; until all the generation of the men of war were consumed from the midst of the camp, as Jehovah sware unto them. Moreover the hand of Jehovah was against them, to destroy them from the midst of the camp, until they were consumed” (2:14-15).*

1. The crossing of the brook Zered brought Israel to the borders of Ammon. It too marked the separation of the unfaithful Israelites who faltered at the first visit to Kadesh.
2. Note that Moses marks a 38 year time frame in which Israel left Kadesh-barnea to the coming over the brook Zered that the rebellious generation be done away with. At Deuteronomy 1:3 Moses marks the eleventh month of the 40th year as the time from leaving Egypt to their current place in Moab. They had spent three months getting to Sinai from Egypt (comp. Ex. 12:2 to Ex. 19:1). Israel spends approximately twelve months at Sinai receiving the law (Numb. 10:11-13). Thirty eight years later Israel finds themselves in the plains of Moab (Numb. 33:38; Deut. 2:14) yet to have entered Canaan. Deuteronomy opens then at the 40th year and eleventh month.

D. *“So it came to pass, when all the men of war were consumed and dead from among the people, that Jehovah spake unto me, saying, Thou art this day to pass over Ar, the border of Moab: and when thou comest nigh over against the children of Ammon, vex them not, nor contend with them; for I will not give thee of the land of the children of Ammon for a possession; because I have given it unto the children of Lot for a possession. (That also is accounted a land of Rephaim: Rephaim dwelt therein aforetime; but the Ammonites call them Zamzummim, a people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakim; but Jehovah destroyed them before them; and they succeeded them, and dwelt in their stead; as he did for the children of Esau, that dwell in Seir, when he destroyed the Horites from before them; and they succeeded them, and dwelt in their stead even unto this day: and the*



Avvim, that dwelt in villages as far as Gaza, the Caphtorim, that came forth out of Caphtor, destroyed them, and dwelt in their stead.” (2:16-23).

1. Israel is commanded to pass over Moab because God had given the land to the descendants of Lot. Israel is commanded not to wage war with Edom because God had destroyed the Horites from before them and he blessed Esau with Edom.
 2. Now, the Lord commands that Moses pass over Ammon because once again the Lord had already promised the land to the descendants of Lot.
- E. *“Rise ye up, take your journey, and pass over the valley of the Arnon: behold, I have given into thy hand Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land; begin to possess it, and contend with him in battle. This day will I begin to put the dread of thee and the fear of thee upon the peoples that are under the whole heaven, who shall hear the report of thee, and shall tremble, and be in anguish because of thee”* (2:24-25).
1. These verses cause us to remember how that God had commanded Israel to take the journey to Canaan from Mount Sinai (Deut. 1:19) and to go up and possess the land of Canaan without fear (Deut. 1:21). This first attempt at taking possession of God’s gift failed; however, now we find a generation of men who believe in the omnipotence of God.
 2. When Israel did as God commanded other nations would fear and God delivered His promised gifts.
- F. *“And I sent messengers out of the wilderness of Kedemoth unto Sihon king of Heshbon with words of peace, saying, Let me pass through thy land: I will go along by the highway, I will turn neither unto the right hand nor to the left. Thou shalt sell me food for money, that I may eat; and give me water for money, that I may drink: only let me pass through on my feet, as the children of Esau that dwell in Seir, and the Moabites that dwell in Ar, did unto me; until I shall pass over the Jordan into the land which Jehovah our God giveth us. But Sihon king of Heshbon would not let us pass by him; for Jehovah thy God hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, that he might deliver him into thy hand, as at this day”* (2:26-30).
1. Though Edom would not allow Israel to pass through their land they apparently give consent to them traveling around the land and even sold them food and water as they went on their way. Likewise, the Moabites sold food and water to Israel as they passed through the land.
 2. God gave the land of Ammon to the descendants of Lot just beyond the River Arnon. Northward would belong to Israel. When Israel sent out messengers to request permission to pass through the land God hardened the heart of the king of Heshbon in that he would not allow Israel to pass by their land nor would he sell them water and food.
 3. Like Pharaoh of Egypt God hardened the heart of the king of Heshbon by giving him a command that his proud heart was unable to submit to; i.e., letting Israel pass through the land. (cf. Ex. 10:3) (see study # 7). God used the pride of the king’s heart to gain Israel’s confidence in battle before entering Canaan.
- G. *“And Jehovah said unto me, Behold, I have begun to deliver up Sihon and his land before thee: begin to possess, that thou mayest inherit his land. Then Sihon came out against us, he and all his people, unto battle at Jahaz. And Jehovah our God delivered him up before us; and we smote him, and his sons, and all his people. And we took all his cities at that time, and utterly destroyed every inhabited city, with the women and the little ones; we left none remaining: only the cattle we took for a prey unto ourselves, with the spoil of the cities which we had taken. From Aroer, which is on the edge of the valley of the Arnon, and from the city that is in the valley, even unto Gilead, there was not a city too high for us; Jehovah our God delivered up all before us: only to the land of the children of Ammon thou camest not near; all the side of the river Jabbok, and the cities of the hill-country, and wheresoever Jehovah our God forbade us”* (2:31-37).
1. Due to the obstinate heart of the king of Heshbon and the faith of Israel Jehovah routed the enemy before the people. While Israel’s faith remained strong through obedience the Lord was with them.
 2. There were apparently areas in Ammon that God forbade Israel from taking. All other lands from the river Arnon as far north as the River Jabbok belonged unto Israel.

Chapter 3

I. The Fear of Man and its Consequences (3 all):

A. *“Then we turned, and went up the way to Bashan: and Og the king of Bashan came out against us, he and all his people, unto battle at Edrei. And Jehovah said unto me, Fear him not; for I have delivered him, and all his people, and his land, into thy hand; and thou shalt do unto him as thou didst unto Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heshbon. So Jehovah our God delivered into our hand Og also, the king of Bashan, and all his people: and we smote him until none was left to him remaining. And we took all his cities at that time; there was not a city which we took not from them; threescore cities, all the region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan. All these were cities fortified with high walls, gates, and bars; besides the unwalled towns a great many. And we utterly destroyed them, as we did unto Sihon king of Heshbon, utterly destroying every inhabited city, with the women and the little ones. But all the cattle, and the spoil of the cities, we took for a prey unto ourselves” (3:1-7).*

1. Note that as long as Israel feared they illustrated a lack of faith and God was not with them (cf. Deut. 1:19-21, 26, 29-32). The word of God reveals man’s fear to be a consequence of a lack of faith in God (cf. Matt. 8:25-27) and a spirit of doubting his promises (Matt. 14:24-31) (see study # 11; The Fear of Man).
2. No matter how fierce the enemies of God be we are commanded not to fear them (cf. Matt. 10:24-31). Paul said, *“For God gave us not a spirit of fear, but of power and love and discipline”* (II Tim. 1:7).
3. There would be plenty to fear as they approached *“the kingdom of Og in Bashan.”* Og was a *“remnant of the Rephaim”* (cf. Deut. 3:11). The Rephaim were a race of giant people (cf. Gen. 14:5). Moses gives emphasis to the enormity of Og’s bed at verse 11 to illustrate this.
4. As Israel believed God they *“utterly destroyed”* the enemy. Note the emphasis upon God’s people utterly destroying cities with fortified walls, gates, and bars in addition to the giants of the land. This is a stark contrast of the time when Israel feared the Canaanites who had fortified cities and giants in the land.

B. *“And we took the land at that time out of the hand of the two kings of the Amorites that were beyond the Jordan, from the valley of the Arnon unto mount Hermon; (which Hermon the Sidonians call Sirion, and the Amorites call it Senir;) all the cities of the plain, and all Gilead, and all Bashan, unto Salecah and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan. (For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of the Rephaim; behold, his bedstead was a bedstead of iron; is it not in Rabbah of the children of Ammon? nine cubits was the length thereof, and four cubits the breadth of it, after the cubit of a man.)” (3:8-11).*

1. Note that Moses records that they *“took the land... out of the hand of the two kings...”* This is an important fact to record due God’s command that Israel take possession of these lands (cf. Deut. 1:21).
2. see notes on Og’s bed

C. *“And this land we took in possession at that time: from Aroer, which is by the valley of the Arnon, and half the hill-country of Gilead, and the cities thereof, gave I unto the Reubenites and to the Gadites: and the rest of Gilead, and all Bashan, the kingdom of Og, gave I unto the half-tribe of Manasseh; all the region of Argob, even all Bashan. (The same is called the land of Rephaim. Jair the son of Manasseh took all the region of Argob, unto the border of the Geshurites and the Maacathites, and called them, even Bashan, after his own name, Havvoth-jair, unto this day.) And I gave Gilead unto Machir. And unto the Reubenites and unto the Gadites I gave from Gilead even unto the valley of the Arnon, the middle of the valley, and the border [thereof], even unto the river Jabbok, which is the border of the children of Ammon; the Arabah also, and the Jordan and the border [thereof], from Chinnereth even unto the sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, under the slopes of Pisgah eastward” (3:12-17).*

1. The land North of the valley of Arnon (at the Arnon river) up northward through Gilead now belonged to Israel.

2. Gad, Reuben, and half the tribe of Manasseh were given this land with the promise of their fighting men crossing the Jordan to wage war with their brethren.
- D. *“And I commanded you at that time, saying, Jehovah your God hath given you this land to possess it: ye shall pass over armed before your brethren the children of Israel, all the men of valor. But your wives, and your little ones, and your cattle, (I know that ye have much cattle,) shall abide in your cities which I have given you, until Jehovah give rest unto your brethren, as unto you, and they also possess the land which Jehovah your God giveth them beyond the Jordan: then shall ye return every man unto his possession, which I have given you. And I commanded Joshua at that time, saying, Thine eyes have seen all that Jehovah your God hath done unto these two kings: so shall Jehovah do unto all the kingdoms whither thou goest over. Ye shall not fear them; for Jehovah your God, he it is that fighteth for you” (3:18-22).*
1. Gad, Reuben, and Manasseh were to fight with their brethren until they too took possession of God’s land gift beyond the Jordan River.
 2. Note once again the command not to fear the enemies through a lack of faith and doubting spirit. They were commanded to take possession of God’s gifts which is defined as waging war (i.e., the gift conditioned upon their efforts to obey). Israel was to remember that God would fight for them (cf. Deut. 1:29).
- E. *“And I besought Jehovah at that time, saying, O Lord Jehovah, thou hast begun to show thy servant thy greatness, and thy strong hand: for what god is there in heaven or in earth, that can do according to thy works, and according to thy mighty acts? Let me go over, I pray thee, and see the good land that is beyond the Jordan, that goodly mountain, and Lebanon. But Jehovah was wroth with me for your sakes, and hearkened not unto me; and Jehovah said unto me, Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto me of this matter. Get thee up unto the top of Pisgah, and lift up thine eyes westward, and northward, and southward, and eastward, and behold with thine eyes: for thou shalt not go over this Jordan. But charge Joshua, and encourage him, and strengthen him; for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the land which thou shalt see. So we abode in the valley over against Beth-peor” (3:23-29).*
1. Moses recognized the all powerful state of Jehovah God as many before and latter would (cf. Gen. 18:14; Jer. 32:17, 27).
 2. Moses desired earnestly to see the land of Canaan... God’s blessing and gift to His people. Due to Moses and Aaron’s sin at the waters of Meribah they were unable to enter in. Though Moses pleads with God the Lord states, *“Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto me of this matter.”*

Lessons from Deuteronomy 2-3

- Note the word *“possession”* as it relates to God’s *“gifts”* and commands (cf. Deut. 2:5, 9, 19, 24; 3:8, 12, 18) (see study # 3).
- Note again that the land given to be possessed by Israel was to be *“contended”* for (Deut. 2:24).
- The rebellious were unwilling to obey God and contend for the land that they may possess it (cf. Deut. 1:19-21, 26, 29-32).
- The great lesson of Deuteronomy 2-3 is that the fear of man illustrates a lack of faith in God. Fear is defined as *“unbelief”* (Deut. 1:32; Matt. 8:25-27) and doubting (Matt. 14:24-31). When Israel put their trust in God he was with them (Deut. 3:2, 6). God had commanded that Israel show no fear toward their enemies (Deut. 3:22) (see study # 11).
- Christians today must not show fear toward the lost of the world. Our foes may seem fierce, deadly, and mean. These foes may give us very scary looks (cf. Ezek. 2:1-7). The Christian; however, is commanded not to fear them (cf. Matt. 10:24-31).
- Let us recall that it was not fear that took down Goliath and it will not be fear that gains us victory over the souls of men today (cf. I Jn. 4:4-6) (study # 11).

Chapter 4

I. Israel Admonished to keep God's commands Alone (4:1-20):

- A. *“And now, O Israel, hearken unto the statutes and unto the ordinances, which I teach you, to do them; that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which Jehovah, the God of your fathers, giveth you. Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish from it, that ye may keep the commandments of Jehovah your God which I command you”* (4:1-2).
1. A timeless and universal principle is laid down by Moses (he reiterates it at Deut. 13:1). So important is this fact that the prophets spoke of it (Prov. 30:6; Jer. 26:2) and the word of God ends on this note (cf. Rev. 22:18-19). God's commands are to be left as they are. Man is not at liberty to add or subtract from them. When Moses spoke he spoke divine commandments from God (cf. Numb. 12:7-8). The commandments of God, not man, shall save the soul. Israel had tried their hand at reinterpreting (cf. Numb. 16:3) and rebellion to God's commandments (Deut. 1:26) none of which helped them (see study # 12; Interpretation of Bible).
 2. Today, God's standards stand alone to save man from sin (Dan. 5:27; Hos. 5:10-11; Amos 7:7-8; Matt. 7:21-24; Eph. 2:20; 4:1ff). Truth is the standard that exposes a man's real identity (i.e. righteous or unrighteous) (I Cor. 14:24-25; Heb. 4:12-13). Truth is constant and does not change (Malachi 3:6; Matt. 24:35; Heb. 13:8). Though man changes it does not (Jonah 1:1-2 comp. to 3:1f.; Mal. 1:6-8; 3:7-10). Truth alone will judge us at the end of times (Jn. 12:46-50; Col. 2:23). Truth is the only true constant in life. Though man may seek to pervert truth it remains truth. Truth abides for ever (cf. Zechariah 1:5-6; Matt. 24:35).
- B. *“Your eyes have seen what Jehovah did because of Baal-peor; for all the men that followed Baal-peor, Jehovah thy God hath destroyed them from the midst of thee. But ye that did cleave unto Jehovah your God are alive every one of you this day. Behold, I have taught you statutes and ordinances, even as Jehovah my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the midst of the land whither ye go in to possess it. Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, that shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. For what great nation is there, that hath a god so nigh unto them, as Jehovah our God is whensoever we call upon him? And what great nation is there, that hath statutes and ordinances so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?”* (4:3-8).
1. The “eyes” of Israel looked and saw God's wrath poured out upon the disobedient at Baal-peor. Israel had committed fornication with the daughters of Moab and the Midianites and even worshipped their gods (cf. Numb. 25:1ff). The Lord's anger was kindled and 24,000 Israelites were killed before the zeal of Phinehas stopped the plague with the act of conviction. Those not involved in the sin at Baal-peor could look to their current state of life and realize that it is due to God's will for the obedient.
 2. Moses encourages Israel to remain faithful to God's commandments and that such actions is defined as being wise and full of wisdom. The nations about them will perceive that Israel is wise as they obey the Lord's commands too. The nations will see that God answers Israel's prayers and is with them as they obey.
- C. *“Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes saw, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life; but make them known unto thy children and thy children's children;”* (4:9).
1. A present danger among people of all times is forgetting where one's blessings in life came from. Israel was to have burned within their memory the 24,000 who died due to their sinful conduct. Israel was to always remember that there are consequences to disobedience.
 2. The Christian today ought to remember the blessings of salvation through Jesus Christ. Sometimes, as the years pass, we forget the initial zeal we had when baptized. God commands that we never let this zeal for Him diminish. Let us teach our children that they too may have a hope of eternal life (cf. Eph. 6:1ff).
- D. *“the day that thou stoodest before Jehovah thy God in Horeb, when Jehovah said unto me, Assemble me the people, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children. And ye came near*

and stood under the mountain; and the mountain burned with fire unto the heart of heaven, with darkness, cloud, and thick darkness. And Jehovah spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of words, but ye saw no form; only ye heard a voice. And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even the ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone” (4:10-13).

1. Again, Moses reminds the people of a day in the past wherein Israel stood before Mount Horeb and received the law of God written on tables of stone (cf. Ex. 19-20).
 2. God appeared to the people at Sinai and they saw the smoke from the fire, the thick darkness about them, and the cloud. The people were terrified at the sight. Jehovah then spoke to Israel out of the fire and thick darkness and Moses reminds the people that they “*saw no form*” but that they only “*heard the voice of words.*”
 3. How could Israel possibly add or subtract from things they heard nor saw not? (Deut. 4:2)
- E. “*And Jehovah commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and ordinances, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over to possess it. Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of form on the day that Jehovah spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire. Lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image in the form of any figure, the likeness of male or female, the likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged bird that flieth in the heavens, the likeness of anything that creepeth on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the water under the earth; and lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun and the moon and the stars, even all the host of heaven, thou be drawn away and worship them, and serve them, which Jehovah thy God hath allotted unto all the peoples under the whole heaven. But Jehovah hath taken you, and brought you forth out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be unto him a people of inheritance, as at this day” (4:14-20).*
1. A very powerful message is taught here regarding the authority of God. Moses reminds Israel of their fearful experience at Horeb (Sinai). They heard the voice of God and received His commandments. Moses calls upon Israel to think back at what they heard and saw. Moses said that they “*saw no manner of form.*” To carve a graven image out of stone or wood and call it God is to err. To look to the sun, moon, and stars and worship them is to err. There is one creator and one worthy of worship; i.e., Jehovah God.
 2. The lesson for man today is that God is the one creator and His word should reign supreme in our lives. We may ask valid questions today: Where have you seen a Catholic, Baptists, Methodists, Buddha, Confucius, Islam etc. way of worship? Where have you seen the church caring for the needy of the world? Where have you seen churches building needy homes? Where have you seen church plays, theater, and sporting events? Where have you seen Christian rock concerts? Where have you seen church sponsored singles groups? Let us always remember that we must have Bible examples, as is illustrated by Moses here, for all that we do or say (cf. Col. 3:17) (see study # 13; Bible Authority).

II. **No Man or Woman is above Jehovah’s Laws (4:21-49):**

- A. “*Furthermore Jehovah was angry with me for your sakes, and swore that I should not go over the Jordan, and that I should not go in unto that good land, which Jehovah thy God giveth thee for an inheritance: but I must die in this land, I must not go over the Jordan; but ye shall go over, and possess that good land” (4:21-22).*
1. Moses reminds Israel how that God’s anger was directed at him once for not following through with His commandment (cf. Numb. 20:10-13). God tells Moses that he will not be able to enter Canaan with Israel due to this act of rebellion on his part (cf. Numb. 27:12-14). Though Moses pleaded with God about the matter the Lord would not change His mind (cf. Deut. 3:23-29).
 2. The thought seems to be that no one man or woman is above God’s laws (not even Moses).
- B. “*Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of Jehovah your God, which he made with you, and make you a graven image in the form of anything which Jehovah thy God hath forbidden thee. For Jehovah thy God is a devouring fire, a jealous God. When thou shalt beget children, and children’s children, and ye shall have been long in the land, and shall corrupt yourselves, and make a graven image in the form of anything, and shall do that which is evil in the sight of Jehovah thy God, to provoke him to anger; I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall*

soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go over the Jordan to possess it; ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed” (4:23-26).

1. Moses delivers a serious warning to Israel. God has commanded that they change no portion of His laws, abide in His commandments alone, and that they turn to past historical events that they may know of His power and wrath against sinners. Do not forget these things!
 2. What if Israel does forget and begin to serve God in ways that they had never learned from Moses or God’s prophets? What if they refuse to teach their children about the mighty works of God? Moses calls heaven and earth in as witnesses that if such occurs God’s anger will be provoked and Israel will be consumed from off the earth.
- C. *“And Jehovah will scatter you among the peoples, and ye shall be left few in number among the nations, whither Jehovah shall lead you away. And there ye shall serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell. But from thence ye shall seek Jehovah thy God, and thou shalt find him, when thou searchest after him with all thy heart and with all thy soul. When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, in the latter days thou shalt return to Jehovah thy God, and hearken unto his voice: for Jehovah thy God is a merciful God; he will not fail thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he sware unto them” (4:27-31).*
1. Moses looks into the future at a day when the people of God would turn their backs on God and worship the works of their hands in the form of birds, snakes, fishes, and various forms of wood and stone (Isa. 45:20 Psalms 115:4-7 and I Cor. 12:2). The consequence of said actions would be tribulation and destruction because of their disobedience.
 2. Though they suffer the Lord stands ready and willing to pardon them of their iniquity if only they would seek His forgiveness.
- D. *“For ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon the earth, and from the one end of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any such thing as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it? Did ever a people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live? Or hath God assayed to go and take him a nation from the midst of another nation, by trials, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by an outstretched arm, and by great terrors, according to all that Jehovah your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes? Unto thee it was showed, that thou mightest know that Jehovah he is God; there is none else besides him” (4:32-35).*
1. No where in man’s history has there been a time when God revealed himself so much to man. God spoke with them at Mount Sinai in the hearing of all. God performed mighty works in Egypt to pull a nation out of another nation. If ever a people existed who should have great faith in God it should be the Israelites.
 2. All these things were done so that the people would know without a doubt that Jehovah is God alone. To perform religious acts apart from the divine instructions delivered by Moses or to worship idols made of man’s hands were utter rebellion in the face of such great evidences of God.
- E. *“Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice, that he might instruct thee: and upon earth he made thee to see his great fire; and thou heardest his words out of the midst of the fire. And because he loved thy fathers, therefore he chose their seed after them, and brought thee out with his presence, with his great power, out of Egypt; to drive out nations from before thee greater and mightier than thou, to bring thee in, to give thee their land for an inheritance, as at this day” (4:36-38).*
1. Moses continues to establish the fact that no Israelite could deny. Jehovah spoke to them from the mountain and they saw no form. Secondly, no Israelite could deny that Jehovah humbled the mightiest nation of their day and brought His people out by divine miracles.
 2. God did this because he loved their fathers (i.e., Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob). God had made promises to the fathers and was fulfilling the land promise in the life of these now hearing Moses.
- F. *“Know therefore this day, and **lay it to thy heart**, that Jehovah he is God in heaven above and upon the earth beneath; there is none else. And thou shalt keep his statutes, and his commandments, which I command thee this day, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, and*

that thou mayest prolong thy days in the land, which Jehovah thy God giveth thee, for ever” (4:39-40).

1. The undeniable fact that Jehovah is the one true God was to be “*laid to heart.*” Moses reiterates saying, “*there is none else*” (cf. Deut. 4:28; Isa. 46:8-11) (see study # 14; There is One God).
 2. Seeing that Jehovah is the only true God and that He has delivered commandments to be followed the people ought to understand the importance of doing so.
- G. “*Then Moses set apart three cities beyond the Jordan toward the sunrising; that the manslayer might flee thither, that slayeth his neighbor unawares, and hated him not in time past; and that fleeing unto one of these cities he might live: [namely], Bezer in the wilderness, in the plain country, for the Reubenites; and Ramoth in Gilead, for the Gadites; and Golan in Bashan, for the Manassites. And this is the law which Moses set before the children of Israel: these are the testimonies, and the statutes, and the ordinances, which Moses spake unto the children of Israel, when they came forth out of Egypt, beyond the Jordan, in the valley over against Beth-peor, in the land of Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heshbon, whom Moses and the children of Israel smote, when they came forth out of Egypt. And they took his land in possession, and the land of Og king of Bashan, the two kings of the Amorites, who were beyond the Jordan toward the sunrising; from Aroer, which is on the edge of the valley of the Arnon, even unto mount Sion (the same is Hermon), and all the Arabah beyond the Jordan eastward, even unto the sea of the Arabah, under the slopes of Pisgah”* (4:41-49).
1. Moses sets up three cities of refuge on the east of the Jordan River for one to flee out of Gad, Reuben, or half the tribe of Manasseh.
 2. First sermon now ended.

Lessons from Deuteronomy 4

- A timeless and universal principle is laid down by Moses in Deuteronomy 4. Moses said, “*Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish from it, that ye may keep the commandments of Jehovah your God which I command you*” (Deut. 4:2). God’s laws are right and there is none else like them (Deut. 4:8). The standard of truth is to never be tampered with (Prov. 30:6; Jer. 26:2; Rev. 22:18-19). To change God’s laws is to set one’s self up as a lawgiver (i.e., god) (II Thess. 2:1ff) and thereby sin against the Lord (II Cor. 1:12; 2:14-17). Israel was to look to the things that they had heard and saw and do nothing else (cf. Deut. 4:12-16). We ought to learn the same lesson today. When God speaks through His word we are not at liberty to do otherwise (see study # 13).
- Sometimes it is not the tampering with truth that condemns man it is his forgetting (Deut. 4:9, 23), departure from truth through sin (Deut. 4:9), or even being drawn away by erroneous teaching (Deut. 4:19).
- Let us be reminded of one thing. Though we forget, depart, or allow ourselves to be drawn away from truth by a false teacher we continue to bear the consequence of our decision. Though we change God’s word never will (cf. Matt. 24:35). Knowing these facts any excuse that man may concoct in his mind for his departure of truth will not be excused by God (cf. Deut. 4:12-19) (see study # 15; How Departures from the Truth Occur).

Chapter 5

I. Moses’ second Sermon: A reiteration of the ten commandments delivered at Sinai (5 all):

- A. “*And Moses called unto all Israel, and said unto them, Hear, O Israel, the statutes and the ordinances which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them, and observe to do them. Jehovah our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. Jehovah made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day. Jehovah spake with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire, (I stood between Jehovah and you at that time, to show you the word of Jehovah: for ye were afraid because of the fire, and went not up into the mount;) saying,”* (5:1-5).

1. Chapter 5:1 begins the second sermon of Moses and goes to chapter 26. The theme of Moses' first sermon may be found at Deuteronomy 4:2, "*Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish from it, that ye may keep the commandments of Jehovah your God which I command you.*" If one is to keep God's commands in all purity they must hear, learn, and have faith in them. Moses reminds Israel of the "*covenant*" God had made with them when at Mount Horeb (Sinai). At that time the Lord appeared before Israel and delivered His commandments to them. The people were terrified and asks Moses, "*Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die*" (Ex. 20:19). God spoke with Israel face to face. They heard and saw the fearful things. Moses stood between the people and God at that time as a representative of the Lord's.
 2. Let us revisit the word "*covenant*" for a moment. The laws that God delivered and expected the people to hear and obey are referred to by Moses as a "*covenant*." A covenant is "A binding agreement made by two or more persons or parties; compact, Law (American Heritage Dictionary [AHD] 334). Note that the scriptures testify that God's covenants are equivalent to binding laws (cf. Ps. 111:9; Deut. 29:9; Heb. 8:6). This covenant delivered by God face to face with Israel at Horeb is recognized in the scriptures as the "*first covenant*" (Heb. 8:7; 9:1) or "*the law*" (Heb. 10:1). This first covenant demanded perfection (Deut. 4:2; Gal. 3:10); however, had no eternal remedies for one who would violate the law (Heb. 10:1-4). The author of Hebrews thereby refers to this law as "*weak and unprofitable*" (Heb. 7:18-19). Someone may say that if this is the case what purpose did the law serve? Paul answers this question at Galatians 3:17ff. The law identified sin (Rom. 7:7) and thereby served as a tutor to bring man to understand their need for forgiveness through the blood of Jesus Christ (Gal. 3:23ff) (see study # 16; Bible Covenants).
- B.** "*I am Jehovah thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, [nor] any likeness [of anything] that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them; for I, Jehovah, thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the third and upon the fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing lovingkindness unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments. Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah thy God in vain: for Jehovah will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. Observe the sabbath day, to keep it holy, as Jehovah thy God commanded thee. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is a sabbath unto Jehovah thy God: [in it] thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and Jehovah thy God brought thee out thence by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm: therefore Jehovah thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day. Honor thy father and thy mother, as Jehovah thy God commanded thee; that thy days may be long, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee. Thou shalt not kill. Neither shalt thou commit adultery. Neither shalt thou steal. Neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbor. Neither shalt thou covet thy neighbor's wife; neither shalt thou desire thy neighbor's house, his field, or his man-servant, or his maid-servant, his ox, or his ass, or anything that is thy neighbor's"* (5:6-21).

I would like to insert the notes from Exodus 20 here due to the text being the same:

Notes on Exodus Chapter 20

- I. God speaks His 10 words (Ten Commandments) directly to the People (20:1-17):**
 - A. "*And God spake all these words, saying, I am Jehovah thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage*" (20:1-2).

1. The proof of God's existence and love for His chosen people was that He brought them miraculously out of the land of Egypt.
 2. The Lord's people were to see and learn of the heavenly Father's love and care for them so that they would willingly obey His commands. When a young man or woman learns of the love and care that God has for them it is then that they will be convicted to keep His commandments (see study # 27; Bible Conviction).
 3. We know that God spoke directly to the people these words due to Ex. 20:22 and Deut. 5:4. The Ten Commandments about to be spoken are actually termed in the Hebrew language "ten words" (cf. Ex. 34:28; Deut. 4:13; 10:4).
- B.** *"Thou shalt have no other gods before me"* (20:3).
1. Polytheism is strictly prohibited in the Word of God due to the fact that is only one true God (Isa. 46:9-10; Eph. 4:4).
 2. The fear of Jehovah God as the one true God was to be in the hearts and minds of men.
- C.** *"Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, nor any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them, for I Jehovah thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation of them that hate me, and showing lovingkindness unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments"* (20:4-6).
1. The Lord commands His people to not fashion images of stone or wood of things they see in the heavens, earth, or waters. Worship to any such man made concoction would be an abomination unto the one true God and He would severely punish those who disobey.
 2. Moses gives the reason for this at Deuteronomy 4:15ff saying, *"for ye saw no manner of form on the day that Jehovah spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire; lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image in the form of any figure, the likeness of male or female..."* The only thing that Israel did see was fire, smoke, and lightning. They heard the thundering, trumpets, and words of God. Seeing no form of God they were not to concoct something from their imagination and bow down to worship it as the heathen did. Herein is a great lesson on Bible authority. God's spoken word is delivered to be obeyed. We take the words alone and give heed to them. We are not to add and subtract things from God's word so that His instructions would be more fitting to one's likes and dislikes. One who perverts the words of God with his vain imaginations is one due His awesome wrath (cf. Rom. 1:18-22; Matt. 13:10-15; II Cor. 1:12; 2:17) (see study # 10).
- D.** *"Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah thy God in vain; for Jehovah will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain"* (20:7).
1. The third command takes into consideration the first two; i.e., there is only one God and He is not to be formed into an image of gold, silver, wood, or stone. All that man can know of God himself is to be found in His holy name; i.e., *"I AM"* (Ex. 3:14) or *"Jehovah"* (Ex. 6:2).
 2. The word *"vain"* indicates empty, useless, and worthless. To speak the name of God in a worthless way would be to use God's name in trivial situations. Many today will exclaim, "O my God" to express surprise. The use of the name of Jehovah God is to be limited to praise, prayer, worship, and the giving of thanks (cf. Matt. 5:33-37) (see study # 4).
 3. The man or woman who uses God's name in a trivial way will not go unpunished.
- E.** *"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is a sabbath unto Jehovah thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore Jehovah blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it"* (20:8-11).
1. The fourth commandment takes into consideration the day God rested from His labors of creation. God blessed this day and hallowed it (cf. Gen. 2:3).
 2. Though many worship today on the Sabbath it is not commanded of NT Christians. Jesus nailed the Mosaic Law to the cross when He was crucified and thereby ushered in the new covenant spoken of by Jeremiah (cf. Jer. 31:31ff; Col. 2:17).

3. These few verses are some of the strongest evidence found in the word of God to prove that God's creative work took place in 24 hour periods rather than six eons of time (i.e., millions and billions of years). Man works six days and rest on the Sabbath like as God did. Man did not work for millions of years but rather for six days that had 24 hours in them (see study # 28; The Creation).
- F. *"Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee"* (20:12).
1. Though the Law of Moses has been nailed to the cross and NT Christians are not responsible to keep it there are, nonetheless, commands that are brought over into the NT.
 2. The apostle Paul made this very command a part of NT law when he commanded it at Ephesians 6:1ff. We know that the things Paul commanded were the commandments of God as His holy apostle (I Cor. 14:37) (see study # 16; Bible Covenants).
- G. *"Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's"* (20:13-17).
1. The 5th through the 10th commandments are brought over into the NT just as the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 5th. Interestingly, the only commandment that does not apply to us today is the fifth commandment, i.e., keeping the Sabbath (we rather keep the first day of the week [cf. Acts 20:7]) (see study # 29).
 2. Murder is sinful in NT times (cf. I Pet. 4:15).
 3. Adultery is sinful in NT times (cf. Gal. 5:19).
 4. Stealing is sinful in NT times (cf. Eph. 4:28).
 5. Lying (bearing false witness) is sinful in the NT (I Tim. 1:10).
 6. Coveting (desiring something that does not belong to you) is sinful in the NT (I Cor. 6:10).

- C. *"These words Jehovah spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice: and he added no more. And he wrote them upon two tables of stone, and gave them unto me. And it came to pass, when ye heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire, that ye came near unto me, even all the heads of your tribes, and your elders; and ye said, Behold, Jehovah our God hath showed us his glory and his greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire: we have seen this day that God doth speak with man, and he liveth. Now therefore why should we die? for this great fire will consume us: if we hear the voice of Jehovah our God any more, then we shall die. For who is there of all flesh, that hath heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived? Go thou near, and hear all that Jehovah our God shall say: and speak thou unto us all that Jehovah our God shall speak unto thee; and we will hear it, and do it. And Jehovah heard the voice of your words, when ye spake unto me; and Jehovah said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee: **they have well said all that they have spoken**"* (5:22-28).
1. Now we are told exactly what God spoke to Israel and what He spoke to Israel through Moses in relationship to the first covenant. God spoke the 10 commands to Israel face to face yet the other parts of the first covenant were delivered to Israel by God through Moses.
 2. The people conclude that their sinful state puts them in jeopardy of loosing their lives if they stand before God again to here Him speak. Moses reminds the people of their decision to have Moses stand as a revealer of the mind of God to the people rather than God speaking directly to the people. The Lord concludes, *"they have well said all that they have spoken."* From that point forward God spoke to the people through Moses (cf. Numb. 12:7).
- D. *"Oh that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever! Go say to them, Return ye to your tents. But as for thee, stand thou here by me, and I will speak unto thee all the*

commandment, and the statutes, and the ordinances, which thou shalt teach them, that they may do them in the land which I give them to possess it. Ye shall observe to do therefore as Jehovah your God hath commanded you: ye shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. Ye shall walk in all the way which Jehovah your God hath commanded you, that ye may live, and that it may be well with you, and that ye may prolong your days in the land which ye shall possess” (5:29-33).

1. The people had vowed to Moses that they would hear the commandments of God and do them. When the Lord heard these words He replied saying, “*Oh that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always...*” Though it was God’s desire that Israel perfectly obey him always He knew that they would not. Likewise, God’s desire for us today is that we would perfectly keep His commandments (i.e., never sin) (I Cor. 15:34; Eph. 4:26). What God desires and what we do are often two different things. God knew that we would disappoint him (cf. Rom. 3:23). He thereby now provides a remedy (cf. I Jn. 2:1).
2. Once again Moses reminds the people not to forget to perfectly obey the commands of God (see also Deut. 4:2).
3. Another reoccurring theme in Deuteronomy is the definition of fearing God. To fear God is to keep his commandments (see study # 17; The Fear of God).

Chapter 6

I. Moses Admonishes Israel to Hear and Obey God’s Commandments (6 all):

- A. “*Now this is the commandment, the statutes, and the ordinances, which Jehovah your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over to possess it; that thou mightest **fear** Jehovah thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged. Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as Jehovah, the God of thy fathers, hath promised unto thee, in a land flowing with milk and honey” (6:1-3).*
 1. Moses reminds Israel of their original fear of God that they may keep all of His commandments.
 2. Man’s intentions are often overridden by things that dominate our time and interest. Moses sought to instill a spirit of fear of God to the level of constant remembrance of the people’s responsibility to keep His laws. A fear of God is a must today for man to be obedient to God’s laws throughout one’s life (cf. Titus 3:8; Matt. 10:28; I Pet. 1:17) (see study # 17).
- B. “*Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah: and thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thy heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be for frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thy house, and upon thy gates. And it shall be, when Jehovah thy God shall bring thee into the land which he swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee, great and goodly cities, which thou buildest not, and houses full of all good things, which thou filledst not, and cisterns hewn out, which thou hewedst not, vineyards and olive-trees, which thou plantedst not, and thou shalt eat and be full; then beware **lest thou forget Jehovah**, who brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage” (6:4-12).*
 1. Verse 4 “forms the beginning of what is termed the *Shema* (“hear”) in the Jewish Services, and belong to the daily Morning and Evening office...This weighty text contains far more than a mere declaration of the unity of God as against polytheism; or of the sole authority of the Revelation He had made to Israel as against other pretended manifestations of His will and attributes. It asserts that the Lord God of Israel is absolutely God, and no other. He and he alone, is Jehovah the absolute, uncaused God; He who had by His election of them made Himself known to Israel” (Barnes Notes; F. C. Cook Pg. 238) (see study # 14).

2. The times that Israel “*forgot Jehovah*” were times of their demise and destruction (cf. Jer. 2:32; 23:27; Hos. 4:6). Let us never forget God nor His commandments. Let us not only study the word of God (II Tim. 2:15) but teach our children His laws as well (Eph. 6:1ff).
3. This same “Shema” is recognized today by our Lord (Matt. 22:37-40; Mark 12:29-31; Luke 10:27). Jesus said, “*And he said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment*” (Matt. 22:37-38). This is another thematic segment of Deuteronomy (see the multitude of “thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart statements in this book):
 - a. Israel was commanded to have no other gods besides Jehovah, not to make graven images of other gods, not to take the name of God in vain (i.e., speak in a manner that illustrates one’s irreverence toward God), and to remember the Sabbath day as a day of rest. Each of these first four commandments found in Exodus 20:1-11 illustrate a heart, mind, and soul that is dependant exclusively upon Jehovah God for help and sustenance in this life. Herein is one of the greatest lessons revealed in the word of God that comes up again and again in Bible study. God wants man to serve Him because it is what one desires more than any other thing in this life (see study # 18; What Does God Require of Me?). God desires man’s heart to be submissive, fearful, respectful, act in reverence toward Him rather than doing religious things for outward show. Joel wrote, “*Yet even now, saith Jehovah, turn ye unto me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto Jehovah your God; for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness, and repenteth him of the evil. Who knoweth whether he will not turn and repent, and leave a blessing behind him, even a meal-offering and a drink-offering unto Jehovah your God?*” (2:12-14). God thereby desires that the man or woman that would serve Him should be torn at heart over their violations of His will.
 - b. Samuel had instructed Saul to have such a heart at I Samuel 15:22-23. David expressed such true sorrow as recorded in Psalms 51. The prophet Isaiah prescribed such a heart at Isaiah 57:15 and 66:1-2. The apostle Paul spoke of such a humble hearted disposition at II Corinthians 7:10. Jesus thereby summarizes the first four commandments with this one statement. It is greatly important to serve God with all of one’s being. My earnest desire ought to be to do so.
- C. “*Thou shalt fear Jehovah thy God; and him shalt thou serve, and shalt swear by his name. Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the peoples that are round about you; for Jehovah thy God in the midst of thee is a jealous God; lest the anger of Jehovah thy God be kindled against thee, and he destroy thee from off the face of the earth*” (6:13-15).
 1. The covenant has been delivered and now Moses lays down commandments in relationship to one’s acceptance and keeping of the law.
 2. Israel is commanded to “*fear Jehovah thy God*” in that they are to hear and obey His words. Those who rebel are subject to the “*anger of Jehovah thy God*” (see study # 17).
 3. The consequence of said anger is that they shall be “*destroyed from off the face of the earth.*”
- D. “*Ye shall not tempt Jehovah your God, as ye tempted him in Massah. Ye shall diligently keep the commandments of Jehovah your God, and his testimonies, and his statutes, which he hath commanded thee. And thou shalt do that which is right and good in the sight of Jehovah; that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest go in and possess the good land which Jehovah sware unto thy fathers, to thrust out all thine enemies from before thee, as Jehovah hath spoken*” (6:16-19).
 1. Never are God’s people to be guilty of trying God’s love and mercy (i.e., tempting Him). The Israelites did this as Massah (cf. Ex. 17:1-7 and Matt. 4:7). The people of Israel, in a state of extreme thirst at Massah, proclaimed “*Is Jehovah among us or not?*” They knew God was with them due to the cloud by day and pillar fire by night guiding them along. They were thirsty and thereby were making demands upon God rather than trusting that He would care for them as He had done with the manna and quail.

2. God's command for the people was that they "*possess*" the land of Canaan (cf. Deut. 3:18). At this time Canaan was possessed by the Canaanites. God promised the people that as they obeyed His commands He would fight for them. They are thereby commanded not to fear the people (cf. Deut. 3:22) but rather "*thrust out all thine enemies from before thee...*"
- E. "*When thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What mean the testimonies, and the statutes, and the ordinances, which Jehovah our God hath commanded you? then thou shalt say unto thy son, We were Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt: and Jehovah brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand; and Jehovah showed signs and wonders, great and sore, upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his house, before our eyes; and he brought us out from thence, that he might bring us in, to give us the land which he sware unto our fathers. And Jehovah commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear Jehovah our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as at this day. And it shall be righteousness unto us, if we observe to do all this commandment before Jehovah our God, as he hath commanded us*" (6:20-25).
1. There would come days in the future when the Israelites sons would asks their fathers regarding the meaning of God's commands and their origins. The young ones had not seen the miracles in Egypt and neither were they miraculously fed and cared for in the wilderness wanderings. To produce faith in their hearts that were instilled within the parents there would need to be earnest teaching. Christian parents are no less charged to do so today (Eph. 6:1ff).
 2. Moses instructs Israel to always remember God's miraculous and wonderful works in Egypt and God's great care for Israel. Israel was "Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt." The Lord; however, redeemed them from Egypt. The people now belong to God as His servants and are thereby commanded to obey His will (see study # 19; Bible Redemption).

Lessons for chapters 5 and 6

- God's law delivered on Sinai is termed a "*covenant*" by Moses at Deuteronomy 5:1-3 (see also Deut. 29:9). The law given at Sinai is termed the "*first covenant*" (Heb. 8:7; 9:1) and "*the law*" (Heb. 10:1). This first covenant was "*weak and unprofitable*" in that it could not make man perfect through the forgiveness of sins (Heb. 7:18-19). The weakness of the first covenant demands a more perfect law (i.e., a law that enabled man to be forgiven of sins) (cf. Jer. 31:31ff). The perfect law is termed the second covenant (cf. Heb. 8:7; Heb. 10:9) (see study # 16).
- To "*fear*" God is to keep His commandments (cf. Deut. 5:29; 6:1-3; Titus 3:8; I Pet. 1:17). My obedience is thereby evidence of my fear of God much like obedience is evidence in my faith (cf. Jn. 3:36; Heb. 11:1ff) and love (Jn. 14:15, 23) of God (see study # 17).
- When I do not keep God's commands (i.e., I sin) I have illustrated a heart that does not fear God. Sin ought to bother people who lay claims to loving Jesus and fearing God (see Deut. 6:4; Joel 2:12-14; I Cor. 7:10) (see study # 20; My Attitude Toward Sin).
- Moses gives final admonition:
 - First, beware of the consequences of forgetting God (Deut. 6:12).
 - Secondly, never be guilty of tempting the Lord thy God (Deut. 6:16ff). To try God's mercy is to exercise a spirit of unfaithfulness (cf. Ex. 17:1-7; Matt. 4:7).

Chapter 7

I. Commands and Blessings for Israel as they prepare to enter Canaan (7:1-15):

- A. "*When Jehovah thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and shall cast out many nations before thee, the Hittite, and the Girgashite, and the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite, seven nations greater and mightier than thou; and when Jehovah thy God shall deliver them up before thee, and thou shalt smite them; then thou shalt utterly destroy them: thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor show mercy unto them; neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For he will turn away thy son from following me, that*

they may serve other gods: so will the anger of Jehovah be kindled against you, and he will destroy thee quickly. But thus shall ye deal with them: ye shall break down their altars, and dash in pieces their pillars, and hew down their Asherim, and burn their graven images with fire” (7:1-5).

1. Moses lists seven nations that Israel was to destroy out of the promised land of Canaan. These nations were greater in number and strength yet with the help of the Lord Israel would prevail.
 2. Moses gives five commands in relation to Israel’s treatment of the Canaanites:
 - a. First, Israel is commanded to utterly destroy the inhabitants of Canaan.
 - b. Secondly, Israel is commanded not to make any covenants with Canaan (i.e., any agreements). Israel was to destroy them rather than try to make establish any type of relationship with Canaan.
 - c. Thirdly, Israel was to show no mercy to them. All were to be destroyed. To show mercy was to do one of two things. First, showing mercy would affront God’s will for Israel. Secondly, showing mercy would only lead to their spiritual demise in that they would be infected with the false deities of the people.
 - d. Fourthly, Israel was not to marry any of the Canaanites. Marriage to these foreigners would only lead to a spouse accepting the false gods of the foreigners.
 - e. Fifthly, Israel was to break down the altars and pillars in the land of Canaan that were dedicated to other gods. One such graven image was the “*Asherim*.” The Asherim is first mentioned at Exodus 34:13 with the same admonition to destroy it. “Like so much else in Canaanite religion, the name and worship of Asherah were borrowed from Assyria. She was the wife of the war god Asir, whose name was identified with that of the city of Ashhur, and thus became the national god of Assyria... the god of fertility” (ISBE v. 1, pp. 317).
- B.** *“For thou art a holy people unto Jehovah thy God: Jehovah thy God hath chosen thee to be a people for his own possession, above all peoples that are upon the face of the earth. Jehovah did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all peoples: but because Jehovah loveth you, and because he would keep the oath which he sware unto your fathers, hath Jehovah brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Know therefore that Jehovah thy God, he is God, the faithful God, who keepeth covenant and lovingkindness with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations, and repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them: he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face” (7:6-10).*
1. Israel is commanded to possess Canaan by destroying all inhabitants and graven images without showing mercy. The reason for such activity is “*for thou art a holy people... God hath chosen thee to be a people for his own possession...*” This statement has a strong similarity to the apostle Peter’s statement found at I Peter 2:9. Peter, speaking of the elect of God, said that they are an “*elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession...*” Under the leadership of Moses, Israel was under the ownership of God because He had “*redeemed*” them out of Egyptian bondage (see Deut. 7:8). Peter’s point is that God owns Christians through the blood sacrifice of Jesus upon the cross (cf. Acts 20:28; I Cor. 6:20; 7:23). Christians are redeemed from the bondage of sin by the blood of Jesus (Col. 1:20ff) (see study # 19).
 2. The reason for God choosing Israel was due to two things:
 - a. His “*love*” that was illustrated in the covenant made with Abraham (and latter renewed with Isaac and Jacob). By the sovereign will of God He chose Abraham to bring forth his scheme to redeem mankind from the consequences of sin (cf. Gen. 12:1ff compared to Gal. 3:6-9 and Rom. 9:6ff).
 - b. God was determined to keep his covenant made with Abraham (i.e., to redeem all nations from the consequences of sin) (Gen. 12:1ff / Gal. 3:6ff).
 3. The loving God will reward those who are faithful to him and punish those who reject His sovereign will.

C. *“Thou shalt therefore keep the commandment, and the statutes, and the ordinances, which I command thee this day, to do them. And it shall come to pass, because ye hearken to these ordinances, and keep and do them, that Jehovah thy God will keep with thee the covenant and the lovingkindness which he swore unto thy fathers: and he will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee; he will also bless the fruit of thy body and the fruit of thy ground, thy grain and thy new wine and thine oil, the increase of thy cattle and the young of thy flock, in the land which he swore unto thy fathers to give thee. Thou shalt be blessed above all peoples: there shall not be male or female barren among you, or among your cattle. And Jehovah will take away from thee all sickness; and none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knowest, will he put upon thee, but will lay them upon all them that hate thee”* (7:11-15).

1. The man and or woman who recognize the sovereign will of God for mankind through obedience can expect to be blessed.
2. God’s blessings are thereby contingent upon man’s obedience. Those who reject the commandments of God shall not receive the following blessings:
 - a. God will keep his covenant agreement (i.e., the land, great nation, and seed promise of Gen. 12:1ff).
 - b. God will love the people by giving them blessings of the fruit of the womb (i.e., many children). Furthermore, the fruit of the ground will be plenteous. The obedient people will be blessed with grain, new wine, and oil (three often mentioned blessings of the fruit of the ground).
 - c. Furthermore, God will multiply their cattle and flocks of sheep.
 - d. Lastly, the Lord would remove sicknesses and diseases from the people and lay them upon their enemies.

II. **Israel commanded to rout and destroy the Canaanites (7:16-26):**

A. *“And thou shalt consume all the peoples that Jehovah thy God shall deliver unto thee; thine eye shall not pity them: neither shalt thou serve their gods; for that will be a snare unto thee. If thou shalt say in thy heart, These nations are more than I; how can I dispossess them? Thou shalt not be afraid of them: thou shalt well remember what Jehovah thy God did unto Pharaoh, and unto all Egypt; the great trials which thine eyes saw, and the signs, and the wonders, and the mighty hand, and the outstretched arm, whereby Jehovah thy God brought thee out: so shall Jehovah thy God do unto all the peoples of whom thou art afraid”* (7:16-19).

1. Moses returns to the duty of Israel in relation to Canaan. Israel is to not *“pity them”* (i.e., feel sorrow over their loss of life and property).
2. Israel is not to serve their gods and neither are they to fear the Canaanites. If fear begins to settle in they are to remember the mighty works of God in Egypt (see study # 11).
3. Israel was to learn to put their faith in God at the most difficult times. Likewise, we too ought to look to God in difficult days and say *“I can do all things through him who strengthens me”* (Phil. 4:13)

B. *“Moreover Jehovah thy God will send the hornet among them, until they that are left, and hide themselves, perish from before thee. Thou shalt not be affrighted at them; for Jehovah thy God is in the midst of thee, a great God and a terrible. And Jehovah thy God will cast out those nations before thee by little and little: thou mayest not consume them at once, lest the beasts of the field increase upon thee. But Jehovah thy God will deliver them up before thee, and will discomfit them with a great discomfiture, until they be destroyed”* (7:20-23).

1. As Israel looked upon the great and mighty nations that lay before them they were to put their trust in Jehovah God. The Lord would *“send the hornet among them”* to destroy the Canaanites. Exodus 23:27-30 indicates that God would be with Israel by way of a hornet in that he would strike terror into all their enemies. The *“hornet”* sent by God was none other than His miraculous care for them. Joshua 24:12 states, *“And I sent the hornet before you, which drove them out from before you, even the two kings of the Amorites; not with thy sword, nor with thy bow. And I gave you a land whereon thou hadst not labored...”*
2. Little by little Canaan would be defeated. God would not overthrow them all at once lest the wild beasts take over the civilized areas and farms.

- C. *“And he will deliver their kings into thy hand, and thou shalt make their name to perish from under heaven: there shall no man be able to stand before thee, until thou have destroyed them. The graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire: thou shalt not covet the silver or the gold that is on them, nor take it unto thee, lest thou be snared therein; for it is an abomination to Jehovah thy God. And thou shalt not bring an abomination into thy house, and become a devoted thing like unto it: thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it is a **devoted thing**”* (7:24-26).
1. Moses delivers words designed to do two things to Israel. First, they are to gain confidence in God’s power to fulfill his loving promises to them. He will fight for them and they will be victorious as they keep his commandments.
 2. Secondly, Moses’ words were to instill an attitude in Israel in relationship to the wicked practices of the Canaanites. Rather than being curious and experimental with Canaan’s idolatry and riches Israel was to develop an attitude of hatred and disgust for those things *“devoted.”* A *“devoted”* (Heb. *herem*) thing was *“cursed, banned, forbidden, things that should be utterly destroyed... forbidden for common use”* (ISBE v. 1, pp. 940). Those things identified as unlawful such as foreign wives, graven images, and Canaanite gold and silver were to be abhorred and detested. Israel was to develop an attitude of hatred for the things that God had a hatred for. Likewise, Christians today are to abhor evil things (cf. Rom. 12:9) (see study # 20).

Chapter 8

I. God looks to man’s inward Heart (8 all):

- A. *“All the commandment which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live, and multiply, and go in and possess the land which Jehovah sware unto your fathers. And thou shalt remember all the way which Jehovah thy God hath led thee these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble thee, to prove thee, to know what was in thy heart, whether thou wouldst keep his commandments, or not. And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by everything that proceedeth out of the mouth of Jehovah doth man live. Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years. And thou shalt consider in thy heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so Jehovah thy God chasteneth thee”* (8:1-5).
1. Moses now reveals to Israel the lessons that Israel should have learned while wandering through the wilderness for forty years. God gave Israel commands in relation to entering Canaan yet they rebelled against God (cf. Num. 13-14). God responds at Number. 14:26ff by punishing Israel to wandering in the wilderness for forty years. During this time all those twenty years old and upward would die due to their disobedience.
 2. The survivors were to learn two valuable lessons:
 - a. First, Israel was to understand that God was humbling them through their trials of difficulty. When Israel was hungry God fed them with manna. When Israel was in need of clothing in a desert place God caused their garments not to wear out neither did their feet swell as a result of all the walking. Let us never get to the point in our lives where we feel that the blessings of life are attained and maintained at our own hands. Let us give God thanks for all good things we receive on this earth. Such an attitude of admittance of our need for God’s help is an act of faith on our part (cf. Acts 22:16; Heb. 2:17-18).
 - b. Secondly, Israel was to learn that man is not only sustained by physical bread but he is given spiritual sustenance by the word of God. Jesus made this statement when being tempted by Satan (cf. Matt. 4:4). Israel was thereby *“proved”* in the wilderness by being placed in difficult situations. When Israel ate manna for a lengthy period of time and when the way seemed so long and hard they were tempted to complain. God wanted to see what was in their heart. Were they grateful for His redeeming them out of Egyptian bondage? Did they truly believe that He was the one true God? People’s true character often comes

out in the most difficult days of life. We are often remembered for how we respond in various difficult situations. As we look back on our lives we may not like what we see. I may have expressed anger at a time when I should have been more patient. I may have said a discouraging word at a time that I should have been encouraging. I may have illustrated a spirit of selfishness at a time that I should have been selfless. God continues to prove people today by allowing us to experience difficult situations and watching how we handle them (see James 1:2ff). The man of faith shall exercise a spirit of gratefulness for the things God has blessed him with; he shall be patient, loving, merciful, and encouraging. Said man has his sights set on heaven. Obedience to God is favored over a desire for worldly comforts. The author of Hebrews, speaking of Christ, said, *“though he was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered”* (Heb. 5:8).

- c. God thereby *“chastened”* Israel with the forty years of proving and humbling them. A key to understanding this statement may be found at Hebrews 2:10 where the author states of Jesus, *“For it became him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.”* Jesus, like the Israelites, suffered much. Jesus’ suffering came at the hands of wicked men not of any wrong he had done but rather through the hardness of their hearts. The people of God suffered in the wilderness under the same principle as that of Jesus. Israel was chastened (i.e., made to be perfect, complete or mature) by God through their hunger and difficult times. They learned that God would give them aid and that he would see them through difficult days. Likewise the Christian today is chastened by God. We are to learn that God will sustain us and that he will see us through difficult days by the hope of eternal salvation. The process of humbling, proving, and chastising is an exercise in getting the mind to think in the right spiritual direction. The apostle Paul, writing of this time period in Israel’s history said, *“Now these things happened unto them by way of example; and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come”* (I Cor. 10:11). The word *“admonition”* = “to put in mind, warn, advise, to have one’s mind directed to something” (LS 535-36). The Christian undergoes various trials in life to direct their minds in a spiritual direction of trust and dependence upon the Lord for help now and forever.
 - B. *“And thou shalt keep the commandments of Jehovah thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him”* (8:6).
 1. Once again the fear of God is defined as obedience to God’s will (see study # 17).
 2. Moses had previously said this at Deuteronomy 5:29 and 6:1-3 and the principle is brought out in the NT at Titus 3:8; I Pet. 1:17.
 - C. *“For Jehovah thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing forth in valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, and vines and fig-trees and pomegranates; a land of olive-trees and honey; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack anything in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig copper. And thou shalt eat and be full, and thou shalt bless Jehovah thy God for the good land which he hath given thee. Beware lest thou forget Jehovah thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his ordinances, and his statutes, which I command thee this day: lest, when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; then thy heart be lifted up, and thou forget Jehovah thy God, who brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; who led thee through the great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents and scorpions, and thirsty ground where was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint; who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not; that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end:” (8:7-16).

 1. The facts are given. God will give Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey, to Israel. They will multiply in children, flocks, and wealth. God thereby warns them not to forget his commandments during these days of plenty.*

2. Israel was humbled (i.e., learned to trust in God) by way of being miraculously brought out of Egypt, surviving the terrible wilderness wherein serpents and scorpions bit them, they had no water, and no food. God proved them with these trials and provided their every need.
 3. Note, to be ungrateful for God's blessings is to "*lift up thy heart and forget Jehovah thy God.*" This is not hard to do. When things are hard on us we think about our need for God. When things are going well we tend to forget about the source of all blessings (i.e., God). To forget God is to not keep his commandments! To not keep God's commandments is to illustrate a lack of fear, faith, and gratefulness.
- D. "*and lest thou say in thy heart, My power and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth. But thou shalt remember Jehovah thy God, for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth; that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as at this day. And it shall be, if thou shalt forget Jehovah thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish. As the nations that Jehovah maketh to perish before you, so shall ye perish; because ye would not hearken unto the voice of Jehovah your God*" (8:17-20).
1. Moses warns Israel against a self sufficient attitude during these days of "*wealth.*" Israel was to remember their past how that God was responsible for their present as well as their future blessings.
 2. The day that Israel forgets God is the day that they were to perish. History reveals the very thing. Israel would later forget God and be invaded by the Babylonians (cf. Jer. 2:32; Hos. 4:6).

Lessons from Deuteronomy 7-8

- One of the great values of spending time studying the Old Testament is that we familiarize ourselves with New Testament themes and terms. Many New Testament doctrines have their roots in the Old Testament. When I study the Old Testament the deeper meaning of words such as "*covenant*" (cf. Deut. 5:1-3; Heb. 8:7; 9:1) and the "*fear*" (Deut. 5:29; 6:1-3; Titus 3:8; I Pet. 1:17) comes out.
- Deuteronomy 7 helps us understand better the subject of **redemption**. God made a promise to Israel's fathers (i.e., Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) that they would be a great nation, they would be given land (i.e., Canaan), and the seed of Abraham would bless all nations (eventually through the Christ in that he offers the forgiveness of sins to all mankind / see Deut. 7:7-8; Gal. 3:6-16). To keep the promise of making Israel a great nation God "*redeemed*" them "*out of the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt*" (Deut. 7:8). By God's great power He brought Israel out of Egypt and now they were a "*possession*" of God's rather than Pharaoh's (Deut. 7:6). The Christian is a redeemed man (or woman) today by the blood of Jesus Christ (see Gal. 3:13; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:20). When man is baptized into Christ for the remission of sins he has been redeemed by God through His Son's blood (see Heb. 9:14). By the blood of Christ we are now a "*possession*" of God's and a part of His kingdom the church (see Acts 20:28; I Cor. 6:20; 7:23). Those who are a "*possession*" of God's are to "*show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light*" (I Pet. 2:9). Now we are no longer in bondage to sin but rather a "*bondservant*" of God's through the redemption of the blood of Christ (I Pet. 1:18-19; 2:16). We thereby evidence our servitude to God by our obedience to His will (see Rom. 6:16) (see study # 19).
- God "*humbles*" (Deut. 8:2, 16) a man by letting him go hungry, thirsty, in need of clothing, and experience the harsh things of life such as "*fiery serpents and scorpions*" (Deut. 8:15) and then "*proves*" the man by providing all his needs (i.e., giving food, water, shelter, and relief from the pain of serpents and scorpions). When the humbling days of life are relived by God's blessings will the man continue in obedience to God and gain an understanding that we do "*not live by read only, but by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of Jehovah?*" (Deut. 8:3; Matt. 4:4). Or, will the blessed man "*say in his heart, My power and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth?*" (Deut. 8:17) Those who say such things fail to prosper from the "*chastening*" of God (Deut. 8:5). The heavenly Father chastens His people as sons that they may obey His commandments and thereby show forth fear toward Him (Deut. 8:6). Those who will not keep God's commands, in the face of blessings given, do not fear God and have altogether "*forgotten*" Him (Deut. 8:11) (see study # 21; God Chastens His People).

Chapter 9

I. Moses Catalogues Israel's Rebellion "*since the day I knew you*" (9 all):

- A. "*Hear, O Israel: thou art to pass over the Jordan this day, to go in to dispossess nations greater and mightier than thyself, cities great and fortified up to heaven, a people great and tall, the sons of the Anakim, whom thou knowest, and of whom thou hast heard say, Who can stand before the sons of Anak? Know therefore this day, that Jehovah thy God is he who goeth over before thee as a devouring fire; he will destroy them, and he will bring them down before thee: so shalt thou drive them out, and make them to perish quickly, as Jehovah hath spoken unto thee*" (9:1-3).
1. Moses has already reminded Israel of their failure to keep Jehovah's command to take possession of Canaan (see Deut. 1:21, 26). The first time Israel came to Canaan they sent out 12 spies into the land. The spies came back with the "*evil report*" of fortified cities and giants in the land (see Numb. 13:25-33).
 2. Moses now tells the people that they know full well what they face; however, they too know by faith that Jehovah has given this land unto the faithful (see Deut. 1:30).
 3. The command is thereby given again; i.e., go, possess Canaan.
- B. "*Speak not thou in thy heart, after that Jehovah thy God hath thrust them out from before thee, saying, For my righteousness Jehovah hath brought me in to possess this land; whereas for the wickedness of these nations Jehovah doth drive them out from before thee. Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thy heart, dost thou go in to possess their land; but for the wickedness of these nations Jehovah thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may establish the word which Jehovah sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob*" (9:4-5).
1. Why did God "give" Canaan to Israel? Time and time again they failed to do His will. Why?
 2. Was it because of Israel's righteous and just behavior? No, they were guilty of sin. Consider the days of Ezekiel. The prophet had foretold of a day when sinful man could receive the forgiveness of sins yet it would not be by any good thing that they had done (cf. Ezek. 36:20-31).
 3. Moses explains to Israel that God is giving Canaan to Israel not of any righteous act that they had done but rather for two other reasons:
 - a. First, Jehovah would use Israel to drive the Canaanites out of the land because they were a wicked people who were steeped in idolatry.
 - b. Secondly, God would give Canaan to Israel because He had made this promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
 4. Likewise, God does not "give" His "gift" of salvation to Christians today because they are a righteous people (cf. Rom. 3:23; I Jn. 1:8; Eph. 2:8) but rather because He loves man (see Deut. 7:6-7; Jn. 3:16) and has promised that all may be blessed with the forgiveness of sins (Gal. 3:6, 16; Eph. 1:7).
 5. The lesson is that we have truly fouled our lives up. God's love through redemption is our only hope. Though we have sinned He demands that we stop sinning, repent through a spirit of sorrow, and live in obedience to His will! His Son bears our sin upon the cruel cross (Heb. 9:28; I Pet. 2:24).
- C. "*Know therefore, that Jehovah thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiffnecked people. Remember, forget thou not, how thou provokedst Jehovah thy God to wrath in the wilderness: from the day that thou wentest forth out of the land of Egypt, until ye came unto this place, ye have been rebellious against Jehovah. Also in Horeb ye provoked Jehovah to wrath, and Jehovah was angry with you to destroy you*" (9:6-9).
1. Moses begins cataloguing all the times Israel, as a whole, acted with a rebellious and disobedient spirit against God's will. The term Moses uses is "*stiffnecked*."
 2. First, Moses reminds the people they had rebelled against Jehovah's will from the time that they had left Egypt even to the very moment that they were currently listening to Moses' second sermon in the plains of Moab.

3. Again, the natural mind wanders why God would bless such a rebellious people? Likewise, if God were to catalogue yours and my sin from the time we came of an age to know sin unto this present moment would He not find sin all the way through (see Deut. 9:24)? Why does God continue to bless me with the hope of salvation though I am a sinful man? How is it that God could “*give*” Canaan to such a wicked people? How is it that God “*gives*” man salvation today (Eph. 2:8)? The answer to this question seems to be the overall theme of Deuteronomy. Deuteronomy is a book that indicates man’s failure to keep God’s laws. A book that illustrates that God’s blessings were contingent upon their obedience. A book that illustrates God’s love for a people who continued to disappoint Him through disobedience. A book that illustrates that God fulfills His promises.
 4. Moses continues...
- D. *“When I was gone up into the mount to receive the tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant which Jehovah made with you, then I abode in the mount forty days and forty nights; I did neither eat bread nor drink water. And Jehovah delivered unto me the two tables of stone written with the finger of God; and on them was written according to all the words, which Jehovah speak with you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly. And it came to pass at the end of forty days and forty nights, that Jehovah gave me the two tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant. And Jehovah said unto me, Arise, get thee down quickly from hence; for thy people that thou hast brought forth out of Egypt have corrupted themselves; they are quickly turned aside out of the way which I commanded them; they have made them a molten image”* (9:10-12).
1. Moses reminds the people of the grave mistake of their for-fathers. The loving heavenly Father had redeemed them from Egypt and sustained them in their desert abode; however, they were ungrateful and sinned against the Lord.
 2. What makes such a wicked people so deserving of a land flowing with milk and honey? What makes you and I (the sinful filth that we are) so deserving of God’s mercy and forgiveness?
 3. The further we look into this subject matter the greater we understand the love of God for His created beings (see study # God’s Love for Man). Truly He is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance (II Pet. 3:9).
- E. *“Furthermore Jehovah spake unto me, saying, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people: let me alone, that I may destroy them, and blot out their name from under heaven; and I will make of thee a nation mightier and greater than they. So I turned and came down from the mount, and the mount was burning with fire: and the two tables of the covenant were in my two hands. And I looked, and, behold, ye had sinned against Jehovah your God; ye had made you a molten calf: ye had turned aside quickly out of the way which Jehovah had commanded you” (9:13-16).*
1. Moses had heard the noise but had not seen anything while upon Sinai receiving the law written on tables of stone. As Moses approaches the camp and views the chaos and molten calf he is horrified.
 2. Moses reminds the current generation that God had strictly forbid image worship yet they did it anyway through a spirit of rebellion (stiffnecked) (see Ex. 20:4, 22-23; Deut. 4:12-16). That which is proclaimed as law and then violated is termed sin (see I Jn. 3:4) (see study # 23; The Identity of Sin).
- F. *“And I took hold of the two tables, and cast them out of my two hands, and brake them before your eyes. And I fell down before Jehovah, as at the first, forty days and forty nights; I did neither eat bread nor drink water; because of all your sin which ye sinned, in doing that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, to provoke him to anger. For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure, wherewith Jehovah was wroth against you to destroy you. But Jehovah hearkened unto me that time also. And Jehovah was very angry with Aaron to destroy him: and I prayed for Aaron also at the same time. And I took your sin, the calf which ye had made, and burnt it with fire, and stamped it, grinding it very small, until it was as fine as dust: and I cast the dust thereof into the brook that descended out of the mount” (9:17-21).*

1. Horrified at the sight of Israel's grievous sin Moses cast the two tables of stone upon the ground breaking them before the people and then he falls upon his face in mourning (what have you done! What have you done...).
 2. Moses was greatly afraid of the anger and hot displeasure of Jehovah seeing that the people had sinned by making the calf (i.e., "*your sin, the calf*") (see study # 17). The prophet of God quickly takes the sinful image, burns it with fire, grinded it to small pieces as fine as dust, and cast the dust into the brook... Though a passionate hatred for the sinful deed was exercised by Moses and illustrated in his grinding the image to fine dust, he could not grind the image to a point of making it disappear. As badly as he would that this event did not take place he and all else had to face that it did (see study # 23).
 3. Moses' only alternative is to pray on behalf of the sinful people and Aaron that God would not destroy them.
- G. "*And at Taberah, and at Massah, and at Kibroth-hattaavah, ye provoked Jehovah to wrath. And when Jehovah sent you from Kadesh-barnea, saying, Go up and possess the land which I have given you; then ye rebelled against the commandment of Jehovah your God, and ye believed him not, nor hearkened to his voice. Ye have been rebellious against Jehovah from the day that I knew you*" (9:22-24).
1. No more thematic verse can be found to this point of our study than this one; i.e., "*Ye have been rebellious against Jehovah from the day that I knew you.*"
 2. Sin after sin is catalogued by Moses and reiterated in the hearing of the people (see Deut. 9:6-9). They were unfit and undeserving of God's gracious gift of Canaan. Consider the following places of sin (no particular order but recorded to expose the people's history of wickedness and undeserving ways of any of God's blessings):
 - c. Israel sinned at Taberah in that they murmured against the Lord not long after they had left Sinai (cf. Numb. 11:1-3).
 - d. Israel sinned at Massah in that they put God to the test by saying, "*Is Jehovah among us, or not?*" (Ex. 17:7). They were several weeks removed from Egypt and nearing Sinai when thirst hit them. Rather than praying to God about it they complained and blamed God for their misery. When they were about to stone Moses to death God intervened and gave them water from a rock.
 - e. Israel sinned at Kibrothhattaavah in that they were not satisfied with the manna God had blessed them with but rather "*lusted after flesh to eat*" (Numb. 11:4). God satisfied their lustful and ungrateful spirit by causing a great multitude of quail to fly into the camp. The lustful people began gathering the flesh, cooking, and eating it. While the flesh was chewed in their mouths God killed many with a great plague and the people were buried at Kibrothhattaavah (graves of lusts) (see Numb. 11:33-34).
 - f. Israel sinned at Kadesh-barnea in that they rebelliously refused to possess Canaan as God had commanded (Numb. 13:25-14:1ff).
- H. "*So I fell down before Jehovah the forty days and forty nights that I fell down, because Jehovah had said he would destroy you. And I prayed unto Jehovah, and said, O Lord Jehovah, destroy not thy people and thine inheritance, that thou hast redeemed through thy greatness, that thou hast brought forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand. Remember thy servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; look not unto the stubbornness of this people, nor to their wickedness, nor to their sin, lest the land whence thou broughtest us out say, Because Jehovah was not able to bring them into the land which he promised unto them, and because he hated them, he hath brought them out to slay them in the wilderness. Yet they are thy people and thine inheritance, which thou broughtest out by thy great power and by thine outstretched arm*" (9:25-29).
1. After the sin at Kadesh-barnea the Lord had determined to wipe out all Israel for their wicked and rebellious behavior. Moses falls down before Jehovah God and prays for forty days and forty nights on behalf of the people.
 2. Moses calls upon the Lord to remember the covenant made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that he may make Israel a great nation, give them a land to dwell in, and bless all nations through the seed of Abraham.

3. The Lord heard Moses' prayer and accepted it (see Numb. 14:20-24).
4. The great lesson we learn from chapter 9 is that God truly defines love (see I Jn. 4:7-11).

Chapter 10

I. The Love of God (10:1-13):

- A. *"At that time Jehovah said unto me, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first, and come up unto me into the mount, and make thee an ark of wood. And I will write on the tables the words that were on the first tables which thou brakest, and thou shalt put them in the ark. So I made an ark of acacia wood, and hewed two tables of stone like unto the first, and went up into the mount, having the two tables in my hand. And he wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the ten commandments, which Jehovah spake unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly: and Jehovah gave them unto me. And I turned and came down from the mount, and put the tables in the ark which I had made; and there they are as Jehovah commanded me"* (10:1-5).
 1. *"At that time"* the people remained at Sinai.
 2. It appears that Moses made a temporary ark to store the two new tables in until the Ark of the Covenant could be constructed and the testimony put therein (cf. Ex. 40:20).
- B. *"(And the children of Israel journeyed from Beeroth Bene-jaakan to Moserah. There Aaron died, and there he was buried; and Eleazar his son ministered in the priest's office in his stead. From thence they journeyed unto Gudgodah; and from Gudgodah to Jotbathah, a land of brooks of water. At that time Jehovah set apart the tribe of Levi, to bear the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, to stand before Jehovah to minister unto him, and to bless in his name, unto this day. Wherefore Levi hath no portion nor inheritance with his brethren; Jehovah is his inheritance, according as Jehovah thy God spake unto him.)"* (10:6-9).
 1. The fact that the priesthood was to remain in the seed of Aaron is proof that God forgave Aaron for his sin at Sinai.
 2. Aaron died at Mt. Hor (Numb. 20:28) for an entirely different sin (Numb. 20:6-13).
- C. *"And I stayed in the mount, as at the first time, forty days and forty nights: and Jehovah hearkened unto me that time also; Jehovah would not destroy thee. And Jehovah said unto me, Arise, take thy journey before the people; and they shall go in and possess the land, which I sware unto their fathers to **give unto them**. And now, Israel, what doth Jehovah thy God require of thee, but to fear Jehovah thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve Jehovah thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, to keep the commandments of Jehovah, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?"* (10:10-13).
 1. Moses communed with God a second time upon Mount Sinai as he received the second set of tables with the law written on them. He comes down and puts the tables into the ark and prepares the people to go in to Canaan and possess the land which God had *"sware unto their fathers to give unto them."* Time and time again Moses reminds Israel that the land of Canaan was God's *"gift"* to them. How many times does it take for this thought to be accepted by Israel? How many times will it take to be accepted by the denominational bodies today. God's gifts are conditioned upon our obedience to His sovereign will!
 2. God has a *"requirement"* in order to receive His gift of Canaan. God required that Israel would do four things (see study # 18):
 - a. First, the Lord required that Israel *"fear"* Him. Fear is evidenced in man through obedience to God's commands (see Deut. 5:29 and 6:1-3). To fear is to be aware of the fierce anger and wrath of God against law breakers. Moses had this fear (see Deut. 9:19) and so should we today (see study # 17).
 - b. Secondly, Jehovah demanded that Israel *"walk in all his ways."* To walk differently (i.e., unlawfully would only bring upon them the wrath of God as was the case many times before).
 - c. Thirdly, the Lord asks Israel to return *"love"* toward him. The people would evidence their love for God as they obeyed His commandments (see Deut. 7:9; Jn. 14:15). God earnestly

desired the people's affection. A father whose children have no affection for him is a man with a broken heart.

- d. Lastly, the Lord demanded that Israel would *“serve Jehovah thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, to keep the commandments of Jehovah, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good.”* Israel was no longer servants in Egypt but rather servants of God. The Lord had redeemed them from Egyptian bondage. They now belonged to Him. His request for these new bondservants was that they fear, love, serve, and obey His will.
3. This verse is quoted later by the prophet Micah at Micah 6:8. Solomon wrote that this was the whole duty of man (Eccl. 12:12-14). Moses had earlier said the same thing at Deuteronomy 6:4-5) and will go on to say it a multitude of other times in this book (see Deut. 10:20; 11:1, 13, 22 etc.). Again, this devotion to God in relation to His gift of Canaan is a thematic part of Deuteronomy.
4. Moses has thoroughly deflated the egos of the people in that he has reminded them of their sinful ways and helped them see that they have done nothing to deserve God's great blessings. Moses has also helped the people understand that though they are a sinful people God still loves them. His help will be available to those who would fear, love, serve, and obey.

II. The Identity of Jehovah God (10:14-22):

- A. *“Behold, unto Jehovah thy God belongeth heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth, with all that is therein. Only Jehovah had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all peoples, as at this day. Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked. For Jehovah your God, he is God of gods, and Lord of lords, the great God, the mighty, and the terrible, who regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward. He doth execute justice for the fatherless and widow, and loveth the sojourner, in giving him food and raiment”* (10:14-18).
 1. Jehovah God is Lord of all (see study # 14). He is the creator of all things and exercises His sovereign will over creation. He chooses one people to favor over another and makes His promises to all humanity. The Lord shows preference to no man but rather makes the distinction by good and evil. The Lord of all is the God of love and care (even for the travelers and poor).
 2. Seeing that God's attributes are good and desire for man eternally good man ought to cast off the stiffnecked ways of their past and serve him with all obedience. The phrase, *“Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart”* reminds us of Paul's statement to the Romans at Romans 2:28-29. Those able to cut out sin (unlawful practices) out of their lives gain the favor of God (see study # 20).
- B. *“Love ye therefore the sojourner; for ye were sojourners in the land of Egypt. Thou shalt fear Jehovah thy God; him shalt thou serve; and to him shalt thou cleave, and by his name shalt thou swear. He is thy praise, and he is thy God, that hath done for thee these great and terrible things, which thine eyes have seen. Thy fathers went down into Egypt with threescore and ten persons; and now Jehovah thy God hath made thee as the stars of heaven for multitude”* (10:19-22).
 1. All of Israel's love and trust was to be placed in the one true God. Israel was to cast off all unlawful living as the saint of God today (cf. Rom. 6:12-13).
 2. Seventy people went into Egypt and now they are a nation as God had promised (Gen. 12:1ff).

Lessons Learned from Deuteronomy 9 – 10

- The author of Hebrews tells us that the events of the Old Testament law (first covenant / cf. Heb. 8:7) are *“copies and shadows”* of the *“pattern”* revealed in the New Testament (i.e., the law of Christ) that helps man make it to heaven (i.e., be redeemed from the consequences of sin) (Heb. 8:5-7). As we look to the book of Deuteronomy we see the shadow or copy of the pattern of God's plan to redeem mankind from sin. Israel was *“redeemed”* from Egyptian bondage (Deut. 7:8) and were now God's *“possession”* (Deut. 7:6). God did not redeem Israel because of any special goodness on their part (Deut. 9:4-6) [Neither was Israel saved by their own power / cf. Deut. 8:17]. Moses catalogues Israel's sins from the time that they left Egypt and concludes by saying, *“Ye have been rebellious against Jehovah from the day that I knew you”* (Deut.

9:24). These chapters are mere shadows of the heavenly things to come. Christians today have been redeemed by the blood of Christ (I Pet. 1:18-19). We are no longer in bondage to sin (Jn. 8:34) but bondservants of God (I Pet. 2:16) and bound to obey His every command (Rom. 6:16). Did we live or conduct ourselves in any right and just way to deserve such a wonderful blessing? No! (see Ezek. 36:20-31; Rom. 3:23; 6:23; Eph. 2:8). Why then does God redeem sinners? God redeems sinners today for the same reason He redeemed Israel out of the bondage of Egypt. God loves us (see Deut. 7:8; I Jn. 4:10). Those who live by faith shall thereby be justified because God loves you (Rom. 3:27) (see study # 22).

- At chapter 10 we find that as bondservants who belong to God there is something “*required*” of Israel. Moses said that God required them to fear, love, and serve Jehovah “*with all thy heart and with all thy soul, to keep the commandments of Jehovah, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good*” (Deut. 10:12-13). To not fulfill God’s will after He has redeemed Israel from Egypt would be the utmost sign of ingratitude. Israel was thereby to “*cleave*” to God by fearing, loving, and serving Him (Deut. 10:20). Doing so would mean “*circumcising the foreskin of your heart, and being no more stiffnecked*” (Deut. 10:16). God continues to require cleaving, fearing, loving, and service (see Matt. 22:37). To be disobedient to God’s New Testament laws would be to disregard one’s salvation (see Heb. 3-4). Let us all thereby “*circumcise the foreskin of our hearts*” (Rom. 2:25-29) by cutting away sin in our lives.

Chapter 11

- I. **Israel’s command to love and obey God is based upon the fact that God has performed great miracles in their sight and He has promised them a productive land in Canaan (11:1-12):**
 - A. “*Therefore thou shalt love Jehovah thy God, and keep his charge, and his statutes, and his ordinances, and his commandments, always*” (11:1).
 1. This verse could easily go at the end of chapter ten. The point being that God chose Israel because He loved them and had made a promise to them through Abraham (Deut. 7:6-8). God redeemed Israel out of the bondage of Egypt (Deut. 7:8; 9:26). Though God had done so much for Israel they were rebellious against His will (Deut. 9:24). God’s will was that they fear, obey, love, and serve Him with all their heart (Deut. 10:12-13, 20). There were many Moses addressed who had seen the great works of Jehovah God in Egypt and beyond. They knew of the promise to make of Abraham a great nation and that God had fulfilled that promise (Deut. 10:22).
 2. Seeing “*therefore*” that God has done all these things for Israel Moses calls upon the people to “*love Jehovah thy God.*” Israel’s love for God would be made manifest by their keeping God’s laws always (cf. Jn. 14:15) (see study # 24; Do You Truly Love God?).
 - B. “*And know ye this day: for I speak not with your children that have not known, and that have not seen the chastisement of Jehovah your God, his greatness, his mighty hand, and his outstretched arm, and his signs, and his works, which he did in the midst of Egypt unto Pharaoh the king of Egypt, and unto all his land; and what he did unto the army of Egypt, unto their horses, and to their chariots; how he made the water of the Red Sea to overflow them as they pursued after you, and how Jehovah hath destroyed them unto this day; and what he did unto you in the wilderness, until ye came unto this place; and what he did unto Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, the son of Reuben; how the earth opened its mouth, and swallowed them up, and their households, and their tents, and every living thing that followed them, in the midst of all Israel: but your eyes have seen all the great work of Jehovah which he did*” (11:2-7).
 1. Israel should love Jehovah God because of all that they have seen with their eyes (their children had not seen what they saw).
 2. Jehovah’s miraculous care for Israel:
 - a. The Lord brought plagues upon Egypt and crippled them, though they were a mighty nation, for Israel’s sake.
 - b. The pursuing army of Pharaoh was destroyed by Jehovah in the Red Sea (what a sight this must have been!).
 - c. Israel wandered through the wilderness for forty years. God miraculously cared for Israel during these years by providing them with manna, quail, and water.

- d. Israel witnessed the miraculous consequences of rebellion against Jehovah's sovereign will when Korah and the sons of Reuben desired the priesthood (Numbers 16:1ff). The Lord opened the earth and swallowed the rebellious up in the sight of all Israel.
- C. *"Therefore shall ye keep all the commandment which I command thee this day, that ye may be strong, and go in and possess the land, whither ye go over to possess it; and that ye may prolong your days in the land, which Jehovah sware unto your fathers to **give unto them** and to their seed, a land flowing with **milk and honey**. For the land, whither thou goest in to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs; but the land, whither ye go over to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven, a land which Jehovah thy God careth for: the eyes of Jehovah thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year"* (11:8-12).
1. Seeing that God has performed many miraculous and fearful miracles before the eyes of Israel they ought to *"keep all the commandments which I command thee this day."*
 2. Furthermore, those who keep the commandments of God will have the promised land to look forward to. A land *"flowing with milk and honey."* A land that is totally different than the arid climate of Egypt. Canaan is a place that God cares for and sends rain upon it that it may produce much fruit for its inhabitants.

II. God's Gifts are Conditioned upon man's Obedience (11:13-32):

- A. *"And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love Jehovah your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul, that I will give the rain of your land in its season, the former rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy grain, and thy new wine, and thine oil. And I will give grass in thy fields for thy cattle, and thou shalt eat and be full"* (11:13-15).
1. A timeless principle is delivered to Israel by Moses. When people do God's will He will bless them (see study # 3). Moses explains to Israel that if they will indeed love, serve, and obey the Lord then the blessings of rain which produce grain, new wine, and oil will be theirs. Moses is careful to keep God's charge and requirements before Israel (see Deut. 10:12-13).
 2. A great example of this type of blessing is found in the books of Haggai and Zechariah. Haggai explained to the people that the blessing of rain and fruitful earth had been withheld from them because they had not followed God's command to build the temple (see Haggai 1:7-11; Ezra 1:1-2; 6:14). The blessings of rain and fruitful ground continued to be withheld from Israel (Haggai 2:15-17) as long as their hearts remained as an adamant stone in sin (Zech. 7:12). Zechariah uses Israel's rebellion to make an illustration regarding the blessings of obedience for future generations. Jesus would one day come into the world (Zech. 3:6-8; 9:9). The blessings of obedience through Jesus would be *"fountains"* of water (Zech. 13:1) from his *"pierced"* body (Zech. 12:10). These *"living waters"* (Zech. 14:8) would bless the people by cleansing their sins (Zech. 13:1). Said blessings of living waters shall ever be supplied by the *"King over all the earth"* (Zech. 14:9).
 3. What should I get from these passages? I should understand that God's will must be followed and when it is one may expect blessings. Under the Mosaic system it would be the physical blessings of water and fruitful earth. Under the law of Christ it would be the blessings of having one's sins forgiven. Again, let us recall the fact that the first covenant is simply a copy or shadow of the heavenly things (see Hebrews 8). We are gaining greater understanding in the themes and terms of the New Testament by studying the Old Testament.
- B. *"Take heed to yourselves, lest your heart be deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them; and the anger of Jehovah be kindled against you, and he shut up the heavens, so that there shall be no rain, and the land shall not yield its fruit; and ye perish quickly from off the good land which Jehovah giveth you"* (11:16-17).
1. Moses gives a grave warning to Israel. A *"deceived"* heart is one that has given ear and acceptance to a set of standards that affront the divine revealed will of God. When man *"turns away"* from divine revelation to serve another system he or she has *"kindled the anger of Jehovah."* The results are as mentioned above; i.e., a withholding of the blessings of God.

2. The apostle Paul wrote, *“Wherefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry”* (I Cor. 10:14). The word *“idolatry”* (*eidololatreia*) is from the root word *eido* and Latin *Video*. It is defined as “a form, shape, figure; image or statue; hence, an idol, image of a god” (Moulton 117). The word *eido* is used in II Cor. 5:7, *“for we walk by faith, not by sight.”* Liddell and Scott define *eido* as “to see, perceive, behold” (227). The act of worshipping an image based upon human perception is idolatry. The Christian does not worship based upon *“sight (eido)”* but upon *“faith”* (divine revelation). Many today are looking for a feel good see something religion. The word of God; however, is a system of instructions for Godly living. Though the immediate context of I Corinthians 8-10 is eating meats that have been sacrificed to false gods by means of worship, there is other *“idolatry”* that ought to be considered. Idolatry comes in a variety of forms other than worshipping false gods. One may exclaim with vigor that they would not participate in idolatry, yet have no problem with worshipping God in unauthorized ways. Consider Isaiah 46:12 in its context of idolatry. Those idolaters of Judah were *“stouthearted, that are far from righteousness.”* I Samuel 15:23 states the nature of idolatry as well. *“For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as idolatry and teraphim. Because thou has rejected the word of Jehovah, he hath also rejected thee from being king.”* The rebellious are stouthearted and stubborn as is evidenced by their rejection of the authority of God. Saul did what he thought was best rather than what God commanded and so it was with Judah in the days of Isaiah. Many today want to do what they think best rather than following God’s divine standard. Children’s church, theatrics, food fest, and games to name a few are ways some churches are attempting to raise attendance (see appendix # 50; Modern Idolatry). The admonition is to *“flee”* from this way of life and thinking and follow only the divine standard of God’s word. *The word *“wherefore”* takes into consideration all of the sins of Israel mentioned in I Corinthians 10:1-13 and therefore idolatry is associated with unauthorized practices.
 - C. *“Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul; and ye shall bind them for a sign upon your hand, and they shall be for frontlets between your eyes. And ye shall teach them your children, talking of them, when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thy house, and upon thy gates; that your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which Jehovah sware unto your fathers to give them, as the days of the heavens above the earth”* (11:18-21).
 1. Recall that Moses had said that these children had not seen what the adults had seen (i.e., the miraculous care that God displayed toward Israel) (see Duet. 11:2). In order to have the younger generation attain the same faith as their parents they would need to see, through their parent’s instructions, the miraculous care of God. Their faith would be established by their parent’s instructions. Moses illustrates the importance of this teaching by instructing the parents to talk to their children at every opportunity about the marvelous God they serve. Children were to see the importance of God’s laws in their parent’s everyday life. At times when they sat at the house, walked along the way somewhere, wake up in the morning, lay down at night they were to see and hear of the word of God. When the children came into their house they were to see and hear of God and when they entered or left the city they lived in they were to hear of God. The blessings of obedience and the curses of disobedience was at stake. To be more precise let us say that the eternity of their souls were at stake.
 2. What about us today? We, as parents, want desperately for our children to attain the level of faith that we have. Often our children go astray and do things which would indicate a heart that is as an adamant stone against the commandments of God. We must asks ourselves... are we teaching them God’s will and the importance of God when they wake up, go to sleep, when they walk to and fro, and when they sit in the house. Are we teaching our children as we go out of town and when we enter into the city of our residence? If God is not important to you in your life then it is very probable that you and I will not be teaching our children at every opportune time. The result... God will not be important in the lives of our children (see study # 25; Teach Your Children the Bible).

- D. *“For if ye shall diligently keep all this commandment which I command you, to do it, to love Jehovah your God, to walk in all his ways, and to cleave unto him; then will Jehovah drive out all these nations from before you, and ye shall dispossess nations greater and mightier than yourselves. Every place whereon the sole of your foot shall tread shall be yours: from the wilderness, and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the hinder sea shall be your border. There shall no man be able to stand before you: Jehovah your God shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that ye shall tread upon, as he hath spoken unto you”* (11:22-25).
1. Once again Moses puts before them God’s requirement of keeping His commandments, loving Him, and cleaving unto him (see Deut. 11:13; 10:12, 13, 20). Over and over again Moses confirms the idea of God’s gifts being conditions upon man’s obedience! (see study # 3).
 2. The blessings of such cleaving is that God would:
 - a. Drive out other nations that are greater and mightier.
 - b. Expand their borders.
 - c. Put fear into their enemies.
- E. *“Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse: the blessing, if ye shall hearken unto the commandments of Jehovah your God, which I command you this day; and the curse, if ye shall not hearken unto the commandments of Jehovah your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known. And it shall come to pass, when Jehovah thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, that thou shalt set the blessing upon mount Gerizim, and the curse upon mount Ebal. Are they not beyond the Jordan, behind the way of the going down of the sun, in the land of the Canaanites that dwell in the Arabah, over against Gilgal, beside the oaks of Moreh? For ye are to pass over the Jordan to go in to possess the land which Jehovah your God giveth you, and ye shall possess it, and dwell therein. And ye shall observe to do all the statutes and the ordinances which I set before you this day”* (11:26-32).
1. Moses reiterates the previous teaching. Those who obey God may expect His blessings those who disobey God’s laws can expect His curse (i.e., a withholding of blessings) (the same is so today).
 2. When Israel crosses the Jordan to possess the land of Canaan God instructs them to remember these instructions. They are to make a memorial regarding this principle upon mount Gerizim (blessings) and Ebal (curses).

Chapter 12

- I. **Moses Commands Israel to destroy all forms of idolatry when they enter Canaan (12 all):**
- A. *“These are the statutes and the ordinances which ye shall observe to do in the land which Jehovah, the God of thy fathers, hath given thee to possess it, all the days that ye live upon the earth. Ye shall surely destroy all the places wherein the nations that ye shall dispossess served their gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree: and ye shall break down their altars, and dash in pieces their pillars, and burn their Asherim with fire; and ye shall hew down the graven images of their gods; and ye shall destroy their name out of that place”* (12:1-3).
1. Rather than being deceived and turning aside from Jehovah to serve the gods of Canaan and incurring the anger of the Lord Israel is commanded to destroy all the places of heathen worship (see Deut. 11:16-17).
 2. The Lord commands Israel to destroy the altars upon the high mountains, hills, and under the green trees. They are to burn and hew them to the ground. Israel was to utterly destroy the names of these heathen gods out of the land.
- B. *“Ye shall not do so unto Jehovah your God. But unto the place which Jehovah your God shall choose out of all your tribes, to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come; and thither ye shall bring your burnt-offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and the heave-offering of your hand, and your vows, and your freewill-offerings, and the firstlings of your herd and of your flock: and there ye shall eat before Jehovah your God, and ye*

shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein Jehovah thy God hath blessed thee” (12:4-7).

1. While Israel was to destroy the name of Canaan deities out of the land they were to establish the name of Jehovah.
 2. The Canaan deities and places of worship were strung out all over the land. Jehovah; however, would be worshipped and served at one location of the Lord’s choosing (i.e., Jerusalem).
- C. *“Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes; for ye are not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance, which Jehovah thy God giveth thee. But when ye go over the Jordan, and dwell in the land which Jehovah your God causeth you to inherit, and he giveth you rest from all your enemies round about, so that ye dwell in safety; then it shall come to pass that to the place which Jehovah your God shall choose, to cause his name to dwell there, thither shall ye bring all that I command you: your burnt-offerings, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave-offering of your hand, and all your choice vows which ye vow unto Jehovah. And ye shall rejoice before Jehovah your God, ye, and your sons, and your daughters, and your men-servants, and your maid-servants, and the Levite that is within your gates, forasmuch as he hath no portion nor inheritance with you” (12:8-12).*
1. The great blessings of Canaan, the land flowing with milk and honey, shall be Israel’s inheritance. Israel shall experience peace from their enemies.
 2. Again, Moses reiterates the fact that God would choose a place *“to cause his name to dwell there.”*
- D. *“Take heed to thyself that thou offer not thy burnt-offerings in every place that thou seest; but in the place which Jehovah shall choose in one of thy tribes, there thou shalt offer thy burnt-offerings, and there thou shalt do all that I command thee. Notwithstanding, thou mayest kill and eat flesh within all thy gates, after all the desire of thy soul, according to the blessing of Jehovah thy God which he hath given thee: the unclean and the clean may eat thereof, as of the gazelle, and as of the hart. Only ye shall not eat the blood; thou shalt pour it out upon the earth as water. Thou mayest not eat within thy gates the tithe of thy grain, or of thy new wine, or of thine oil, or the firstlings of thy herd or of thy flock, nor any of thy vows which thou vowest, nor thy freewill-offerings, nor the heave-offering of thy hand; but thou shalt eat them before Jehovah thy God in the place which Jehovah thy God shall choose, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, and the Levite that is within thy gates: and thou shalt rejoice before Jehovah thy God in all that thou puttest thy hand unto” (12:13-18).*
1. Israel is solemnly warned not to make sacrifices to Jehovah God in places other than the *“place which Jehovah shall choose in one of thy tribes.”* Canaan served a multiplicity of gods whereas Israel shall serve the one true God. His place shall He choose and that one place will be where Israel worships and sacrifices.
 2. Israel was enabled to eat the good of the land in their homelands; however, when they made vows or offerings of thanksgiving to the Lord they were to eat it before Him in the one place of God’s choosing (i.e., Jerusalem). All acts of worship were to be done at the one place for the one God.
- E. *“Take heed to thyself that thou forsake not the Levite as long as thou livest in thy land. When Jehovah thy God shall enlarge thy border, as he hath promised thee, and thou shalt say, I will eat flesh, because thy soul desireth to eat flesh; thou mayest eat flesh, after all the desire of thy soul. If the place which Jehovah thy God shall choose, to put his name there, be too far from thee, then thou shalt kill of thy herd and of thy flock, which Jehovah hath given thee, as I have commanded thee; and thou mayest eat within thy gates, after all the desire of thy soul. Even as the gazelle and as the hart is eaten, so thou shalt eat thereof: the unclean and the clean may eat thereof alike. Only be sure that thou eat not the blood: for the blood is the life; and thou shalt not eat the life with the flesh. Thou shalt not eat it; thou shalt pour it out upon the earth as water. Thou shalt not eat it; that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, when thou shalt do that which is right in the eyes of Jehovah. Only thy holy things which thou hast, and thy vows, thou shalt take, and go unto the place which Jehovah shall choose: and thou shalt offer thy burnt-offerings, the flesh and*

the blood, upon the altar of Jehovah thy God; and the blood of thy sacrifices shall be poured out upon the altar of Jehovah thy God; and thou shalt eat the flesh” (12:19-27).

1. Moses reminds Israel not to forget the Levite in that he has no inheritance of land and is to thereby be dependant upon the offerings of the people for sustenance as he labors at the tabernacle.
 2. Again, for the fifth and sixth time, Moses alludes to the “*place which Jehovah thy God shall choose, to put his name there...*” Israel would be bound to worship the Lord and provide the Levite with sustenance there rather than any other place.
- F. “*Observe and hear all these words which I command thee, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee for ever, when thou doest that which is good and right in the eyes of Jehovah thy God. When Jehovah thy God shall cut off the nations from before thee, whither thou goest in to dispossess them, and thou dispossessest them, and dwellest in their land; take heed to thyself that thou be not ensnared to follow them, after that they are destroyed from before thee; and that thou inquire not after their gods, saying, How do these nations serve their gods? Even so will I do likewise. Thou shalt not do so unto Jehovah thy God: for every abomination to Jehovah, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters do they burn in the fire to their gods. What thing soever I command you, that shall ye observe to do: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it” (12:28-32).*
1. The people of God were to be a distinctive and holy people (see Deut. 7:6). The distinctive people of God would hear and obey the will of Jehovah God alone (not their own will / Deut. 12:8 or the will of the Canaanites / Deut. 12:30). The temptation will be to follow these ways and thereby Moses warns the people by saying, “*take heed...*” (Deut. 12:30; see also Deut. 11:16).
 2. One horrid distinction between God’s people and the people of Canaan was their worship. Some of the Canaanites had no problem sacrificing their own children in fire to their supposed deities. Said act was an abomination to God and thereby Moses commands, “*what thing soever I command you, that shall ye observe to do: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it”* (see also comments at Deut. 4:2).

Lessons Learned from Deuteronomy 11-12

- Let us focus on the shadows and copies mentioned at Heb. 8. God’s blessings of Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey (Deut. 11:9), would belong to Israel as they kept God’s commands (Deut. 11:26-28). The conditions of obedience have ever and continue to be God’s “requirement” for man to receive blessings (Deut. 11:22ff; Rom. 6:16ff). Moses delivers these “*requirement*” statements five times in Deuteronomy chapters 10-11 (see 10:12-13, 20; 11:1, 13, 22). God requires no less from us today (see Matt. 22:36-40; I Pet. 2:17) (see study # 3; # 18).
- Secondly we see the motivation for obeying the will of God. God fulfills His promises (Deut. 10:22), loves (Deut. 7:8), and cares for His people (Deut. 11:27). Nothing has changed! God continues to fulfill His promise to save man from their sins (Acts 2:38ff), to love (I Jn. 4:10), and care for man (I Pet. 5:7) (see study # 26; What Motivates the Christian to Obey God?).
- The third lesson we learn is that if we want our children to develop the faith in God that we have we must teach them the value of truth (see Eph. 6:1ff). Moses tells the Israelites that the children had not seen the mighty works of God and thereby it was up to the parents to teach them all about God (see Deut. 11:2, 18ff). Parents will show their children how important God is to them and nurture a similar faith in them if they will take the time to teach them at every opportunity.
- The last lesson we learn from Deuteronomy 11-12 is that God has no divine rivals. The gods of wood and stone do not exist. The Israelites were warned that the people of Canaan worshiped various deities under every green tree, hill, and mountain top (Deut. 12:2). God’s command was that Israel would destroy their name out of those places by dashing in pieces and burning (see Deut. 12:3). The Lord God Almighty was different than the multitudes of presumed deities not only in the fact that He was alive but that He was to be served in only one place (i.e., Jerusalem). Moses tells the people six times in chapter 12 that the Lord would “*put his name*” in a designated “*place*” (Deut. 12:5, 11, 14, 18, 21, and 26). This one place, as opposed to

the multitude of places, indicated the oneness of the true God. Today, there are denominational bodies under every figurative “green tree, hill, and mountain top” of our city (i.e., many streets). These denominations practice abominations which God hates (Deut. 12:31). The Christian is to be careful not to be led astray by these false religions (Deut. 12:29-32) (see I Cor. 1:10; I Jn. 2:26ff) (see study # 27; Denominationalism).

Chapter 13

I. Moses warns against False Prophets (13:1-5):

- A. *“If there arise in the midst of thee a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and he give thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or unto that dreamer of dreams: for Jehovah your God proveth you, to know whether ye love Jehovah your God with all your heart and with all your soul”* (13:1-3).
1. When Israel enters Canaan to possess it they would find false gods under the green trees and on top of the hills and mountain tops (Deut. 12:2ff). God instructed them to destroy every one of these abominations. With the subject of false gods before the people Moses naturally moves on to individuals who would represent false words that did not add up to the doctrine revealed by Moses. Moses had instructed that no man add or take away from God’s divine revelation; however, he knew that such men would arise (Deut. 4:2; 12:32). Moses writes this chapter to instruct God’s people on how to deal with such an individual.
 2. If a prophet were to make a prediction and that prediction come to pass the people may be curious and apt to listen to the man. Their listening; however, was to stop once he began to speak words that contradicted the Law delivered by Moses at Sinai. The dreams of the prophet have originated in the mind of man and not God.
 3. Note that God is “*proving*” Israel with such events. We had learned earlier that God proves man by allowing him to suffer through hardships and seeing whether one would turn to God for help or not (see Deut. 8:2-4, 15-16). The Lord allowed hardships and false teaching to see who it was that would truly love Him with all their heart and soul. This loving with the heart and soul is a reoccurring thought of God’s (see Deut. 10:12, 20-21; 11:1, 13, 22). The divine principle of loving God and keeping His commandments alone are inseparably connected from the beginnings of God’s people (see Jn. 14:15). Through trials, hardships of life, and false teaching God will make one’s love or lack thereof manifest (see study # 21).
- B. *“Ye shall walk after Jehovah your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him. And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death, because he hath spoken rebellion against Jehovah your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of bondage, to draw thee aside out of the way which Jehovah thy God commanded thee to walk in. So shalt thou put away the evil from the midst of thee”* (13:4-5).
1. Let us recall that one of the great themes of these first five books of the Bible is that God’s blessings are contingent upon man’s obedience to His laws. One who would cause another to stray from the commandments of Jehovah God has caused that soul to loose out on God’s blessings. This is thereby a serious matter. The Lord demands that His people obey, serve, and cleave to Him alone!
 2. Those who truly love God will illustrate that love by taking the man or woman who has spoken falsely and put him to death. Why?
 - a. Because “*he has spoken rebellion against Jehovah your God.*” Moses spoke of the seriousness of rebellion against God’s will at Deuteronomy 1:26, 43. Israel had refused to keep God’s word in relation to taking possession of Canaan and thereby they were sentenced to wander in the wilderness for forty years. The word rebellion is defined as to “refuse allegiance to... to resist or defy an authority... to feel or express strong unwillingness ... an act or show of defiance...” (AHD 1031). When one gives heed (ear,

obedience, or acceptance) to the rebellious teacher he has joined in the resistance of the Holy Spirit (see Acts 7:51; II Jn. 9-11).

- b. The rebellious teacher is put in comparison to God. The Lord had redeemed Israel out of the house of bondage with great power. The great God has delivered them because of His love (Deut. 7:8). God wants the best for people yet the false prophet seeks to ruin man's potential blessings by "*drawing one aside out of the way which Jehovah commanded them to walk.*" Jesus (Matt. 7:15ff), Paul (Phil. 3:2), Peter (II Pet. 2:1ff), and John (I Jn. 2:26) all warned against false teachers who would bring a different and misleading doctrine (see study # 28; False Teachers).
- c. Israel was commanded to "*put the evil away from in the midst of thee.*" False teachers of all generations were to be exposed and dealt with rather than letting them alone. We recall that Elijah commanded that they all be gathered up and slaughtered at I Kings 18:40. Under the NT we do not put to death the false prophet but we certainly expose their teachings as error (Eph. 5:11; II Tim. 2:16-18), give them no place in the church or mind (II Jn. 9-11), and avoid (Titus 3:10-11). Said actions will put away the evil from the midst of us today. Note, that if we cannot identify such an individual as a false teacher, as some say and practice, how can we ever avoid the individual? Again, Moses was not too concerned about the false prophet's character. Moses was not too concerned about how nice the guy was. If he (or she) taught error they were to be killed. Below, we see that it did not matter if this erroneous teacher was one's wife or own children. No sympathy was to be exercised toward them at all (see study # 28).

II. Moses warns against Family members who would lead one astray from truth (13:6-11):

A. "*If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, that is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which thou hast not known, thou, nor thy fathers; of the gods of the peoples that are round about you, nigh unto thee, or far off from thee, from the one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth; thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him: but thou shalt surely kill him; thy hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people*" (13:6-9).

1. What if this false prophet was a member of your personal family? What if this erroneous teacher was your wife, son, or daughter? Would you put your love of God above the love you have for your family members? Jesus said, "*He that loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me*" (Matt. 10:37-38). Many are willing to label the false teacher and avoid such a one as long as it does not affect their immediate household. Jehovah reveals to Moses that not even family members who bring a different teaching are to be given place.
2. Rather than tolerating, accepting, or even following these family member's false teaching the people of God were to:
 - a. Not give consent to him.
 - b. Not hearken unto him.
 - c. Thine eye shall not pity him.
 - d. Thou shalt not spare.
 - e. Neither shalt thou conceal.
 - f. Thou shalt surely kill him.
 - g. My hand should be the first upon my false teaching wife, children, etc.
 - h. Then all the people should with one mind lay their hands upon the false teacher to kill him.

B. "*And thou shalt stone him to death with stones, because he hath sought to draw thee away from Jehovah thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. And all Israel shall hear, and fear, and shall do not more any such wickedness as this is in the midst of thee*" (13:10-11).

1. Let us recall that Jehovah is proving His people with such teachers. Will you love your family members more than God? He is watching.

2. The blessings of obedience certainly far outweigh the temporary love and experiences of this life. When all of Israel is united in their love for God's divine revelation and act as a unit to stamp out the wicked teachers then all shall have fear in relation to bringing a doctrine that perverts the law of God.
3. These false teachers had the potential of causing one to loose out on God's redemptive blessing of Canaan just like said teachers can cause us to loose out on heaven. Moses did not say expose the erroneous teaching yet leave the teacher alone and concealed. These erroneous teachers were to be identified and done away with that no one else be infected with their disease of selfish pride and erroneous teaching.

III. **A town that draws away the inhabitants of another town with erroneous teaching (13:12-18):**

A. *"If thou shalt hear tell concerning one of thy cities, which Jehovah thy God giveth thee to dwell there, saying, Certain base fellows are gone out from the midst of thee, and have drawn away the inhabitants of their city, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which ye have not known; then shalt thou inquire, and make search, and ask diligently; and, behold, if it be truth, and the thing certain, that such abomination is wrought in the midst of thee, thou shalt surely smite the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, destroying it utterly, and all that is therein and the cattle thereof, with the edge of the sword"* (13:12-15).

1. Here Moses deals not with one but a plurality of erroneous teachers (i.e., "*base fellows*").
2. If a group of false prophets were to seduce an entire city to follow their wicked ways then the child of God was to act:
 - a. First, when the faithful heard of the event they were to inquire more about the story, make a search of the information, and ask diligently about the matter to many sources.
 - b. If the story is found to be true; i.e., an entire group of people from a city has been drawn away by these teachers, then the child of God was to act further.
 - c. The inhabitants of the city were to be utterly destroyed along with their cattle.

B. *"And thou shalt gather all the spoil of it into the midst of the street thereof, and shalt burn with fire the city, and all the spoil thereof every whit, unto Jehovah thy God: and it shall be a heap for ever; it shall not be built again. And there shall cleave nought of the devoted thing to thy hand; that Jehovah may turn from the fierceness of his anger, and show thee mercy, and have compassion upon thee, and multiply thee, as he hath sworn unto thy fathers; when thou shalt hearken to the voice of Jehovah thy God, to keep all his commandments which I command thee this day, to do that which is right in the eyes of Jehovah thy God"* (13:16-18).

1. After the city of false teachers and worshippers is destroyed the faithful are to gather all the spoils of that city into the middle of the street and burn it with fire (the whole city with its spoils). God then commands that such a place never be rebuilt.
2. No righteous man or woman was to take of the "*devoted thing to thy hand.*" We have discussed the "devoted thing" at Deuteronomy 7:25-26. There, Moses instructed the people saying rather than being curious and experimental with Canaan's idolatry and riches Israel was to develop an attitude of hatred and disgust for those things "*devoted.*" A "*devoted*" (Heb. *herem*) thing was "cursed, banned, forbidden, things that should be utterly destroyed... forbidden for common use" (ISBE v. 1, pp. 940). Those things identified as unlawful such as foreign wives and graven images were to be abhorred and detested. Israel was to develop an attitude of hatred for the things that God had a hatred for. Likewise, Christians today are to abhor evil things (cf. Rom. 12:9). The point here is that the people of God were to have disgust and hatred over the things the false teacher taught (should we do any less today?) (see study # 20).

Chapter 14

I. **The Sanctified child of God (14 all):**

A. *"Ye are the children of Jehovah your God: ye shall not cut yourselves, nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead. For thou art a holy people unto Jehovah thy God, and Jehovah*

hath chosen thee to be a people for his own possession, above all peoples that are upon the face of the earth” (14:1-2).

1. To further sanctify the people from the surrounding idolatrous nations the Lord commanded through Moses that they not “*cut themselves*” or “*make any baldness between their eyes for the dead.*” Apparently there was a practice among the heathen of doing these things in connection with their idolatrous belief system.
 2. Israel was to abstain from any activities that mirrored the heathen people of their day. Moses reminds Israel that they are a sanctified “*holy people*” (in relation to the standard they represent and follow) (see Lev. 11:44). Said holy people belong to God as His “*possession*” due to the fact that He had redeemed them from the bondage of Egypt (Deut. 7:6-8) (see study # 19).
 3. The Christian today is also to be holy (I Pet. 1:15-16) because we too are God’s possession (I Pet. 2:9) through His redeeming us from the bondage of sin with the precious blood of Jesus (I Pet. 1:18-19).
- B.** “*Thou shalt not eat any abominable thing. These are the beasts which ye may eat: the ox, the sheep, and the goat, the hart, and the gazelle, and the roebuck, and the wild goat, and the pygarg, and the antelope, and the chamois. And every beast that parteth the hoof, and hath the hoof cloven in two, [and] cheweth the cud, among the beasts, that may ye eat. Nevertheless these ye shall not eat of them that chew the cud, or of them that have the hoof cloven: the camel, and the hare, and the coney; because they chew the cud but part not the hoof, they are unclean unto you. And the swine, because he parteth the hoof but cheweth not the cud, he is unclean unto you: of their flesh ye shall not eat, and their carcasses ye shall not touch. These ye may eat of all that are in the waters: whatsoever hath fins and scales may ye eat; and whatsoever hath not fins and scales ye shall not eat; it is unclean unto you. Of all clean birds ye may eat. But these are they of which ye shall not eat: the eagle, and the gier-eagle, and the ospray, and the glede, and the falcon, and the kite after its kind, and every raven after its kind, and the ostrich, and the night-hawk, and the sea-mew, and the hawk after its kind, the little owl, and the great owl, and the horned owl, and the pelican, and the vulture, and the cormorant, and the stork, and the heron after its kind, and the hoopoe, and the bat. And all winged creeping things are unclean unto you: they shall not be eaten. Of all clean birds ye may eat. Ye shall not eat of anything that dieth of itself: thou mayest give it unto the sojourner that is within thy gates, that he may eat it; or thou mayest sell it unto a foreigner: for thou art a holy people unto Jehovah thy God. Thou shalt not boil a kid in its mother's milk” (14:3-21).*
1. Israel was further sanctified from the nations by the animals they ate and did not eat.
 2. Moses reiterates the list that was given at Leviticus 11.
- C.** “*Thou shalt surely tithe all the increase of thy seed, that which cometh forth from the field year by year. And thou shalt eat before Jehovah thy God, in the place which he shall choose, to cause his name to dwell there, the tithe of thy grain, of thy new wine, and of thine oil, and the firstlings of thy herd and of thy flock; that thou mayest learn to fear Jehovah thy God always” (14:22-23).*
1. Moses reminds Israel of their responsibility to tithe (give a tenth) of their increase (cf. Lev. 27:30; Numb. 18:21ff).
 2. Once again Moses reveals that there will be one place (as opposed to the many of the heathens of Canaan) to worship God (see the six times this is mentioned at Deut. 12).
 3. A tithe of the blessings of grain, oil, and new wine (i.e., grape juice from the fruit of the vine) was to be given to the Lord at the designated place as a thank offering.
 4. Doing these things would prove that Israel loved and feared Jehovah thy God.
- D.** “*And if the way be too long for thee, so that thou art not able to carry it, because the place is too far from thee, which Jehovah thy God shall choose, to set his name there, when Jehovah thy God shall bless thee; then shalt thou turn it into money, and bind up the money in thy hand, and shalt go unto the place which Jehovah thy God shall choose: and thou shalt bestow the money for whatsoever thy soul desireth, for oxen, or for sheep, or for wine, or for strong drink, or for whatsoever thy soul asketh of thee; and thou shalt eat there before Jehovah thy God, and thou shalt rejoice, thou and thy household” (14:24-26).*

1. Moses gives consolatory advice for those who would live too far from Jehovah's prescribed place of worship to bring their tithes. These individuals may sell their blessings and get money for them. They were to take this money to the place of God's choosing (designated place of worship – Jerusalem) and use the money to buy and sacrifice unto Jehovah.
 2. Notice the use of the term "*strong drink*" (*shekar*). At some places in the Old Testament (OT) this word (as well as the word "wine") is used to indicate an intoxicating drink (see Prov. 20:1). Here the drink is condoned (as in two other places in the OT / see Numb. 28:7 and Deut. 29:6). One must see that both wine (grape juice) and shekar (juice from fruits such as dates, pomegranates, or barley) can only mean an intoxicating drink if the context so suggests.
- E. "*And the Levite that is within thy gates, thou shalt not forsake him; for he hath no portion nor inheritance with thee. At the end of every three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase in the same year, and shalt lay it up within thy gates: and the Levite, because he hath no portion nor inheritance with thee, and the sojourner, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that Jehovah thy God may bless thee in all the work of thy hand which thou doest*" (14:27-28).
1. The Levites were unlike the other eleven tribes in that they were not given an inheritance of land to plow and get the blessings of grain, oil, and wine. The Levites' duties were the tabernacle (later the temple at the set place of Jehovah).
 2. To provide sustenance for them (along with the sojourner, fatherless, and widows) the people were to give of their means to them for their survival once every three years. This tithe appears to be separate from the annual tithe given at the temple (i.e., once every three years at each city).

Lessons Learned from Deuteronomy chapters 13-14

- Not only does the Lord prove man through hardships (see Deut. 8:2-5, 15-16) but He also allows false teachers to prove His people (Deut. 13:3). Moses has carefully spoken of the importance of loving, serving, and cleaving to God on seven occasions now (cf. Deut. 6:4; 10:12, 20-21; 11:1, 13, 22; 13:3). One indicates their love for God through their obedience (Jn. 14:15; I Jn. 5:1-2). When said love is true one will carefully weigh words spoken by others and determine whether they are truth or error (I Jn. 4:1-2) (see study # 24).
- The New Testament is chocked full of warnings against those who would teach false doctrines. Jesus (Matt. 7:15ff), Paul (Phil. 3:2), Peter (II Pet. 2:1ff), and John (I Jn. 2:26) all warned of the dangers of men who teach words that have not been revealed by God. Moses' instructions, as well as the Lord's and apostles of the NT, help us understand what our view of these men and women should be.
- The souls of men are at stake when considering whether words are truthful or erroneous. God redeemed man from bondage and this is not to be taken lightly (see Deut. 13:5; Eph. 1:7; I Pet. 1:18-19).
- What should the disciples of the Lord do when confronted with error? First, be aware that such men exist. During the days of the apostles there were false Christ, apostles, brethren, and even those who were writing letters who claimed inspiration (II Thess. 2:2; Gal. 1:6; Acts 18:27). Moses said, "*put away the evil from among thee*" (Deut. 13:5). The Christian is instructed to do the following:
 - Identify the person or persons teaching the error (see I Tim. 1:20; II Tim. 2:17-18).
 - Expose the error (Eph. 5:11; II Tim. 2:16-18).
 - Give the false teacher no greeting (II Jn. 9-11).
 - Avoid such people after an attempt to reconcile them to truth (Titus 3:10-11).
 - What if the false teacher is a family member (Deut. 13:6-9)? Jesus said that no one person should stand in my way of serving God (Matt. 10:37-38).
 - What if many people in the church begin to accept error and draw away the hearts of the disciples (Deut. 13:12ff; I Cor. 11:17ff). Let us follow the same principle; i.e., identify the error, identify the false teachers, expose, give no greeting, avoid after an attempt to reconcile them to truth, and avoid prejudicial treatment of these people due to **friendships** or **family relationships** (see study # 28).
- Let the Christian learn to abhor and be disgusted with error (i.e., the devoted thing) (Deut. 14:1-2; Rom. 12:9). We should thereby abstain from all forms of evil (Deut. 14:1-2; II Thess. 5:22).

Chapter 15

I. The “Sabbatical Year” and caring for the Poor (15:1-11):

A. *“At the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release. And this is the manner of the release: every creditor shall release that which he hath lent unto his neighbor; he shall not exact it of his neighbor and his brother; because Jehovah's release hath been proclaimed. Of a foreigner thou mayest exact it: but whatsoever of thine is with thy brother thy hand shall release. Howbeit there shall be no poor with thee; (for Jehovah will surely bless thee in the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it;) if only thou diligently hearken unto the voice of Jehovah thy God, to observe to do all this commandment which I command thee this day”* (15:1-5).

1. The instructions for carrying out the “Sabbatical year” or “year of release” are found at Exodus 23:10-13. Moses instructs Israel to work six years (as they work six days in the week) and the seventh year is to be a year of rest for the land and people (this infers that the people worked extremely hard during these six years). Moses further instructs the people not to exact money from a neighbor that had borrowed during this time. The borrower would have no way of repaying debt during the year of rest. This; however, did not release the debtor permanently from his debt. He was; however, given a year to recover from his labors and debt. We have what I would call a Sabbatical month now. Creditors (especially automobile debts) allow the debtors to forgo a month of payments to use their money for things such as Christmas (closest analogy I could think of ☺)
2. The poor were not allowed to go hungry. God has always expressed concern over those who are less fortunate throughout the scriptures (cf. Gal. 2:10) (see study # 29; Caring for Poor People). When said instructions were followed the Lord promised Israel great blessings in the land of Canaan.

B. *“For Jehovah thy God will bless thee, as he promised thee: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow; and thou shalt rule over many nations, but they shall not rule over thee. If there be with thee a poor man, one of thy brethren, within any of thy gates in thy land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thy heart, nor shut thy hand from thy poor brother; but thou shalt surely open thy hand unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need in that which he wanteth. Beware that there be not a base thought in thy heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou give him nought; and he cry unto Jehovah against thee, and it be sin unto thee. Thou shalt surely give him, and thy heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him; because that for this thing Jehovah thy God will bless thee in all thy work, and in all that thou putteth thy hand unto. For the poor will never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt surely open thy hand unto thy brother, to thy needy, and to thy poor, in thy land”* (15:6-11).

1. It is interesting to note Moses’ observation about the economic standing of some. Moses states, *“The poor will never cease out of the land...”* One may recall that Jesus said, *“For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always”* (Matt. 26:11). As there will always be very rich, rich, middle class, and lower classes there will also be those who are poor. Why these people are poor is not under consideration. The OT indicates great conviction against those who mistreat or overlook the poor among them (cf. Amos 2:7; 4:1; 5:11; 8:4-6). Under the NT, care for the poor is everywhere inferred too. Jesus said that caring for the poor was a matter of personal perfection (Matt. 19:21). People both in Jesus’ (Lk. 19:8; Jn. 12:5) and the apostles’ (Acts 2:43; Rom. 15:26-26) day were concerned with those who were poor. Those; however, who would be poor by choice; i.e., lazy and or busybodies, were not to be helped (cf. II Thess. 3:10-12).
2. Moses very strongly *“commands”* Israel to open their wallets to the needy and that not grudgingly. People in Moses’ day (as well as our day) were to help the needy because they saw their needs and had empathy for them. This is a subject that is not talked about much; however, one that needs to be considered. Many brethren go without because the wealthy have no concern for their needy brethren. It seems that Americans have a greater concern about helping

the needy over seas more than they do within their own congregation. Our concern should be toward all who are in need.

- C. *“If thy brother, a Hebrew man, or a Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee. And when thou lettest him go free from thee, thou shalt not let him go empty: thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy threshing-floor, and out of thy winepress; as Jehovah thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give unto him”* (15:12-14).
1. Sometimes the Hebrews were unable to repay what was borrowed due to extreme poverty. Said cases would enable the creditor to adopt the brother (or his children) as slaves to repay the debt. The Sabbatical year would be a year of *“release”* for said slavery.
 2. Note the kindness that was to be displayed by the creditor to his brother that was enslaved to him. When the seventh year rolled around the slave was to be released and the master was to *“furnish him liberally”* with flocks, grain, and wine. As God had blessed the rich the rich were to pass this blessing on to the poor.
- D. *“And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt, and Jehovah thy God redeemed thee: therefore I command thee this thing to-day. And it shall be, if he say unto thee, I will not go out from thee; because he loveth thee and thy house, because he is well with thee; then thou shalt take an awl, and thrust it through his ear unto the door, and he shall be thy servant for ever. And also unto thy maid-servant thou shalt do likewise. It shall not seem hard unto thee, when thou lettest him go free from thee; for to the double of the hire of a hireling hath he served thee six years: and Jehovah thy God will bless thee in all that thou doest.”* (15:15-18).
1. Israel was never to think too highly of themselves as their wealth multiplied (see Deut. 8:17). At one point they were all slaves in Egypt (they were to remember those days that they may have empathy for their current slaves). We would all do well to remember days when things were not going so well for us that we may help those who are in need today.
 2. Some slaves may develop such a love and dependency upon their masters that they do not wish to leave after six years of service. Those who desire to stay were to go through a ritual prescribed by God. Masters were to take an awl (i.e., a pointed tool for making holes, as in wood or leather) and pierce the slave’s ear through and impale him (or her) to the door of the house. It seems that this would signify their place in the master’s home.
 3. If, however, the slave decided to leave the master was to obey the law of the Sabbatical year and release the slave with the necessities of life. He was not to hold on to the slave even if he loved and depended upon the man or woman.
- E. *“All the firstling males that are born of thy herd and of thy flock thou shalt sanctify unto Jehovah thy God: thou shalt do no work with the firstling of thy herd, nor shear the firstling of thy flock. Thou shalt eat it before Jehovah thy God year by year in the place which Jehovah shall choose, thou and thy household. And if it have any blemish, as if it be lame or blind, any ill blemish whatsoever, thou shalt not sacrifice it unto Jehovah thy God. Thou shalt eat it within thy gates: the unclean and the clean shall eat it alike, as the gazelle, and as the hart. Only thou shalt not eat the blood thereof; thou shalt pour it out upon the ground as water”* (15:19-23).
1. Moses reiterates the law given at Sinai of first born animals recorded at Exodus 13:1-12.
 2. These first born animals were to be sanctified for the Lord. These firstlings were not to be used for work and neither were they to be sheared. Those without blemishes (i.e., lame, blind, ill etc.) were to be sacrificed to the Lord at the altar of burnt offering and eaten. Those firstlings that were blemished had no place at the altar of burnt offering. The owner of the blemished firstling was to sanctify it unto the Lord and eat it within his own property.

Chapter 16

- I. **Observance of Three set feasts wherein all Male Jews were required to Attend Annually (16 all):**
- A. *“Observe the month of Abib, and keep the passover unto Jehovah thy God; for in the month of Abib Jehovah thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night. And thou shalt sacrifice the passover*

unto Jehovah thy God, of the flock and the herd, in the place which Jehovah shall choose, to cause his name to dwell there. Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it; seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith, even the bread of affliction; for thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste: that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life. And there shall be no leaven seen with thee in all thy borders seven days; neither shall any of the flesh, which thou sacrificest the first day at even, remain all night until the morning. Thou mayest not sacrifice the passover within any of thy gates, which Jehovah thy God giveth thee; but at the place which Jehovah thy God shall choose, to cause his name to dwell in, there thou shalt sacrifice the passover at even, at the going down of the sun, at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt. And thou shalt roast and eat it in the place which Jehovah thy God shall choose: and thou shalt turn in the morning, and go unto thy tents. Six days thou shalt eat unleavened bread; and on the seventh day shall be a solemn assembly to Jehovah thy God; thou shalt do no work therein” (16:1-8).

1. The **Passover** was to mark the “*beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year*” (Ex. 12:2; 23:15). The 14th of Abib was marked as the Passover feast (Lev. 23:4-5). Upon this day Israel would sacrifice an unblemished lamb in the evening and eat its flesh with no leaven. Their bread was to be unleavened due to the quick nature of their departure from Egypt. No one had the time to add leaven to the dough and allow it to rise. It is termed “*bread of affliction*” due to the fact that Israel would be caused to remember their haste out of Egypt by the mighty hand of God as well as the affliction they suffered there (see Ex. 12:11, 39).
 2. The next six days were to be spent eating unleavened bread (i.e., **Feast of Unleavened Bread**). This feast began one day after the Passover (i.e., Abib 15) (Lev. 23:6). The seventh day would be a holy convocation unto the Lord.
 3. The sacrificial lamb was to be sacrificed at Jehovah’s specified place (i.e., latter it would be at the temple in Jerusalem). The lamb was to be eaten that night and not allowed to sit out all night. It seems that Exodus 34:25 infers that the flesh would begin the rotting process overnight and thereby produce leaven which, if in contact with other foods, will act as a fermenting catalysts.
- B. *“Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee: from the time thou beginnest to put the sickle to the standing grain shalt thou begin to number seven weeks. And thou shalt keep the feast of weeks unto Jehovah thy God with a tribute of a freewill-offering of thy hand, which thou shalt give, according as Jehovah thy God blesseth thee: and thou shalt rejoice before Jehovah thy God, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, and the Levite that is within thy gates, and the sojourner, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are in the midst of thee, in the place which Jehovah thy God shall choose, to cause his name to dwell there. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt: and thou shalt observe and do these statutes” (16:9-12).*
1. Moses is given instructions for observance of 50 days after the Passover feast (OT **Feast of Weeks** [cf. Ex. 34:22] and NT **Pentecost** [Acts 2:1ff] the 50th day after the Feast of Weeks). This annual feast was “*at the year’s end*” (Ex. 34:22).
 2. The 50 days after Passover is a time of harvest. God’s people were not to harvest the corners of their fields nor gather fruit that had dropped from the trees but rather leave those areas for the poor. The people of God were to begin the season of Pentecost with a wave offering of the first-fruits of the land to indicate their thankfulness for the harvest. They were to offer up a burnt-offering, meal-offering, and a drink-offering. At the end of the 50 days they were to have a holy convocation in which no work was to be done. They would then offer a meal offering, burnt-offerings, drink offerings, sin offerings, peace offerings, and a wave offering. The fiftieth day after the Passover was to be a day of holy convocation (see Lev. 23:9ff).
- C. *“Thou shalt keep the feast of tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in from thy threshing-floor and from thy winepress: and thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, and the Levite, and the sojourner, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within thy gates. Seven days shalt thou keep a feast unto Jehovah thy God in the place which Jehovah shall choose; because Jehovah thy God will bless thee*

in all thine increase, and in all the work of thy hands, and thou shalt be altogether joyful” (16:13-15).

1. The **Feast of Tabernacles** (or **Feast of booths**) was to be conducted on the 15th day of the 7th month Tishri (Lev. 23:33-36). The first day of the feast, i.e., the 15th of Tishri, was to be a holy convocation and the people were to do no work. Seven straight days were to be spent making a fire sacrifice unto Jehovah God and then on the eighth day they were to close the feast with another holy convocation.
 2. The Feast of Tabernacles was another time of rejoicing due to the harvest of grain and wine that Jehovah had blessed them with.
- D. *“Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before Jehovah thy God in the place which he shall choose: in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles; and they shall not appear before Jehovah empty: every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of Jehovah thy God which he hath given thee”* (16:16-17).
1. Three times a year (the annual feasts mentioned above) all male Jews were required to assemble at the temple of God in Jerusalem to remember their bondage and affliction in Egypt and to give God thanks for not only His deliverance but also for the blessings of this life they enjoyed in Canaan.
 2. To express their thanksgiving the Lord commands that they do not *“appear before Jehovah empty.”* Each attending man was to *“give as he is able.”*
 3. All of these instructions are mere copies or shadows of NT worship. Our Passover lamb is Jesus Christ (I Cor. 5:7). He has **delivered** (i.e., **Redeemed**) us from the bondage of sin (cf. Col. 1:13) as God delivered Israel from the bondage of Egypt (see Deut. 7:8; 16:12). We assemble on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7) to worship God in joyous prescribed ways to learn (Acts 20:7ff), give thanks (through prayer and giving of our means / I Cor. 16:1-2; II Cor. 9:7), and remember his deliverance and our redemption through the Lord’s Supper (I Cor. 11:23-24). Singing is an all encompassing part of worship that takes all of these acts into consideration (Eph. 5:19). The Christian is not to come to worship *“empty handed.”* As Moses commanded Israel to *“give as one is able”* even so the apostle Paul admonished the Corinthians Christians to *“give as you have been prospered”* (I Cor. 16:2) and *“cheerfully”* (II Cor. 9:7) (see study # 30; Five acts of Worship).
- E. *“Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which Jehovah thy God giveth thee, according to thy tribes; and they shall judge the people with righteous judgment. Thou shalt not wrest justice: thou shalt not respect persons; neither shalt thou take a bribe; for a bribe doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous. That which is altogether just shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live, and inherit the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee. Thou shalt not plant thee an Asherah of any kind of tree beside the altar of Jehovah thy God, which thou shalt make thee. Neither shalt thou set thee up a pillar; which Jehovah thy God hateth”* (16:18-21).
1. These judges would be selected by the people.
 2. They were to be just, not showing partiality nor taking bribes.
 3. They were not to pervert justice.
 4. They were not to allow altars to other deities to be constructed in the land

Lessons Learned from Deuteronomy 15-16

- God commanded that the poor be taken care of (Deut. 15:11) (see study # 29).
- The Bible illustrates God’s special attention and care for the needs of those who are poor (Consider Lk. 19:8; Jn. 12; Acts 2:43; Gal. 2:10 etc.). Those who overlooked the needs of the poor are condemned by the prophets Amos (see Amos 2:7; 4:1; 5:11; 8:4-6) and Jeremiah (Jer. 20:13).
- God demands that we see to the needs of the poor today (i.e., it is a matter of Christian duty) (see Matt. 19:21). Our giving and hospitable care toward the needy should be done with a spirit of cheer rather than begrudgingly (see Deut. 15:10 and I Pet. 4:9).
- Note that the Bible never promotes sloth (those who are poor due to their unwillingness to work and thereby beg on street corners). Consider the wise King Solomon’s admonition to the lazy man or woman at

Proverbs 6:6-11. Solomon instructs the sluggards to examine the diligent life of the ant and learn to do the same. Those who refuse to work in this life shall not be helped (see II Thess. 3:10-12). To help a man or woman in need that is a sluggard is thereby sinful. Notice that Moses instructs the poor who have amassed a debt to go into slavery if need be to pay off your bills (cf. Deut. 15:12-14).

- At what point should a Christian deem a man or woman in need? At times of their affliction (see James 1:27). Some may work hard yet they are flooded with medical bills that they will not be able to repay. The fact of the matter is that some make quite a bit more than others (a fact of life that is brought out in the Bible). Those with higher skilled jobs will be paid more and said position places one with great responsibility in relation to the poor. Again, those who have family members able to care for them ought to do so (I Tim. 5:8, 16). The answer then is that we should visit, observe, and help if the need is there. Secondly, we can only help the poor who are trying in this life. Those who support the lazy find themselves supporting sloth and sin.
- Poor brethren alone are to be helped. Moses, as did Jesus, admits that there will always be poor people in the world (see Deut. 15:11; Matt. 26:11). The poor; however, are not to be found among brethren (see Deut. 15:4a). There is no possible way to meet the needs of the poor the world over though many churches try. God commands in the OT and NT that the needs of the poor people of God (saints) are to be met. We find then in the NT churches caring and aiding the needy saints alone (see Rom. 15:26ff).
- Lastly, note the importance of the five acts of worship. God commands that all be present at worship (Deut. 16:16; Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:1ff). Those who do not attend the assembly of the saints for unexcused reasons are in sin (see Heb. 10:25).

Chapter 17

I. Identifying Sinners among the Congregation of God's People (17:1-13):

- A. *"Thou shalt not sacrifice unto Jehovah thy God an ox, or a sheep, wherein is a blemish, or anything evil; for that is an abomination unto Jehovah thy God"* (17:1)
1. The *"blemished"* animal is one that is lame or blind (see Deut. 15:21). During the days of the prophet Malachi the people of God transgressed Jehovah's covenant in that they were offering blemished animals upon the altar of burnt offering (see Mal. 1:8, 13-14). God cursed such a one in that text and here we see the original command that they had violated (see study # 31; Authorized Worship).
 2. To violate the will of God is *"an abomination unto Jehovah thy God."* God hates it!
- B. *"If there be found in the midst of thee, within any of thy gates which Jehovah thy God giveth thee, man or woman, that doeth that which is evil in the sight of Jehovah thy God, in transgressing his covenant, and hath gone and served other gods, and worshipped them, or the sun, or the moon, or any of the host of heaven, which I have not commanded; and it be told thee, and thou hast heard of it, then shalt thou inquire diligently; and, behold, if it be true, and the thing certain, that such abomination is wrought in Israel, then shalt thou bring forth that man or that woman, who hath done this evil thing, unto thy gates, even the man or the woman; and thou shalt stone them to death with stones"* (17:2-5).
1. Note that *"evil"* is defined as *"transgressing his covenant"* (see study # 23). God's covenant is a law and when it is transgressed sin has occurred (see I Jn. 3:4). Often time's today people do not like hearing the word *"evil"* when found in sin. Being evil carries with it the idea of premeditated wrong doing. Evil is something that marks a man's character as being flawed. God; however, terms unlawfulness *"evil."* If the deed or teaching is not according to truth it is evil (see Heb. 3:12; James 3:16; I Pet. 3:11; III Jn. 1:11).
 2. Unlawful worship was to be reported immediately. Note the urgency. The problem of sin was to be dealt with swiftly lest the hearts of others be turned away from the Lord. The sinner was to be punished by stoning to death.
- C. *"At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is to die be put to death; at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death. The hand of the witnesses shall be first upon him"*

to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. So thou shalt put away the evil from the midst of thee” (17:6-7).

1. If one were to hear, inquire diligently, and find that there were two or three witnesses of the evil deed then the sinner was to be put to death. Both Jesus (Matt. 18:15-20) and Paul (II Corinthians 13) applied this principle in establishing guilt among the evil.
 2. Note that the primary thrust of these instructions is that the people “*put away the evil from the midst of thee.*” The reason such a law breaker is to be put away from the congregation is that he or she is likened unto leaven (I Cor. 5:1-8) or gangrene (II Tim. 2:16-18) that can spread throughout the people (see church discipline) (see study # 32; Keeping the Church Pure).
- D. *“If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke, being matters of controversy within thy gates; then shalt thou arise, and get thee up unto the place which Jehovah thy God shall choose; and thou shalt come unto the priests the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days; and thou shalt inquire; and they shall show thee the sentence of judgment. And thou shalt do according to the tenor of the sentence which they shall show thee from that place which Jehovah shall choose; and thou shalt observe to do according to all that they shall teach thee: according to the tenor of the law which they shall teach thee, and according to the judgment which they shall tell thee, thou shalt do; thou shalt not turn aside from the sentence which they shall show thee, to the right hand, nor to the left” (17:8-11).*
1. While some cases of evil behavior would be cut and dry (i.e., the sin was identified, witnesses were in place, and the guilty was punished) others would not be. Some cases may have many people speaking testimony that contradicted others. One may conclude that a fair judgment cannot be passed upon one due to the confusing situation. Said cases were to go before the judge of the land and priests at the temple of God.
 2. The priests and judge of the land would hear out the matter and give a judgment as God had ordained or authorized them to do (much like Moses did at Exodus 18:26). When these men’s judgment came all were to heed the decision.
- E. *“And the man that doeth presumptuously, in not hearkening unto the priest that standeth to minister there before Jehovah thy God, or unto the judge, even that man shall die: and thou shalt put away the evil from Israel. And all the people shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously” (17:12-13).*
1. Once the verdict was delivered by the priests and or judge of the land it was to be respected. The priests and judge may decide to release a man or woman from the error that is charged after hearing all the evidence. The priests and judge may determine to give the sentence of death. Whatever the judgment of these men is it is to be respected by all (see study # 33; Dealing with Problems in the Church).
 2. One bringing the difficult case before the priests and judge may not agree with their judgment and refuse to kill the guilty or refuse to save the life of the one judged innocent. Such a one that acts contrary to God’s priests or judge of the land is to be killed himself. Why? Because he too has now proved to be rebellious against God’s will.
 3. Today, when the elders of the church are presented with cases of sin among brethren their judgments too must be heeded because they have the best interest of individuals and the congregation in mind. All must thereby submit to such in truth (see Heb. 13:17; I Pet. 5:5).

II. Election of a King (17:14-20):

- A. *“When thou art come unto the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like all the nations that are round about me; thou shalt surely set him king over thee, whom Jehovah thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee; thou mayest not put a foreigner over thee, who is not thy brother. Only he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he may multiply horses; forasmuch as Jehovah hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way” (17:14-16).*
1. The future days of Israel would see a king over the people likened unto the nations around them. Said man would be one of God’s choice and from among the Israelites (not a foreigner).

2. The king was to follow God's rules: i.e., he was not to put his trust in military might by multiplying to himself horses and neither was he ever to contemplate leading Israel back to Egypt.
- B.** *“Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold. And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book, out of that which is before the priests the Levites: and it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life; that he may learn to fear Jehovah his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them; that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children, in the midst of Israel” (17:17-20).*
1. Furthermore the king was not to multiply to himself wives, silver, and gold due to the fact that these things would have the power to turn his heart from serving God.
 2. The king was to be one who respected the laws of God. He was to have a written copy of the law handy and read it all the days of his life.
 3. The king was to *“learn to fear Jehovah his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes to do them.”* As the people who witnessed and participated in the stoning of an evil doer was to obtain fear through the incident (see Deut. 17:13) even so the king was to fear God by keeping His commandments.
 4. We read God's law today to develop the same fear (see II Tim. 2:15; I Pet. 2:17).

Chapter 18

I. Duty of Israel to support the Levites and all Priests (18:1-8):

- A.** *“The priests the Levites, even all the tribe of Levi, shall have no portion nor inheritance with Israel: they shall eat the offerings of Jehovah made by fire, and his inheritance. And they shall have no inheritance among their brethren: Jehovah is their inheritance, as he hath spoken unto them” (18:1-2).*
1. The entire tribe of Levi was to have no land portion as the other tribes of Israel. God was to be their inheritance (see Numb. 18:20).
 2. The Levites food was to come from the sacrifices that the people brought to Jehovah throughout the year.
- B.** *“And this shall be the priests' due from the people, from them that offer a sacrifice, whether it be ox or sheep, that they shall give unto the priest the shoulder, and the two cheeks, and the maw. The first-fruits of thy grain, of thy new wine, and of thine oil, and the first of the fleece of thy sheep, shalt thou give him. For Jehovah thy God hath chosen him out of all thy tribes, to stand to minister in the name of Jehovah, him and his sons for ever” (18:3-5).*
1. The people of the other tribes were to pay *“dues”* to the Levites in the form of parts of their sacrifices unto God.
 2. The people were to sacrifice the unblemished firstlings of their flocks and give the Levite the shoulder and two cheeks of the maw. The first-fruits of their grain, oil, and wine (God's blessings) were to be delivered to the Levites as well. The Levites were also to receive the first fleece of the people's sheep that they may cloth and warm themselves.
- C.** *“And if a Levite come from any of thy gates out of all Israel, where he sojourneth, and come with all the desire of his soul unto the place which Jehovah shall choose; then he shall minister in the name of Jehovah his God, as all his brethren the Levites do, who stand there before Jehovah. They shall have like portions to eat, besides that which cometh of the sale of his patrimony” (18:6-8).*
1. The Levite priest who had been on a journey and returns to the temple to serve Jehovah is to be cared for as all other priests and Levites.
 2. The reason for the journey seems to be that the priests has taken care of a death in the family and has received some form of patrimony (i.e., inheritance). Just because the priest received the

inheritance did not mean that the people were to stop supporting him through their contributions. As the priest did his work he was worthy of his hire.

II. Warnings against Magicians and Wizards (18:9-22):

- A. *“When thou art come into the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found with thee any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, one that useth divination, one that practiseth augury, or an enchanter, or a sorcerer, or a charmer, or a consulter with a familiar spirit, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For whosoever doeth these things is an abomination unto Jehovah: and because of these abominations Jehovah thy God doth drive them out from before thee”* (18:9-12).
1. Moses instructs Israel not to “*learn*” how to participate in the abomination of the surrounding nations. Their abominations included sacrificing their children in fire to other deities and practicing all manner of wicked gains in so called divine council (i.e., witchcraft, augury, enchantments, sorcery, charmers, wizardry, or necromancers [i.e., communicating with the spirits of the dead in order to predict the future... black magic... magical enchantments etc.]).
 2. To be involved in such activity was to practice that which is an “*abomination unto Jehovah.*” Abominations are those things that represent evil in that they are transgressions of the will of God (see Deut. 17:1ff). Many today are very interested in wizardry, witchcraft, enchantments, and magic. Movies are filled with such activity and the world is fascinated by it all. These acts; however, are against the sovereign will of God and challenge His Oneness. God alone has power and all else is of the evil one.
 3. Due to Canaan’s participation in these magical things God drives them out from the land (see Deut. 9:5).
- B. *“Thou shalt be perfect with Jehovah thy God”* (18:13).
1. Perfection in this context meant fearing and following Jehovah’s commandments (see study # 34; The Perfection of the Saint).
 2. Let us recall that Jesus made this same statement during the Sermon on the Mount (see Matt. 5:48) and it meant the same thing.
- C. *“For these nations, that thou shalt dispossess, **hearken** unto them that practice augury, and unto diviners; but as for thee, Jehovah thy God hath not suffered thee so to do. Jehovah thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; according to all that thou desiredst of Jehovah thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of Jehovah my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And Jehovah said unto me, They have well said that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him”* (18:14-19).
1. A clear contrast is drawn between the witches, wizards, and sorcerers against the prophet that God would raise up from among the people. They were not to “*hearken*” unto the augurers but rather the prophet of God.
 2. The people of God were to be sanctified from the nations that did evil things against the will of God. Moses comforts the people in that he tells them that God will bring another prophet before the people that they may hear and learn divine revelation from. They are commanded to give heed to this prophet as they do Moses. Those who refuse to hear the words of this prophet will be judged by the Lord.
 3. The fulfillment of Moses’ prophecy was to be realized in Jesus Christ (see Acts 3:20-26). Jesus had also said that Moses predicted his day (see Jn. 5:45-47).
- D. *“But the prophet, that shall speak a word presumptuously in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die. And if thou say in thy heart, How shall we know the word which Jehovah hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of Jehovah, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which Jehovah hath not spoken: the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously, thou shalt not be afraid of him”* (18:20-22).

1. In contrast to the prophet that God would send to provide instructions and justification for the Lord's people is the prophet who comes in his own name.
2. Here is a prophet who speaks words which God has not commanded. How serious is it for one to speak words that God had not commanded? False teaching was so serious that the one participating in such activity was to be put to death (see study # 28).
3. If it be God's judgment that such actions occur what do you suppose would happen to the one who rejects this judgment and protects the false prophet? Such a one was to also die (see Deut. 17:12).

Lessons Learned from Deuteronomy 17-18

- A study of Deuteronomy 17 helps us to see that God has not changed as far as His perspective of sinners within the congregation of His people. Those who worshipped in a manner that God had not prescribed were to be stoned to death (Deut. 17:3-5). Authorized worship among God's people is precisely defined in the NT as well (see John 4:23). Those who do not worship in accordance with the authority of God are likewise condemned (see Matt. 15:7-9; Acts 17:22-28; Col. 2:20-23) (see study # 31). Those who reject the authority of God in their worship (or life in general) are not to be tolerated (Rev. 2:18-22) or accepted (I Cor. 5:1-2) by the brethren. Israel of old and Christians today are to "*put away the evil from the midst of them*" (Deut. 17:7). Why should Christians do this today? Christians should put away persistent unrepenting sinners from among them because their lack of respect for the authority of God is likened unto leaven (I Cor. 5:2-8) and a gangrene (II Tim. 2:16-18) that can infect the rest of the congregation. Additionally, said sinners are to be put away so that they may feel the sting of their shameful acts and repent in prayer that they may be forgiven and restored to the fellowship of God and brethren (see I Cor. 5:1-11 and II Thess. 3:6, 14).
- We learn from Deuteronomy 17:8 how to deal with controversial discussions. Jesus (Matt. 18:15) and the apostle Paul (II Cor. 13:1) spoke of witnesses and a method by which the sinner could be identified and restored.
- Lastly, we learn that magicians, wizards, and sorcerers were an "*abomination*" to God because they attributed power to sources other than God (like man or other gods) (Deut. 18:10-12). We are learning, through a study of the Pentateuch to develop God's attitude toward sin. When God views things as "*abominable*" it means that He absolutely hates it. The word "*devoted*" has been explored in the study of Deuteronomy. The word takes into consideration God's attitude toward unauthorized practices (see study # 20). The people of God, during Moses' day, were to "*utterly detest and abhor that which is devoted* (unauthorized acts or things reserved for destruction at the hands of God)" (Deut. 7:26). Today, there is a great deal of fascination with magic and wizards as depicted in such movies as the "Lord of the Rings" and "Harry Potter." While these movies may be entertaining some children may find great value, respect, honor, and adoration for that which God hates (i.e., magic, wizards and sorcerers). Parents ought to teach their children what God's view of wizards and sorcerers is so that their adoration belongs to God alone. The thrust of a study of Deuteronomy is that man is to "*fear*" Jehovah alone (Deut. 17:13, 19) and thereby walk perfectly before Him (Deut. 18:13).

Chapter 19

I. Laws regarding Cities of Refuge (19:1-13):

- A. "*When Jehovah thy God shall cut off the nations, whose land Jehovah thy God giveth thee, and thou succeedest them, and dwellest in their cities, and in their houses; thou shalt set apart three cities for thee in the midst of thy land, which Jehovah thy God giveth thee to possess it. Thou shalt prepare thee the way, and divide the borders of thy land, which Jehovah thy God causeth thee to inherit, into three parts, that every manslayer may flee thither*" (19:1-3).
 1. Three matters of importance are to be examined here. First, note once again, that God is giving the land of Canaan to Israel due to His promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Israel will dwell in houses that they had not built.

2. Secondly, note the confidence wherein Moses speaks. Moses gives instructions to Israel regarding things into the future (i.e., when Israel possesses Canaan). Moses is so sure that God will fulfill his promise to Israel that he begins giving ordinances for a time when they would possess Canaan.
 3. The third thing to notice is the actual instruction of this chapter. Israel was to divide Canaan into three large sections and set aside a city in each that would provide a safe haven for someone who had killed another either by accident or purposeful until that man or woman may be given a trial.
- B. *“And this is the case of the manslayer, that shall flee thither and live: whoso killeth his neighbor unawares, and hated him not in time past; as when a man goeth into the forest with his neighbor to hew wood, and his hand fetcheth a stroke with the axe to cut down the tree, and the head slippeth from the helve, and lighteth upon his neighbor, so that he dieth; he shall flee unto one of these cities and live: lest the avenger of blood pursue the manslayer, while his heart is hot, and overtake him, because the way is long, and smite him mortally; whereas he was not worthy of death, inasmuch as he hated him not in time past. Wherefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt set apart three cities for thee” (19:4-7)*
1. The purpose of the city of refuge is now discussed in detail. It may be that two men are working together and an accident happens whereby one of the men dies. The city of refuge will be a safe place for the man who accidentally killed the one that he had no feelings of animosity toward.
 2. There would; however, be family of the deceased who did not witness the accident and pursue the killer with *“his heart hot”* with anger. To keep the innocent from dying he is commanded to flee to the nearest city of refuge.
- C. *“And if Jehovah thy God enlarge thy border, as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, and give thee all the land which he promised to give unto thy fathers; if thou shalt keep all this commandment to do it, which I command thee this day, to love Jehovah thy God, and to walk ever in his ways; then shalt thou add three cities more for thee, besides these three: that innocent blood be not shed in the midst of thy land, which Jehovah thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, and so blood be upon thee. But if any man hate his neighbor, and lie in wait for him, and rise up against him, and smite him mortally so that he dieth, and he flee into one of these cities; then the elders of his city shall send and fetch him thence, and deliver him into the hand of the avenger of blood, that he may die. Thine eye shall not pity him, but thou shalt put away the innocent blood from Israel, that it may go well with thee” (19:8-13).*
1. The enlargement of the borders of the Promised Land was contingent upon Israel’s continued obedience to God’s will. The enlarged land would demand more cities of refuge which the Lord was willing to give in turn for the people’s obedience. Moses continues to encourage love and obedience with the people (see study # 18).
 2. The man who pursues the manslayer into the city of refuge to take vengeance shall himself be guilty and subject to the penalty of death without pity.

II. **Laws regarding a neighbor’s Landmark (19:14):**

- A. *“Thou shalt not remove thy neighbor’s landmark, which they of old time have set, in thine inheritance which thou shalt inherit, in the land that Jehovah thy God giveth thee to possess it” (19:14).*
- B. To move or remove a landmark was the equivalent of stealing land. When Israel came into Canaan to possess the land it would be a time likened unto the squatters that, in recent history, marked out free land in Oklahoma. Once the ownership of the land was marked out no one was to move them.

III. **Israel Commanded to Put away the Evil from the Midst of Thee (19:15-21):**

- A. *“One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall a matter be established. If an unrighteous witness rise up against any man to testify against him of wrongdoing, then both the men, between whom the controversy is, shall stand before Jehovah, before the priests and the judges that shall be in those days; and the judges shall make diligent inquisition:*

and, behold, if the witness be a false witness, and have testified falsely against his brother; then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to do unto his brother: so shalt thou put away the evil from the midst of thee" (19:15-19).

1. One man's word against another was not enough proof to establish guilt in anyone. Under the Mosaic Law, if there were more than one witness to a crime "*the matter shall be established.*" Justice is an important trait of Jehovah God (cf. Jer. 9:23-24). Getting a matter right is important with God and should be with all today.
 2. There may be false witnesses brings a complaint against another (i.e., he is lying about the situation at hand to do someone harm). How was anyone to settle such matters when it was one man's word against another? Let us recall that Moses had already instructed the people how to handle "*matters too hard for thee in judgment...*" at Deuteronomy 17:8ff. There, Moses instructed the people to bring their hard cases before the priests or ordained judges of the land to decide the matter.
 3. Note that when one came before these priests or judges that they also "*stood before Jehovah.*" The priests or judges would inquire of the Lord in the matter and the guilty would be identified. Today, we do not have God's miraculous intervention. We must establish guilt based upon the evidences heard by any witnesses. A wise judgment must be made (in the church today) by the elders of a church (see Matt. 18:15ff).
 4. Lastly, notice the statement, "*so shalt thou put away the evil from the midst of thee.*" We have run across this phrase previously at Deuteronomy 17:7, 12 in relation to a man who was guilty of a sin against another or a man who would not consider the judgment of the judges or priests in regard to the hard matter under consideration. Evil within the ranks of God's people has never been tolerated! As we stated previously, Christians should put away persistent unrepenting sinners from among them today as well (see study # 20 and # 33). Said people lack respect for the authority of God and are likened unto leaven (I Cor. 5:2-8) and a gangrene (II Tim. 2:16-18) that can infect the rest of the congregation. Additionally, said sinners are to be put away so that they may feel the sting of their shameful acts and repent in prayer that they may be forgiven and restored to the fellowship of God and brethren (see I Cor. 5:1-11 and II Thess. 3:6, 14).
- B.** "*And those that remain shall hear, and fear, and shall henceforth commit no more any such evil in the midst of thee. And thine eyes shall not pity; life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot*" (19:20-21).
1. Again, when strict standards are set and punishment measured out to the violator of law others will be persuaded not to do such evil things. This is a principle in civil government (see Rom. 13:1-7). Man is to learn respect and fear for authority. A society that has no fear of authority is a delinquent and chaotic society. A church that does not strike a healthy fear of God into its members is not succeeding in helping people make it to heaven. Fear will be produced when truth is preached (see lessons on Deuteronomy 19 and 20 below) (see study # 17).
 2. Furthermore, during these Mosaic days, the Lord commanded a no pity approach when administering punishment to the evil. Those who violate Law were punished and no man or woman was to pity them. The principle was, "*life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.*"
 - a. Jesus touched on this command at Matthew 5:38-39 saying, "*Ye have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, Resists not him that is evil: but whosoever smites thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also...*" The New Covenant Jesus taught certainly was the original blue print that Moses copied and or shadowed by divine inspiration (see Heb. 8:1ff). The original plan was that man would not "*resist*" evil men who do us wrong.
 - b. The word "*resist*" (*anthistemi*) = "to set up against or in opposition to... to stand against, esp. in battle, to withstand, oppose" (LS 70-71). While Moses allowed the wronged man or woman to take immediate vengeance upon evil people the Lord tells us that God will have the final word in the realm of vengeance (Heb. 10:30). Rather than taking physical revenge the child of God is to now shame the evil man or woman into repentance (see Rom. 12:20).

Christians oppose the attitude of the man. Rather than physically punishing the sinner God's people look for their repentance (see Gal. 2:22; Eph. 5:11-12; 6:13; II Tim. 4:15; I Jn. 4:1ff). Christians certainly do not turn the cheek to false doctrines and wicked attitudes (see Jn. 18:19-23).

Chapter 20

I. Instructions for the day of Battle (20 all):

- A. *“When thou goest forth to battle against thine enemies, and seest horses, and chariots, and a people more than thou, thou shalt not be afraid of them; for Jehovah thy God is with thee, who brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And it shall be, when ye draw nigh unto the battle, that the priest shall approach and speak unto the people, and shall say unto them, Hear, O Israel, ye draw nigh this day unto battle against your enemies: let not your heart faint; fear not, nor tremble, neither be ye affrighted at them; for Jehovah your God is he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you” (20:1-4).*
1. Moses has said repeatedly that the land of Canaan is a gift from God due to His promise made unto their fathers (see Deut. 19:1). Here; however, we find the conditions of the people obtaining God's gift and promises (see study # 3). They were to put their faith in His ability to save them and wage war against the mighty multitudes.
 2. Throughout history men standing upon the front lines of battles have heard motivational speeches by a general to wage war. They are told a variety of things such as we fight for freedom, for our honor, for our country, for our little ones and wives, we fight these men for their unlawful deeds against us... “Remember the Alamo...” Jehovah commands the priests to approach the soldiers of Israel before battle and give such a speech. The priest's speech was to be for the purpose of:
 - a. Reminding Israel of God's promises.
 - b. Strengthening the hands of those who may be intimidated by the numbers and armament of horses and chariots of the enemy.
 - c. To remove all fear from their hearts in that they were to put their faith in God. God would *“fight for you against your enemies, to save you.”*
 3. Today, God's persecuted Christian can rest assured that God's gift (promises) of salvation will belong to those who endure the trials of the wicked until the end (see I Pet. 1:6-7).
- B. *“And the officers shall speak unto the people, saying, What man is there that hath built a new house, and hath not dedicated it? Let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man dedicate it. And what man is there that hath planted a vineyard, and hath not used the fruit thereof? Let him go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man use the fruit thereof. And what man is there that hath betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her? Let him go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man take her. And the officers shall speak further unto the people, and they shall say, What man is there that is fearful and faint-hearted? let him go and return unto his house, lest his brethren's heart melt as his heart” (20:5-8).*
1. We envision the battle field before us. Two armies are preparing for war. The priests have made their speech telling the armies of God that He will fight for them and they are not to fear the sight of men, horses, and chariots that stand before them. The officers of the army then come before the men and set the reality of their actions before them; i.e., death is likely to occur to the faithful people of God who are fulfilling God's commands to take His gift of Canaan (see Deut. 1:21, 26) (see study # 3). What does such a thought suggests to you and I today? It tells us that God's gift of salvation is gained by a faith that cares not about the things of this life but rather is dedicated to His cause of saving the soul of man into eternity. The apostle Paul said, *“For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain”* (Phil. 1:21). Again, Paul said, *“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing”* (II Tim. 4:7-8).

The one who seeks out God's gifts and promises are willing to wage war as soldiers of Jesus Christ's until death (II Tim. 2:3-4). The apostle John said, "*Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life*" (Rev. 2:10).

2. Those not in shape for the battle were to return home. Some may have just built a house, planted a vineyard, and married a wife. These were to return home to enjoy these things before death. Latter battles would come for them to participate in (God intends for us to enjoy the life we now have / cf. Eccl. 2:24). There were those; however, who were to be excused from life threatening battle due to fear. The fearful were to return to their homes lest they infected the other soldiers with their fear (see Numbers 13-14 for an example of this happening). The fearful have no place with the army of God's faithful soldiers (see Rev. 21:8).
- C. "*And it shall be, when the officers have made an end of speaking unto the people, that they shall appoint captains of hosts at the head of the people. When thou drawest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it. And it shall be, if it make thee answer of peace, and open unto thee, then it shall be, that all the people that are found therein shall become tributary unto thee, and shall serve thee. And if it will make no peace with thee, but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it: and when Jehovah thy God delivereth it into thy hand, thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword: but the women, and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof, shalt thou take for a prey unto thyself; and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies, which Jehovah thy God hath given thee. Thus shalt thou do unto all the cities which are very far off from thee, which are not of the cities of these nations*" (20:9-15).
1. Moses gives battle instructions for the cities and nations that are "*very far off from thee.*" There would be times when Israel went to war with others aside from the Canaanites (i.e., the promised land).
 2. Israel's first objective with these peoples was to seek out peace with them. If no peace is extended then they were to siege the city, kill every male, and take women and other spoils for themselves.
- D. "*But of the cities of these peoples, that Jehovah thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth; but thou shalt utterly destroy them: the Hittite, and the Amorite, the Canaanite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite; as Jehovah thy God hath commanded thee; that they teach you not to do after all their abominations, which they have done unto their gods; so would ye sin against Jehovah your God*" (20:16-18).
1. Some of the strongest and gruesome language in God's word is found right here. When it came to waging war with the Canaanite there was no peace to be sought with these people. Israel's instructions (**command**) was to "*save alive nothing that breaths; but thou shalt utterly destroy them.*"
 2. The reason for this aggressive behavior toward the Canaanites was "*that they teach you not to do after all their abominations, which they have done unto their gods.*" When it came to dealing with those who "**taught**" doctrines that affronted the sovereign creator of the universe they were not to be tolerated, spared, nor pitied (see Deut. 13:8-9). Again, we are learning here what God's attitude toward sin and erroneous teaching is (see the devoted thing of Deut. 7:26). People today who conceal, support, pity, or give **any** sympathy to a false teacher in relation to their "character" shall be just as guilty as the one teaching the error (see Deut. 13:6ff). If more of our liberal minded brethren would study through these OT passages they would gain a greater understanding of God's view of false teachers (see study # 28).
 3. The state of Israel's mind in relation to deity, creation, power, truth, and sovereignty was important to God. Today, we do not pour out wrath upon these men themselves, but we do warn, name, expose, and avoid because they are a threat to our receiving God's gift of salvation.
- E. "*When thou shalt besiege a city a long time, in making war against it to take it, thou shalt not destroy the trees thereof by wielding an axe against them; for thou mayest eat of them, and thou shalt not cut them down; for is the tree of the field man, that it should be besieged of thee? Only the*

trees of which thou knowest that they are not trees for food, thou shalt destroy and cut them down; and thou shalt build bulwarks against the city that maketh war with thee, until it fall" (20:19-20).

1. Further instructions regarding warfare are given. Israel was not to go axe happy on all trees of the forest.
2. Fruit producing trees were to be preserved and all other species used for the siege.

Lessons found in Deuteronomy 19-20

- A thematic and timeless principle is continued by Moses when he instructs Israel to love God and walk in all His ways (see Deut. 19:9). Moses has carefully established this principle throughout the book of Deuteronomy (see Deut. 6:4; 10:12-13, 20; 11:1, 22) (see study # 18). God **proved** Israel to see whether they truly loved Him and was willing to keep His commandments. The proving came in the form of physical hardships and false prophets (see Deut. 8:2; 13:3). The Lord continues to prove His people today with the same things (see I Pet. 1:6ff; I Jn. 4:1ff) (see study # 5).
- Israel's experience with disobedience was to produce FEAR in the whole congregation (see study # 17). They were to learn that when law was violated there were consequences to be met out (see Deut. 19:20-21). This principle is found in today's government. One who violates civil law will be fined, penalized, jailed, and or in some way receive corporal punishment (see Rom. 13:1ff). During Moses' day it was to be so severe that the prophet of God states, "*life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot*" (Deut. 19:21). Such a system would certainly succeed in thwarting anyone's plans to commit lawless deeds. There are parallels to this command in the New Testament. Let us remember, the first covenant is a shadow or copy of the original found in the second covenant (see Heb. 8:1ff). Jesus taught a 'variation' of this principle in the New Testament as he was "*preaching the gospel of the kingdom*" (see Matt. 4:23). Jesus said, "*Ye have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, Resist not him that is evil: but whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also...*" (Matt. 5:38ff). Man was to learn the fear of God under the Mosaic system by corporal punishment for sinful living. When one was severely punished for sinful deeds there were two things that occurred. First, evil was put out of the congregation (Deut. 19:19). Secondly, those who remained (i.e., the ones not punished) would hear and see what the consequences of other's sins were and thereby gain "*fear*" of doing sinful things (see Deut. 19:20). Under the new covenant of Jesus Christ man is not forced into a submissive fear of God by hazard of corporal punishment. What then produces fear and a desire not to violate God's commandments under the NT Law of Christ? First, we must observe that the Bible tells us that man evidences his or her fear in God through their acts of obedience (see Deut. 5:29; 6:2; Titus 3:8; I Pet. 1:17) much like they evidence their faith (Jn. 3:36; Heb. 11:1). Secondly, one's love for God seems to be the connecting factor. Jesus said, "*If you love me, you will keep my commandments*" (Jn. 14:15). I love God because he illustrated his care and love for me by sending His Son to die on the cross enabling me to be forgiven of my sins (i.e., He redeemed me from the consequences of sin) (see Eph. 1:7). Our fear is no longer produced by immediate punishment but rather a knowledge that God will one day judge man for any lawless deeds that went unjustified (see Jn. 12:48). While the Lord's sacrifice enables man to receive the forgiveness of sins He cannot forgive those who do not seek out God's grace (see I Jn 5:16-17). The final judgment will be a lake of fire where sinful people will be tormented for ever and ever (Rev. 20:10). The apostle John, looking to man's future judgment, said, "*And if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire*" (Rev. 20:15). The inevitable reality of all our lives is that we shall live and die. God warns of a day of judgment. The apostle Paul wrote, "*Knowing therefore the fear (terror / KJVB) of the Lord, we persuade men...*" (II Cor. 5:11). Fear is thereby a response to the knowledge, produced by faith, of the coming Day of Judgment.
- Conviction (the state of being convinced... a fixed or strong belief [AHD 320]) within the mind of a NT child of God is formed when reading through a book like Deuteronomy (see study # 35). The greater one's conviction the more determined we will be to speak only where the Word of God speaks. Those who would speak otherwise shall be sharply opposed. We learn from these early books in the Bible that God does not tolerate, conceal, protect, spare, have pity for, offer sympathy, or speak highly of any false prophets (teachers) (Deut. 20:16-18) (see study # 28). We do not find God speaking of the false prophet's "good" character traits while he leads people astray with his own doctrines (look back to Deut. 13:6ff). A proper

attitude was to be developed within the mind of the child of God. Not only was fear of corporal punishment found within this society but God wanted to instill a sense of ought within the mind of His people in relation to false prophets. The attitude of God's people was a sense of detesting and abhorring those things that were sinful (see Deut. 7:26). We ought not participate in or tolerate false teaching (see study # 20). Canaan was to be utterly destroyed (i.e., everything that had breath in its nostrils) because of what they "*taught*" (i.e., said teaching opposed what God taught). God's people today will gain greater conviction in truth as they look to these earlier books in the Bible. We will develop a strong attitude of authoritative living (cf. Col. 3:17) (see study # 13). My mind will be strongly opposed to all erroneous teaching because it has the power to cause a man to lose his soul (see II Pet. 2:1ff).

Chapter 21

I. Moses Instructs the People regarding ridding themselves of Innocent Blood (21:1-9):

- A. *"If one be found slain in the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee to possess it, lying in the field, and it be not known who hath smitten him; then thy elders and thy judges shall come forth, and they shall measure unto the cities which are round about him that is slain: and it shall be, that the city which is nearest unto the slain man, even the elders of that city shall take a heifer of the herd, which hath not been wrought with, and which hath not drawn in the yoke; and the elders of that city shall bring down the heifer unto a valley with running water, which is neither plowed nor sown, and shall break the heifer's neck there in the valley. And the priests the sons of Levi shall come near; for them Jehovah thy God hath chosen to minister unto him, and to bless in the name of Jehovah; and according to their word shall every controversy and every stroke be"* (21:1-5).
1. Moses deals with a homicidal murder wherein no witness is and neither does anyone know how the man was killed.
 2. The elders and the judges of the land are to measure the distance from the body to the nearest town. The elders of the town nearest the body are to take a heifer that has never been used in labor and break its neck. Priests were to come to the city to "*bless in the name of Jehovah.*" Here is a situation where priests may leave their home area to perform the work of God.
- B. *"And all the elders of that city, who are nearest unto the slain man, shall wash their hands over the heifer whose neck was broken in the valley; and they shall answer and say, Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it. Forgive, O Jehovah, thy people Israel, whom thou hast redeemed, and suffer not innocent blood to remain in the midst of thy people Israel. And the blood shall be forgiven them. So shalt thou put away the innocent blood from the midst of thee, when thou shalt do that which is right in the eyes of Jehovah"* (21:6-9).
1. Sin took place in the land due to the fact that a body lay unattended and obviously murdered. The heifer would be used to pay the price of sin since no murderer was found. Prayer was offered by the elders of the city on behalf of the people that the sin of murder would be forgiven.
 - a. Note that the elders of the city took the responsibility of the sin that was committed and acted as spokesman for the whole city.
 - b. Secondly, note the fact that an innocent animal had to be killed (a price for the sin committed) indicates that God did not forget the sin simply because no one knew what happened.
 - c. Thirdly, note that when the elders prayed to God they said, "*Forgive, O Jehovah, thy people Israel...*" This prescribed prayer indicates the people's acknowledgment of their association to any breach of the law by a member of their society.
 2. Notice that the blood of the innocent lay upon the ground of the people and thereby all were associated with the murder. We may recall that when God had commanded Canaan to be destroyed He also commanded that all things be "*devoted*" (i.e., associated with the wickedness of Canaan and thereby discarded). Achan; however, disregarded God's commands and took of that which was devoted. Though Achan privately took what was not his to take, God said, "*Israel hath sinned; yea, they have even transgressed my covenant which I commanded them:*

yea, they have even taken of the devoted thing...” (see Joshua 7:11). Why would God accuse all of Israel of sinning when in reality it was the secret sin of Achan?

3. The early principles of the consequences of sin are brought out in this study. While sin remained among the people of God He was not in fellowship with them (i.e., He would not fight for them, they were accursed, God would not dwell in a place that did not display the same attitude as his in relation to the “*devoted*” thing [cf. Josh. 7:12]). Truly Israel was to be in all points holy as He is holy (see Lev. 11:44-45). Israel was “*redeemed*” by God and thereby belonged to Him. They were to thereby obliged to fear and obey His every will. When one redeemed person sinned it was soon to be a reflection of all Israel’s standing in relation to things devoted. How would they respond? Herein was God’s testing ground for their faith.
4. The lesson for us to learn is that God continues to expect us to be holy (I Pet. 1:16-17). The Lord desires our attitude of sin to be diametrically opposed to all things that offend His holy word. When sin is found among God’s people it is to be removed from the congregation rather than tolerated. When sin occurs among the people of God all are associated with it in that the Lord is looking to our response (i.e., He is proving us to see what is in our hearts / see Deut. 8:1-6). Will we tolerate it? Will it be detested and abhorred (Deut. 7:26; Rom. 12:9). The sin must be put away lest everyone suffer the consequences of the error as was the case of Achan’s sin (see Josh. 7:5). When the sin remains through man’s apathy, tolerance, and or lack of convicted spiritual distaste for sin God sees that all are guilty (see study # 20).

II. Marital Laws and Obligations (21:10-17):

- A. *“When thou goest forth to battle against thine enemies, and Jehovah thy God delivereth them into thy hands, and thou carriest them away captive, and seest among the captives a beautiful woman, and thou hast a desire unto her, and wouldest take her to thee to wife; then thou shalt bring her home to thy house; and she shall shave her head, and pare her nails; and she shall put the raiment of her captivity from off her, and shall remain in thy house, and bewail her father and her mother a full month: and after that thou shalt go in unto her, and be her husband, and she shall be thy wife. And it shall be, if thou have no delight in her, then thou shalt let her go whither she will; but thou shalt not sell her at all for money, thou shalt not deal with her as a slave, because thou hast humbled her”* (21:10-13).
 1. Taking a wife from the “*enemy*” can be none other than the women of the surrounding nations EXCEPT for those of Canaan. The Lord has previously given strict instructions regarding putting to death everything that has breath in its nostrils in Canaan (see Deut. 20:16-17). God had permitted Israel to take the spoils of women and children in these battles (see Deut. 20:14). God had; however, strictly forbid marriages with the Canaanites (see Deut. 7:1-5) (see study # 36; Marriage Laws).
 2. If a man, after the battle, saw a beautiful woman that he desired to take as a wife he was to bring her back to his house, allow the woman to mourn the death of her parents, and then go into her and be a husband to her.
 3. Later, if the man found some unseemly thing in the woman and he no longer desired her he could in no way sell her because “*thou hast humbled her*” (i.e., taken away her virginity).
- B. *“If a man have two wives, the one beloved, and the other hated, and they have borne him children, both the beloved and the hated; and if the first-born son be hers that was hated; then it shall be, in the day that he causeth his sons to inherit that which he hath, that he may not make the son of the beloved the first-born before the son of the hated, who is the first-born: but he shall acknowledge the first-born, the son of the hated, by giving him a double portion of all that he hath; for he is the beginning of his strength; the right of the first-born is his”* (21:14-17).
 1. It is apparent from this reading that by this time of Israel’s history they had engaged themselves in multiple marriages (remember Abraham and Sarah and Hagar at the same time and Jacob had Sarah and Leah). The Lord had never intended for Israel to do this yet it happened. Jesus (Matt. 19:5, 8) and the apostle Paul (Eph. 5:22-31) taught that there was to be one woman for one man for life. Why did God permit this now yet condemn it during the days of Jesus and the apostles? Why did God permit this violation of law yet hold stringently opposed to other violations? Why would the devoted in any area of life be accepted without consequences? If it

had always been God's intentions that one man take one woman for life How could God had allowed it in these great patriarchs such as Abraham and Jacob? This is a case that we must take as it is recorded. God permitted it yet that did not make it His will. God gave regulating laws in relationship to multiple marriages and divorce (see Deut. 24:1ff) yet it was not His will from the beginning of time. Jesus explained that these things happened due to the "*hardness*" of the people's heart. The people violated the will of God and continued to do so. The hardening of the heart, on the part of the people, suggests that they did know God's will on this yet rejected it. God suffered them in that He did not destroy them. Through time Israel had involved themselves in other areas of sin that God would have severely punished them for yet he overlooked it due to Moses' intercession. During NT days people were to learn more about God's view of sin and thereby come to the conclusion that the only way forgiveness may be sought is through the blood of Christ (see Gal. 3:22ff; Heb. 7:18).

2. Moses gives a scenario of a man having two wives. One wife is beloved and the other hated. The hated wife has the man's first born son. The beloved wife has a son as well from the man. Which son is to receive a double portion of the man's inheritance? The law of inheritance remains the same... it is the first born son even though the man has ill feelings for that wife and son.

III. Dealing with Rebellious Children (21:18-23):

- A. *"If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, that will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and, though they chasten him, will not hearken unto them; then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place; and they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton, and a drunkard. And all the men of his city shall stone him to death with stones: so shalt thou put away the evil from the midst of thee; and all Israel shall hear, and fear"* (21:18-21).
 1. Rebellion has been defined in this study as disobedience (see Deut. 1:26). Children were also commanded to obey the voice of their father and mother. Those who do not are to be "*chastened*." Through the process of time a child that continues to disobey his parent's will through stubborn actions and rebellion is to be taken before the elders of the city and stoned to death.
 2. While some things were permitted by the Lord other issues against His will were vigorously punished. A stubborn and rebellious child who gave no heed to his parent's instructions, even after the parents chastened him, was to be put to death. Today, God instructs parents to teach and chasten their children. Children are commanded to hear and obey their father and mother (see Eph. 6:1ff). Corporal punishment does not occur today yet through such a reading we too may hear and fear.
 3. Moses reiterates the theme of this book; i.e., "*so shalt thou put away the evil from the midst of thee; and all Israel shall hear, and fear"* (see Deut. 13:5; 17:7, 12; 19:19; 21:21).
- B. *"And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree; his body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt surely bury him the same day; for he that is hanged is accursed of God; that thou defile not thy land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee for an inheritance"* (21:22-23).
 1. Putting to death one who has been guilty of things such as adultery, rape, disobedience to parents and so forth was an act that indicated the people's similar detesting and abhorrence of sinful acts and respect for God's laws. Those who committed crimes worthy of death were a blight upon the land itself and were thereby to be discarded after their punishment.
 2. The gross sinners were not to be left on the wood hanging past sunset (cf. Josh. 8:29; 10:26-27). Because of their crimes they were "*accursed of God*." "The land was defiled not only by vices and crimes (cf. Lev. 18:24,28; Num. 35:34), but also by the exposure to view of criminals who had been punished with death, and thus had been smitten by the curse of God, in as much as their shameful deeds were thereby publicly exposed to view" (Keil and Delitzsch pg. 944). The curse of God is explained further by Barnes pg. 312 "The curse of God is probably regarded as lying on the malefactor because, from the fact of his being hanged, he must have

been guilty of a peculiarly atrocious breach of God's covenant. Such an offender could not remain on the face of the earth without defiling it (cf. Lev. 18:25-28; Num. 35:34). Therefore after the penalty of his crime had been inflicted, and he had hung for a time as a public example, the Holy land was to be at once and entirely delivered from his presence." "The placing of the body on a tree was not that which made the person accursed, but was an external sign or token of his being an accursed one" (PPC Vol. 3 pg. 350). Once again these incidents indicate God's passionate distaste for unlawful living (see study # 20).

3. At Galatians 3:13, our Lord Jesus is said to have *"redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us: for it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:"* Paul quotes from Deut. 21:22-23; signifying the terrible death our Lord suffered in our stead. The curse of the law is that man had to keep everything which was written in it (Deut. 27:26). Romans 3:9,23 illustrate man's inability to keep all the law or seek their justification through the Mosaic law thus the law (Mosaic law) left man under a curse (i.e., due God's condemning judgment). Jesus took this curse (the punishment for sin) upon himself for us (cf. Isa. 53:8). Nowhere do the scriptures say that Jesus took on our sins or himself became a sinful man on the cross; he simply took the curse of God (the punishment for sins) and thus redeemed us from having to pay the price of God's curse against sin (cf. Gal. 3:13 above) (see study # 19). Over all I believe this shows us the seriousness of sin and the fact that God neither tolerates it nor overlooks it. Secondly we too see that even though God's curse is upon the disobedience, He has provided a way for man to be saved based solely on his love, mercy and grace towards his creation (Jn. 3:16).

Chapter 22

I. How to handle Matters with other Brethren (22:1-11):

- A. *"Thou shalt not see thy brother's ox or his sheep go astray, and hide thyself from them: thou shalt surely bring them again unto thy brother. And if thy brother be not nigh unto thee, or if thou know him not, then thou shalt bring it home to thy house, and it shall be with thee until thy brother seek after it, and thou shalt restore it to him. And so shalt thou do with his ass; and so shalt thou do with his garment; and so shalt thou do with every lost thing of thy brother's, which he hath lost, and thou hast found: thou mayest not hide thyself. Thou shalt not see thy brother's ass or his ox fallen down by the way, and hide thyself from them: thou shalt surely help him to lift them up again"* (22:1-4).
 1. Moses develops the people's attitude toward things that belong to others and their own inner character. To see a brother's ox wandering around loose and not do anything about it is to illustrate a character that lacks care for others belongings. Whatever a brother loses is to be returned or held on to until the brother claims it. If a brother needs help you are to help rather than acting like he doesn't exist.
 2. Once again we see the togetherness of the brethren. Not only did they universally oppose sin but they were also determined to keep watch and help each other.
- B. *"A woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment; for whosoever doeth these things is an abomination unto Jehovah thy God"* (22:5).
 1. To confuse the identity of women and men was a corruption of God's creation. A woman who puts on a man's cloths or a man who puts a woman's clothing on is to be marked as an abomination unto Jehovah thy God.
 2. Paul clearly warns of keeping the distinction between male and female at I Corinthians 11:2-15 (see study # 37; Things that God Abhors).
- C. *"If a bird's nest chance to be before thee in the way, in any tree or on the ground, with young ones or eggs, and the dam sitting upon the young, or upon the eggs, thou shalt not take the dam with the young: thou shalt surely let the dam go, but the young thou mayest take unto thyself; that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days. When thou buildest a new house, then thou*

shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thy house, if any man fall from thence. ” (22:6-7).

1. Moses gives regulation regarding finding eggs or young birds being nursed by their mother.
 2. The people were not to take both dam and young together.
 3. More various regulations regarding the care for others even when building one’s house.
- D. *“Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with two kinds of seed, lest the whole fruit be forfeited, the seed which thou hast sown, and the increase of the vineyard. Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together. Thou shalt not wear a mingled stuff, wool and linen together” (22:8-11).*
1. Moses does not tell us why the Lord would not permit planting two different types of crops in one field other than the fact that if it is done the whole field was to be forfeited. Neither does Moses tell us why it was unlawful to plow with an ox and ass under the same yoke. Lastly, Moses forbids the sowing wool and linen (to different fabric types) together.
 2. Moses had first delivered this principle to the Israelites at Leviticus 19:19 saying, *“Ye shall keep my statutes. Thou shalt not let thy cattle gender with a diverse kind: thou shalt not sow thy field with two kinds of seed: neither shall there come upon thee a garment of two kinds of stuff mingled together” (19:19).*
 - a. The words *“diverse kind”* (Heb. *kil'ayim*) = “separation; two heterogeneities:--divers seeds (-e kinds), mingled (seed)” (Strong’s 3610). The Greek equivalent is found one time in the NT at II Cor. 6:14; i.e., (*heterozugeo*). The Greek word is defined as “to be yoked in unequal partnership with another” (LS 320). “Yoked with a different yoke; used in Lev. 19:19 of the union of beasts of different kinds, e.g. an ox and an ass), to come under an unequal or different yoke, to be unequally yoked, to have fellowship with one who is not an equal” (Thayer 245). “Draft animals that need different kinds of yokes, because they are of different species [i.e., an ox and a donkey]: Lev. 19:19” (AG 314). Cattle were not to be mix breed (Lev. 19:19), different seeds sown in the same field (Deut. 22:9), different animals such as the ox and mule were not to be yoked together in work (Deut. 22:10), and two different fabrics were not to be sown together (Lev. 19:19; Deut. 22:11). The principle behind these facts is found at II Cor. 6:14ff where Paul said, *“Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers: for what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? Or what communion hath light with darkness?”*
 - b. Just as the Israelite, who mingled two things that did not lawful belong together, was unaccepted so the Christian today who tolerates and or accepts erroneous principles that do not belong in spirituality is unacceptable (see study # 38; Unity and Diversity).

II. Sexual Sins among the People (22:12-30):

- A. *“Thou shalt make thee fringes upon the four borders of thy vesture, wherewith thou coverest thyself. If any man take a wife, and go in unto her, and hate her, and lay shameful things to her charge, and bring up an evil name upon her, and say, I took this woman, and when I came nigh to her, I found not in her the tokens of virginity; then shall the father of the damsel, and her mother, take and bring forth the tokens of the damsel's virginity unto the elders of the city in the gate; and the damsel's father shall say unto the elders, I gave my daughter unto this man to wife, and he hateth her; and, lo, he hath laid shameful things to her charge, saying, I found not in thy daughter the tokens of virginity; and yet these are the tokens of my daughter's virginity. And they shall spread the garment before the elders of the city. And the elders of that city shall take the man and chastise him; and they shall fine him a hundred shekels of silver, and give them unto the father of the damsel, because he hath brought up an evil name upon a virgin of Israel: and she shall be his wife; he may not put her away all his days” (22:12-19).*
1. When a man took a woman to marriage she was to be a virgin. It may be that when the man lies sexually with the woman that he believes she has been defiled by another man. If the man truly believes this he is to state his cause to the woman’s mother and father. The woman’s mother and father were to take the damsel’s *“tokens of virginity”* before the elders. Said evidence is to prove the man’s fears wrong. The *“token (proof) of virginity”* = “In the regulations dealing with the treatment accorded to an unchaste bride, some scholars suggest that the required token was a blood-smearred garment or cloth consequent upon a ruptured hymen

- (“A membranous fold of tissue partly or completely occluding the external vaginal orifice” (AHD 631)” (ISBE, V. 4, pp. 869).
2. If the accusing man has been discovered as wrong he was to pay his wife’s father and mother 100 shekels of silver because he has sought to shame his wife by giving her an evil name (i.e., she was a fornicator before she was married). This again teaches us what God’s view of premarital sexual intercourse is (see I Cor. 6:18).
- B. *“But if this thing be true, that the tokens of virginity were not found in the damsel; then they shall bring out the damsel to the door of her father’s house, and the men of her city shall stone her to death with stones, because she hath wrought folly in Israel, to play the harlot in her father’s house: so shalt thou put away the evil from the midst of thee”* (22:20-21).
1. The man’s accusation against the woman may be a correct assessment (i.e., she had committed fornication with another man before she was married to the current man).
 2. This being the case the woman was to be stoned to death by the men of the city *“because she hath wrought folly in Israel, to play the harlot in her father’s house.”*
 3. Once again, we find the thematic statement that accompanies punishment of sinful acts, *“so shalt thou put away the evil from the midst of thee.”*
- C. *“If a man be found lying with a woman married to a husband, then they shall both of them die, the man that lay with the woman, and the woman: so shalt thou put away the evil from Israel. If there be a damsel that is a virgin betrothed unto a husband, and a man find her in the city, and lie with her; then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of that city, and ye shall stone them to death with stones; the damsel, because she cried not, being in the city; and the man, because he hath humbled his neighbor’s wife: so thou shalt put away the evil from the midst of thee”* (22:19-24).
1. The sin of adultery was to be no more tolerated than fornication. The guilty adulterators were to be stoned to death for their error.
 2. Once again the Deuteronomy theme of putting away evil from the people is reiterated.
- D. *“But if the man find the damsel that is betrothed in the field, and the man force her, and lie with her; then the man only that lay with her shall die: but unto the damsel thou shalt do nothing; there is in the damsel no sin worthy of death: for as when a man riseth against his neighbor, and slayeth him, even so is this matter; for he found her in the field, the betrothed damsel cried, and there was none to save her”* (22:25-27).
1. Moses gives instructions regarding the sin of rape.
 2. The rapist would be put to death and the innocent woman left alone.
- E. *“If a man find a damsel that is a virgin, that is not betrothed, and lay hold on her, and lie with her, and they be found; then the man that lay with her shall give unto the damsel’s father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife, because he hath humbled her; he may not put her away all his days”* (22:28-29).
1. Here is a case of fornication between two people who are not betrothed to be married.
 2. If it be that they are found out the two are to be married and never divorce.
 3. This causes us to remember the case above where a man takes a woman and finds out that she had previously been with another man but did not marry that man. Those who were never caught in such a sin, went on with their lives, and married someone else risked being found out and stoned to death. Again, we see the value of sexual purity among the people of God.
- F. *“A man shall not take his father’s wife, and shall not uncover his father’s skirt”* (22:30)
1. The sin of incest was not to be tolerated.
 2. Some; however, may have been born to another mother (i.e., his father’s other wife). The woman his father is married to is not his mother. Nonetheless, such an act would not only constitute adultery but a perverted act.

Lessons Learned from chapters 21 and 22

- It has become overwhelming apparent that Moses is delivering these sermons to the people of God that they may stand together in their opposition to sin. We have now run across the phrase, *“so shalt thou put away the evil from Israel”* ten times (see Deut. 13:5; 17:7, 12; 19:13, 19; 21:9, 21; 22:21, 22, 24). A united front

of God's people against sin is the message of Deuteronomy (see study # 39; Unity among the People of God).

- Note that when sin occurred it was not to be tolerated in others or self. When a homicidal murder occurred wherein there were no witnesses or knowledge of the killer all the people were to seek forgiveness due to their association with the sin (see Deut. 21:8) (guilty by association unless acts are performed to show and beg innocence).
- When a rebellious son was exposed all were to stone him to death and thereby put away the evil from Israel. Again, a united front was displayed by the people to show that there would be no tolerance of sin (see Deut. 21:21).
- When those who committed sins worthy of death were hung they were not to be left on the wood post all night lest the land be defiled (i.e., All would show their abhorrence of the sin by removing the body from the sight of all upon the land due to that individuals gross negligence of God's laws) (Deut. 21:22-23).
- All of Israel was to be sexually pure and those who violate God's laws were to be punished (many by death depending upon the crime) (see Deut. 22:9-11). Again, the people were to be united in opposing those who violate God's laws.
- The Grand lesson is that God's people are to be united in truth (see Jn. 17:17-21; Rom. 15:5; I Cor. 1:10; Eph. 4:3; Phil. 1:27) and share in a willingness to not only abhor that which is evil but put it away from the people (see also I Cor. 5:1-8). Said united front against sin would see them through the battles that lay ahead in Canaan. Such a united front against sin today will see us through the onslaught of Satan through false teachers, spiritual apathy, and spiritual liberalism in the form of tolerating sin. Our fellowship with God is dependant upon our attitude and actions toward sin. Christians as a whole must put up a united front against it.

Chapter 23

I. The Lord Rejects some at His "Assembly" (23:1-8):

A. *"He that is wounded in the stones, or hath his privy member cut off, shall not enter into the assembly of Jehovah. A bastard shall not enter into the assembly of Jehovah; even to the tenth generation shall none of his enter into the assembly of Jehovah"* (23:1-2).

1. The one with wounded stones (i.e., testicles) and or a castrated man is disqualified from entering into the *"assembly of Jehovah."* A *"bastard"* is an illegitimate child (i.e., one born to a woman who was not married at the time). Said individual, even unto the 10th generation, shall not enter into the *"assembly of Jehovah."* This, once again, puts a stamp upon God's distaste for premarital sexual activity (see I Cor. 6:13ff; Heb. 13:4).
2. What is the *"assembly of Jehovah?"* Moses has instructed Israel in relation to keeping the congregation of God's people holy and pure (see Lev. 11:44). They were to have a united front against false prophets and unlawful acts as a whole. The people are repeatedly admonished to *"put away the evil from the midst of thee..."* The conclusion is simple. The assembly of Jehovah is Israel as a whole (i.e., those recognized as belonging to God). The congregation was to be guarded against sin and unqualified people (see study # 42).
3. Let us recall that the Lord had given specific instructions or guidelines for those who would serve as priests at Leviticus 16. No son of Aaron who had a blemish in that he was blind, lame, had a flat nose, was deformed, had a broken foot or hand, had a crooked back, was a dwarf, had an eye malady, or had injured testicles could serve as priest. Such a one was viewed as *"blemished"* (Lev. 21:18-21). Those who were *"blemished"* were equated with those who walk in sin in that they are depicted as *"unclean"* (Lev. 16:16, 30), *"defiled"* (Lev. 18:30), *"impure"* (Lev. 22:21), and having a *"blemish or imperfection"* (Lev. 22:21). The holy nature of God is depicted in His *"abhorrence"* of those who walk in sin (cf. Lev. 20:23). God's holiness is fixed in our minds when we read of the defiled state of these blemished sons of Aaron, those who had leprosy, women who delivered babies, and even those who were in a menstrual cycle. These people, in said cases, did no blatant sin yet they were depicted as unclean for set periods due to the holy nature of God. When one does not represent total perfection in mind and body they

were rejected by God. The castrated or illegitimate represented imperfections in the realm of God's creation and moral standards.

- B.** *“An Ammonite or a Moabite shall not enter into the assembly of Jehovah; even to the tenth generation shall none belonging to them enter into the assembly of Jehovah for ever: because they met you not with bread and with water in the way, when ye came forth out of Egypt, and because they hired against thee Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse thee. Nevertheless Jehovah thy God would not hearken unto Balaam; but Jehovah thy God turned the curse into a blessing unto thee, because Jehovah thy God loved thee. Thou shalt not seek their peace nor their prosperity all thy days for ever”* (23:3-6).
1. After Israel had defeated Sihon king of the Amorites, they went to battle against Og the king of Bashan. Both kingdoms were routed and their land disposed by the Israelites according to God's commandments (see Numb. 21:21-35). Balak, king of Moab, heard of these battles and had great fear of Israel. He attempts to hire a prophet by the name of Balaam to curse the people of God so that he might defeat them (see Numb. 22:1-6). Each time Balaam tried to curse Israel; however, he blessed them.
 2. The Moabites and Ammonites were Israel's kinsmen (see Gen. 19:37ff). They should have had pleasure and empathy for Israel. They rather sought their demise and for this their wickedness the Lord excludes them from the assembly *“even to the tenth generation.”*
- C.** *“Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite; for he is thy brother: thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian, because thou wast a sojourner in his land. The children of the third generation that are born unto them shall enter into the assembly of Jehovah”* (23:7-8).
1. Esau was the father (or point of origination) of the Edomites (see Gen. 36:9). Esau was also the son of Isaac and twin brother of Jacob (Gen. 25:25ff). Moses thereby instructs Israel not to abhor these people because *“he is thy brother.”*
 2. Furthermore, Israel is instructed not to abhor the Egyptian due to the fact that God had made them a mighty nation within Egypt and they were sojourners in their land.
 3. After three generations a man of Esau or Egyptian born may enter into the congregation of God's people.

II. Purity during times of War (23:9-14):

- A.** *“When thou goest forth in camp against thine enemies, then thou shalt keep thee from every evil thing. If there be among you any man, that is not clean by reason of that which chanceth him by night, then shall he go abroad out of the camp, he shall not come within the camp: but it shall be, when evening cometh on, he shall bathe himself in water; and when the sun is down, he shall come within the camp”* (23:9-11).
1. Young's literal translation states that the matter of being unclean was an “incident” (chance / ASV) (occurrence / NKJB). There are multitudes of things that would cause a man to be unclean (i.e., contact with the dead etc.). The issue here; however, is the state of being (i.e., unclean). To be *“unclean”* is to be considered in a state of sin and unacceptable before the Lord (see Lev. 16:16, 30).
 2. All were to acknowledge the man's unclean state and expect him to go outside the camp and remain unclean until the next evening. When he has bathed in water he shall come back into the camp.
- B.** *“Thou shalt have a place also without the camp, whither thou shalt go forth abroad: and thou shalt have a paddle among thy weapons; and it shall be, when thou sittest down abroad, thou shalt dig therewith, and shalt turn back and cover that which cometh from thee: for Jehovah thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp, to deliver thee, and to give up thine enemies before thee; therefore shall thy camp be holy, that he may not see an unclean thing in thee, and turn away from thee”* (23:13-14).
1. Interestingly, the Lord gives minute details that even govern the place and manner that one urinates or defecates. No man was to use the rest room within the camp but rather they were to go to a designated area, with their shovel, and bury their waist.
 2. The reason for these instructions is that *“Jehovah thy God walks in the midst of thy camp...”* God will in no way be with a camp of men who are unclean. The men, as a whole, were to see

to it that each and every man was clean so that God would remain with them. One can only imagine the terror of going to battle without the Lord being with them. Likewise, we ought to be careful to be morally clean in every way that “*Jehovah thy God would walk in the midst of our camp.*” Those who walk in sin or tolerate it in the lives of others can rest assured that God will “*turn away from thee*” (see study # 9 and # 40; Sin Separates One from God).

III. **Mistreated Slaves and the rejection of Prostitutes (23:15-18):**

- A. “*Thou shalt not deliver unto his master a servant that is escaped from his master unto thee: he shall dwell with thee, in the midst of thee, in the place which he shall choose within one of thy gates, where it pleaseth him best: thou shalt not oppress him*” (23:15-16).
1. Moses is apparently speaking of a slave that has escaped the hand of a cruel master.
 2. Said individual was to be treated kindly and given a place to live.
- B. “*There shall be no prostitute of the daughters of Israel, neither shall there be a sodomite of the sons of Israel. Thou shalt not bring the hire of a harlot, or the wages of a dog, into the house of Jehovah thy God for any vow: for even both these are an abomination unto Jehovah thy God*” (23:17-18).
1. Moses, by inspiration of God, forbids any prostitute or sodomite among men (homosexual acts) within the congregation of His people. Said acts are an “*abomination unto Jehovah thy God*” (see study # 41; Sexual Immorality).
 2. Furthermore, one who would attempt to bring money gained through acts of harlotry unto the Lord at his holy temple was to be rejected because He abhors such.

IV. **Lending Money, Keeping Vows, and Eating in a Neighbors Field (23:19-25):**

- A. “*Thou shalt not lend upon interest to thy brother; interest of money, interest of victuals, interest of anything that is lent upon interest: unto a foreigner thou mayest lend upon interest; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon interest, that Jehovah thy God may bless thee in all that thou puttest thy hand unto, in the land whither thou goest in to possess it*” (23:19-20).
1. Israel is commanded not to lend money to brethren and charge them interest. Foreigners were a different story (the very act illustrates that Israel had business dealings with those of the world yet not spiritual fellowship / much like we do today) (see study # 42; Bible Fellowship).
 2. Note that the blessings of God were dependant upon whether or not Israel obeyed this command.
- B. “*When thou shalt vow a vow unto Jehovah thy God, thou shalt not be slack to pay it: for Jehovah thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee. But if thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no sin in thee. That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt observe and do; according as thou hast vowed unto Jehovah thy God, a freewill-offering, which thou hast promised with thy mouth. When thou comest into thy neighbor's vineyard, then thou mayest eat of grapes thy fill at thine own pleasure; but thou shalt not put any in thy vessel. When thou comest into thy neighbor's standing grain, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thy hand; but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbor's standing grain*” (23:21-25).
1. The Israelites lawfully offered free will offerings to God and made vows that illustrated a heart that purposed to serve Him with all their heart. These vows were to be kept. They were a promise to God and those who did not keep the vow were recognized as guilty of sin. Whatsoever, thereby, comes out of the mouth in the vow was to be kept.
 2. Israel was aloud to eat of their neighbor’s vineyard and grain fields while traveling; however, they could not bring a vessel with them and fill it.

Chapter 24

I. **Moses Gives Instructions regarding Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage (24:1-4):**

- A. “*When a man taketh a wife, and marrieth her, then it shall be, if she find no favor in his eyes, because he hath found some unseemly thing in her, that he shall write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house. And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife” (24:1-2).*

1. Marriage Laws were discussed at Deuteronomy 21:10-17. Moses had instructed Israel that the men who had gained a wife through the spoils of battle with foreign nations (except the Canaanites) could “*let her go*” (i.e., divorce her) but not “*sell*” her if he found “*no delight in her*.” He could not sell her because he has “*humbled her*” by laying with her sexually (see Deut. 21:10-14). That which was “*no delight*” at Deuteronomy 21:14 is termed “*she find no favor in his eyes*” here at Deuteronomy 24:1. The **cause** of the man finding no favor with the woman, and consequential divorce, is that “*he hath found some unseemly thing in her*.” An “*unseemly thing*” (Hebrew *ervah*) means, “disgrace or blemish” (Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible #6172). We know that the “*unseemly thing*” could not include adultery because the Mosaic Law condemned such a one to death (cf. Lev. 20:10; Deut. 22:22). The unseemly thing was thereby something about the woman, other than adultery, that caused the man to have “*no favor in his eyes*.” A blemish could have been a deformity, the inability to have children, an issue of blood, something in her past that he did not know about until now, etc.
 2. The man is instructed, in said cases, to “*write her a bill of divorcement... and send her out of his house*.” The “*bill of divorcement*” (Heb. *seper kritut*) was “a legal document certifying a divorce on the grounds specified with no reflection on the wife’s marital faithfulness.” (ISBE; Vol. 1, pp. 975). “The custom of giving letters of divorce was probably adopted by the Israelites in Egypt, where the practice of writing had already found its way into all the relations of life... Moses could not entirely abolish the traditional custom, if only ‘because of the hardness of the people’s hearts’ (Matt. 19:8).”¹
 3. Once the “*bill of divorcement*” was written and handed to the wife she was then sent away by the man (he wanted nothing more to do with her). Said woman was now eligible to remarry even though she had committed no sexually immoral act against her husband (i.e., “*she may go and be another man’s wife*”).
- B.** “*And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, who took her to be his wife; her former husband, who sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that is abomination before Jehovah: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which Jehovah thy God giveth thee for an inheritance*” (24:3-4).
1. Moses follows out the woman who has been given a bill of divorcement from her first husband. She has now gone and married another man. He too has found some unseemly thing in her and now “*hates her*.” Her second husband writes a bill of divorcement and gives it unto the woman sending her out of his house. This woman is no longer free to remarry another man. She is defiled. She is defiled even if the second husband died and left her a widow... she may not remarry. To do otherwise would be an “*abomination before Jehovah*.” Any who would allow such to take place (i.e., a twice divorced woman to remarry) causes the land to sin in that all would be guilty of this woman’s trespass by their apathy toward the deed (see notes at Deut. 21:23) (see study # 20).
 2. This passage is often discussed in light of the conversation between Jesus and the Pharisees at Matthew 19:1-9. The Pharisees were attempting to put Jesus on trial before the people because they sought to accuse (cf. Matt. 12:10) and destroy him (cf. Matt. 12:14). If they could succeed in pitting Jesus against Moses they could certainly prevail. They ask the Lord Jesus a question saying, “*Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?*” (Matt. 19:3). Jesus answered saying, “*Have ye not read, that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh? So that they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder*” (Matt. 19:4-6). To this point of the discussion the Pharisees are thinking that they have the Lord in check mate. They have found an area of Jesus’ teachings that seemingly affronts the people’s beloved Moses’ instructions regarding marriage, divorce, and remarriage. Jesus clearly states a

¹ Keil and Delitzsch; Commentary on the Old Testament; Vol. 1, pp. 950-951

different teaching than does Moses on the subject. The Pharisees thereby answer Jesus saying, “*Why then did Moses command to give a bill of divorcement, and to put her away?*” (Matt. 19:7). The Pharisees clearly see that Jesus has said something totally opposed to Moses’ teaching and thereby call him on this teaching. Jesus answers saying, “*Moses for your hardness of heart suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it hath not been so*” (Matt. 19:8). Jesus, speaking by divine revelation, states that Moses “*suffered*” (*epitrepo*) (i.e., to “refer the matter to a person, leave it to his judgment... to give up, yield, to permit, suffer” (LS 305)) their divorces due to their “*hardness of heart.*” God had always intended for there to be one man for one woman for life; however, the people hardened their hearts against this command.

3. Here is a summation: Moses suffered a man to put away a wife for any cause (adultery was not under discussion because this was punishable by death) and allowed the put away wife to remarry. Jesus said that this has never been God’s intention from the beginning.
4. We find difficulty with these instructions because we have found, through a study of the Pentateuch, a stringent demand to adhere to the will of God. Why would God permit marriage to two wives (see Deut. 21:15) and divorce and remarriage for non adultery issues at Deuteronomy 24:1ff yet condemn it from the beginning of creation and now on the other side of the Mosaic Law? The answer lies within law itself. Moses’ Law on marriage, divorce, and remarriage at Deuteronomy 24:1ff became a law in and of itself due to the hardness of the people’s heart. Though it was not God’s will that man and woman divorce it none-the-less came to be law under the Mosaic system and thereby honored at that time. Jesus, the long awaited King of God’s Kingdom, laid down the law of Christ by saying, “*And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, commits adultery: and he that marries her when she is put away commits adultery*” (Matt. 19:9). Keil and Delitzsch write that the woman was defiled after she left her first husband and this gave Jesus the occasion to expose the error of the people’s hard hearts on the matter (see Keil and Delitzsch V. 1, pp. 951). It seems to me that Romans 9 is an explanation of how God could tolerate this sin here and not tolerate other sins elsewhere. Is there inconsistency with God? No! God will have mercy and patience on whom He will (read Rom. 9:6-23).

II. Various Laws (24:5-22):

- A. “*When a man taketh a new wife, he shall not go out in the host, neither shall he be charged with any business: he shall be free at home one year, and shall cheer his wife whom he hath taken*” (24:5).
 1. Newly wed men were exempt for one year from fighting.
 2. This one year time was to be spent “*cheering his wife.*”
- B. “*No man shall take the mill or the upper millstone to pledge; for he taketh a man's life to pledge*” (24:6).
 1. At times some of the Israelites would be in need and seek to borrow money from others using collateral.
 2. Moses forbids the use of “*the upper millstone*” as collateral because this was indispensable in the daily preparation of the people’s food. To take the millstone would be to take the person’s ability to prepare food for the family.
- C. “*If a man be found stealing any of his brethren of the children of Israel, and he deal with him as a slave, or sell him; then that thief shall die: so shalt thou put away the evil from the midst of thee*” (24:7).
 1. Kidnapping individuals and selling them as slaves was a crime punishable by death.
 2. Those who performed such a sin were to be killed and thereby the peoples, “*put away the evil from the midst of thee.*” Once again the theme of this study surfaces. The purity and holiness of the people of God as a whole was always to be considered.
- D. “*Take heed in the plague of leprosy, that thou observe diligently, and do according to all that the priests the Levites shall teach you: as I commanded them, so ye shall observe to do*” (24:8).
 1. Those diagnosed with leprosy were to follow the strict instructions laid down by Moses at Leviticus chapter 13 all.

2. The procedures for the leper were a commandment of God.
- E. *“Remember what Jehovah thy God did unto Miriam, by the way as ye came forth out of Egypt”* (24:9).
1. Deuteronomy has been a book that has caused Israel to recall their failures in obeying God’s will (see Deut. 1:26 etc.). Moses now calls to Israel’s remembrance Miriam’s rebellious act against God’s sovereign choice of Moses as the people’s law giver (see Numb. 12:1-10).
 2. Punishment awaits the man or woman who rebels against God’s sovereign will.
- F. *“When thou dost lend thy neighbor any manner of loan, thou shalt not go into his house to fetch his pledge. Thou shalt stand without, and the man to whom thou dost lend shall bring forth the pledge without unto thee. And if he be a poor man, thou shalt not sleep with his pledge; thou shalt surely restore to him the pledge when the sun goeth down, that he may sleep in his garment, and bless thee: and it shall be righteousness unto thee before Jehovah thy God”* (24:10-13).
1. There would come a time that the man who borrowed money using his own clothes or covers as collateral was to pay his debt. The debtor; however, was not to barge into the man’s house and take the pledge. The borrower was to bring his pledge out to the man.
 2. Moses shows empathetic treatment toward the poor in that the coat gained in the pledge was to be returned to the poor man before nightfall that he may warm himself with it.
- G. *“Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy sojourners that are in thy land within thy gates: in his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it: lest he cry against thee unto Jehovah, and it be sin unto thee”* (24:14-15).
1. Those who are wealthy and hire out laborers for a days work were not to withhold pay.
 2. When such a man works hard for the pay he should receive his wages at the end of the day because he desperately needs this to survive.
- H. *“The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin”* (24:16).
1. Ezekiel had reiterated this principle in his prophecy at Ezek. 18:20.
 2. While it may be true that the father had the responsibility to teach the child Bible truths it may be that the child is stubborn and refuses to accept the way of righteousness (see Deut. 21:18-21). The stubborn and rebellious child may go on to commit a sin worthy of death. The father would not be held responsible for such a child and neither would the child be responsible for the father if he commit a sin worthy of death. Moses commands, *“every man shall be put to death for his own sin.”*
- I. *“Thou shalt not wrest the justice due to the sojourner, or to the fatherless, nor take the widow's raiment to pledge; but thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt, and Jehovah thy God redeemed thee thence: therefore I command thee to do this thing. When thou reapest thy harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the sojourner, for the fatherless, and for the widow; that Jehovah thy God may bless thee in all the work of thy hands. When thou beatest thine olive-tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again: it shall be for the sojourner, for the fatherless, and for the widow. When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it after thee: it shall be for the sojourner, for the fatherless, and for the widow. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt: therefore I command thee to do this thing”* (24:17-22).
1. God demands justice for all. Whether the person be a sojourner, fatherless, or brother. Israel was to take consideration of the fact that they were all bondmen (slaves) in Egypt. Never think too highly of yourselves now.
 2. There would come times when it would be advantages to take a widow’s much needed clothing in a pledge but never let it happen. God cares for the widows and fatherless. The wealthy are to thereby leave all the “seconds” in the fields. They are not to harvest the corners of their fields but rather leave these parts for the sojourners, widows, and fatherless.

Lessons Learned from Deuteronomy 23 – 24

- Once again we find that God’s people were to be united in maintaining their state of holiness. Their fellowship with God was dependant upon said actions (see Deut. 23:14; I Cor. 1:1-10).
- Secondly, we learn more about marital laws of the OT as opposed to the NT (see Deut. 24:1-2 compared to Matthew 19:1-9).
- Thirdly, we learn more of God’s special care for the poor, fatherless, widows, and sojourners. James said, *“Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world”* (James 1:27).

Chapter 25

I. Laws regarding Corporal Punishment and Labor (25:1-4):

- A. *“If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment, and the judges judge them; then they shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked; and it shall be, if the wicked man be worthy to be beaten, that the judge shall cause him to lie down, and to be beaten before his face, according to his wickedness, by number. Forty stripes he may give him, he shall not exceed; lest, if he should exceed, and beat him above these with many stripes, then thy brother should seem vile unto thee”* (25:1-3).
1. God is the Lord of justice (see Jer. 9:23-24). Man’s perception of right and wrong is developed by the Law of God. Justice sees to it that the Law of God is kept and the rod of correction administered to those who do not. The righteous are to be justified and the wicked condemned. Throughout Israel’s history, as we see today in our own society, justice does not prevail. Often the wicked are treated as though they were righteous and the righteous as though they were wicked (see Eccl. 3:16). The prophet Isaiah said, *“Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!”* (Isa. 5:20).
 2. According to Proverbs 10:13 and 26:3 the rods or sticks used to beat the unjust were taken upon the back. The man would apparently lie face down on the ground and be beaten up to forty stripes. “The number, forty, was probably chosen with reference to its symbolical significance, which it had derived from Gen. 7:12 onwards, as the full measure of judgment” (Keil and Delitzsch pg. 953). This law is the reason that on five occasions in the Apostle Paul’s life he received *“forty stripes save one”* (see II Cor. 11:24). The *“save one”* was so that the Jews not be found guilty of going above the prescribed forty and thereby be viewed as a *“vile”* man among the people (Deut. 25:3).
- B. *“Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the grain”* (25:4).
1. Laboring animals were to be given the right to eat that which they worked for. If an ox worked at treading out grain then he was to be given the right to eat a portion that which he treaded as his wages. To do otherwise would be a matter of cruelty.
 2. The apostle Paul used this law to illustrate God’s will in relation to a preacher’s right to receive wages from the church for his work at I Corinthians 9:1-13. At I Corinthians 9:14 Paul said, *“Even so did the Lord ordain that they that proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel.”* Paul stated that this was a matter of *“law”* (i.e., he referred back to Deut. 25:4 and quoted that law at I Cor. 9:9-10).

II. The Levirate Law and Law of a Wife’s deeds when two are Fighting (25:5-12):

- A. *“If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no son, the wife of the dead shall not be married without unto a stranger: her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother unto her. And it shall be, that the first-born that she beareth shall succeed in the name of his brother that is dead, that his name be not blotted out of Israel”* (25:5-6).
1. God’s will was that a man’s name not be blotted out by death. If a man dies not having a son then his brother was to take his surviving wife and she would become the wife of the brother for the sake of producing a son and continuing that man’s heritage.
 2. When the dead man’s brother took his brother’s wife as his own and had a son that young man was to be recognized as the dead man’s first born son.

- B. *“And if the man like not to take his brother's wife, then his brother's wife shall go up to the gate unto the elders, and say, My husband's brother refuseth to raise up unto his brother a name in Israel; he will not perform the duty of a husband's brother unto me. Then the elders of his city shall call him, and speak unto him: and if he stand, and say, I like not to take her; then shall his brother's wife come unto him in the presence of the elders, and loose his shoe from off his foot, and spit in his face; and she shall answer and say, So shall it be done unto the man that doth not build up his brother's house. And his name shall be called in Israel, The house of him that hath his shoe loosed”* (25:7-10).
1. It was clearly a shameful thing not to fulfill the Levirate Law of Marriage. The woman was to spit in such a one's face after having loosed his shoes. The shame not only occurred at the point of the woman spitting in his face but he was to live with this shame in that all Israel would look upon his house and say, This is the *“house of him that hath his shoe loosed.”*
 2. Man ought to feel the shame of sin today lest he change not his ways (see study # 43; The Shame of Sin).
- C. *“When men strive together one with another, and the wife of the one draweth near to deliver her husband out of the hand of him that smiteth him, and putteth forth her hand, and taketh him by the secrets; then thou shalt cut off her hand, thine eye shall have no pity”* (25:11-12).
1. Moses continues to instruct Israel with various laws.
 2. Moses considers a quarrel between two men. The wife of one may seek to help her husband by taking hold of the enemy's testicles to loose her husband. Such an act was not to be tolerated. The woman's hand was to be cut off and no one was to have pity on her.

III. **Law of just weights and Command to destroy the Amalekites (25:13-19):**

- A. *“Thou shalt not have in thy bag diverse weights, a great and a small. Thou shalt not have in thy house diverse measures, a great and a small. A perfect and just weight shalt thou have; a perfect and just measure shalt thou have: that thy days may be long in the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee. For all that do such things, even all that do unrighteously, are an abomination unto Jehovah thy God”* (25:13-16).
1. The *“weights”* and *“measures”* were “common standards of length, volume, area, and weight... the study of weights and measures is called metrology” (ISBE v. 4, pp. 1046-47). Metrology is the “science that deals with measurement... a system of measurement” (AHD 793). To have a *“diverse”* weight or measure would be to have the standard altered. Let us say that grain was farmed and sold at a market by the weight. The standard (we used pounds today) would be the measure used in the sale. If one had 10 measures or weights (i.e., an homer etc.) of wheat he would be paid the going rate of an homer of wheat. If the one measuring the wheat for sale used *“diverse weights”* to measure the sale he would be cheating the farmer. A standard weight that was actually lighter than the true standard would give the merchant more wheat for less money (i.e., he would be cheating the farmer). Such a cheating scheme is an abomination to Jehovah God (see Prov. 20:10; Mic. 6:11). The Lord used the weights and measures of the days of Daniel as an illustration of Belshazzar's wickedness (see Dan. 5:27) (i.e., His moral character did not measure up to the standard of God's Word) (see study # 44; The Standard of Truth).
 2. Notice that not only are they who cheat with weights and measures considered an abomination to God but also all who would do acts of unrighteousness (see God's view of sin).
- B. *“Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way as ye came forth out of Egypt; how he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary; and he feared not God. Therefore it shall be, when Jehovah thy God hath given thee rest from all thine enemies round about, in the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it, that thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven; thou shalt not forget”* (25:17-19).
1. When Israel had traveled from Egypt through the desert (Ex. 17:9-16), the Amalekites attacked them from the rear where was the *“feeble, faint and weary”* (Deut. 25:18). God *“reminds”* Israel of this wicked attack and commands that they *“blot out their remembrance.”*
 2. This was ultimately performed under King Saul (I Sam. 15)

Chapter 26

I. Instructions to be thankful when in Canaan (26 all):

- A. *“And it shall be, when thou art come in unto the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, and possessest it, and dwellest therein, that thou shalt take of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which thou shalt bring in from thy land that Jehovah thy God giveth thee; and thou shalt put it in a basket, and shalt go unto the place which Jehovah thy God shall choose, to cause his name to dwell there. And thou shalt come unto the priest that shall be in those days, and say unto him, I profess this day unto Jehovah thy God, that I am come unto the land which Jehovah sware unto our fathers to give us. And the priest shall take the basket out of thy hand, and set it down before the altar of Jehovah thy God”* (26:1-4).
1. Moses continues to prepare the people to enter into Canaan.
 2. The people were to go in, possess Canaan, and take the first fruits of the ground for an offering unto Jehovah.
- B. *“And thou shalt answer and say before Jehovah thy God, A Syrian ready to perish was my father; and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there, few in number; and he became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous. And the Egyptians dealt ill with us, and afflicted us, and laid upon us hard bondage: and we cried unto Jehovah, the God of our fathers, and Jehovah heard our voice, and saw our affliction, and our toil, and our oppression; and Jehovah brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great terribleness, and with signs, and with wonders; and he hath brought us into this place, and hath given us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey”* (26:5-9).
1. Israel was to offer up the first fruits of the land of Canaan as a memorial for all God had done to bring them to their current blessed state.
 2. Israel had grown into a mighty nation in Egypt. They were cruelly treated with hard labor. Finally, Israel was delivered by the mighty hand of God with signs and wonders.
 3. At this point the second promise of God to Abraham would be fulfilled (i.e., the mighty nation and land promises).
- C. *“And now, behold, I have brought the first of the fruit of the ground, which thou, O Jehovah, hast given me. And thou shalt set it down before Jehovah thy God, and worship before Jehovah thy God: and thou shalt rejoice in all the good which Jehovah thy God hath given unto thee, and unto thy house, thou, and the Levite, and the sojourner that is in the midst of thee”* (26:10-11).
1. The offering of the first fruits of Canaan upon entry of the land was to be considered an offering of thanksgiving for all that Jehovah had done for them.
 2. A day of joyous worship was to take place.
- D. *“When thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithe of thine increase in the third year, which is the year of tithing, then thou shalt give it unto the Levite, to the sojourner, to the fatherless, and to the widow, that they may eat within thy gates, and be filled. And thou shalt say before Jehovah thy God, I have put away the hallowed things out of my house, and also have given them unto the Levite, and unto the sojourner, to the fatherless, and to the widow, according to all thy commandment which thou hast commanded me: I have not transgressed any of thy commandments, neither have I forgotten them: I have not eaten thereof in my mourning, neither have I put away thereof, being unclean, nor given thereof for the dead: I have hearkened to the voice of Jehovah my God; I have done according to all that thou hast commanded me. Look down from thy holy habitation, from heaven, and bless thy people Israel, and the ground which thou hast given us, as thou swarest unto our fathers, a land flowing with milk and honey”* (26:12-15).
1. *“The year of tithing”* would be every third year. At this time Israel was to offer their tithes to the Levite, sojourner, fatherless, and widows that they may be sustained.
 2. Israel was to dwell with God in all good conscience in relation to keeping His laws. Their lifestyles were to be holy in that they could look to God’s laws and know that they were in good standing with the Lord seeing that they had kept His commandments. They should be able to say within, *“I have not transgressed any of thy commandments, neither have I forgotten*

them, eaten in my mourning, or am unclean in any way... I have hearkened and done according to all that thou hast commanded me..."

3. Having performed the law of God the people may ask Him to "*bless thy people Israel, and the ground which thou has given us...*"
- E. "*This day Jehovah thy God commandeth thee to do these statutes and ordinances: thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thy heart, and with all thy soul. Thou hast avouched Jehovah this day to be thy God, and that thou wouldest walk in his ways, and keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his ordinances, and hearken unto his voice: and Jehovah hath avouched thee this day to be a people for his own possession, as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldest keep all his commandments; and to make thee high above all nations that he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honor; and that thou mayest be a holy people unto Jehovah thy God, as he hath spoken*" (26:16-19).
1. Israel was to keep and do all that God commanded "*with all thy heart and with all thy soul...*" To keep God's commands with all thy heart and soul was to love God. Jesus said that this was the first and great commandment (see Matt. 22:37-38). Herein is a great lesson in God's word. The Lord desires man to serve Him because this is what we want to do. He wants a people who display their love for him in their obedience (see Jn. 14:15). Man ought to be torn within at the thought of violating His will (see I Sam. 15:22-23; Joel 2:12-14) (see study # 45; God's Desire for Man).
 2. The idea of "*avouching*" is to "take responsibility for; guarantee... affirm, prove, avow" (AHD 145). Israel had avouched (i.e., affirmed and avowed) that Jehovah was their God. God had visually and audibly spoke in the hearing and sight of the people (see Ex. 20:18-20). He had commanded that they have no other gods before him (Ex. 20:3). The people avouch His deity and their allegiance to him (see Ex. 19:8). To affirm allegiance to God was to walk, keep, and hearken unto all God's commands. As the people avouched Jehovah in faithfulness the Lord would avouch them as His own "*possession.*" Israel belonged to God because He had redeemed them from the bondage of Egypt (see Deut. 7:6-9).
 3. As God's possession Israel would be exalted to be "*high above all nations..., in praise, name, and honor...*" As Israel honored God through their holiness He would bless them and all nations would see their greatness by the help of Jehovah. The exaltation of Israel in the sight of other nations is a type of the exaltation that Christians will one day receive in the eternal kingdom of God (see I Pet. 5:4-6). The glorification of the faithful Christian (i.e., the reception of one's glorious heavenly home into eternity) is an underlying theme of motivation by the apostle Peter (see I Pet. 1:7, 13; 4:13; 5:4) (see study # 46; The Glorified Saint). To be "*exalted*" (*hupsoo*) = "to raise aloft, lift up... to elevate, uplift, exalt [to raise in rank, character or status; elevate... to glorify {to give glory, honor, or high praise to; exalt / AHD 562}; praise; honor / AHD 471] (Moulton 421). Herein is an interesting thought. While in the flesh man is not to participate in prideful boasting of oneself that others may glorify them. Many are glorified in our society today (i.e., movie stars and sports figures who set world records). The Christian WILL receive such glory when in heaven (now is not the time to receive glory from others). Those who die in faith shall be exalted to a high rank in that they will be praised, honored, and exalted for their victory over Satan (I Jn. 4:4).
 4. This ends the second sermon (i.e., first sermon from chapter 1-4 and second from chapters 5-26).

Lessons Learned from Deuteronomy 25-26

- We learn of the just nature of God (Deut. 25:1, 13). The Word of God is like the system of measurements. The standard of truth measures all peoples and determines whether they are in sin are living right.
- Can we say, as God demanded His people to say, "*I have not transgressed any of thy commandments, neither have I forgotten them*" (Deut. 26:13). What forms my perception of right and wrong? Some form opinions of right and wrong from the teaching of denominational preachers while others lean upon their own

fleshly wisdom and interpretation (II Pet. 1:20). The Apostle Paul would never make conclusions apart from divine revelation and neither should any of us (II Cor. 1:12).

- God desires that we serve Him because it is what we want to do (Deut. 26:16). Our serving of God ought to be with “*joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, by reason of the abundance of all things*” (cf. Deut. 28:47). Jesus spoke of this at Matt. 22:37-38. When one serves God because they see true and eternal profit in spiritual living they will be bothered by any words or sinful actions that impede that progress (see Joel 2:12-14) (see study # 45).

Chapter 27

Third Sermon of Moses in the plains of Moab

I. Moses divinely gives Israel Four Duties to Perform once in Canaan (27 all):

A. “*And Moses and the elders of Israel commanded the people, saying, Keep all the commandment which I command you this day. And it shall be on the day when ye shall pass over the Jordan unto the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee, that thou shalt set thee up great stones, and plaster them with plaster: and thou shalt write upon them all the words of this law, when thou art passed over; that thou mayest go in unto the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee, a land flowing with milk and honey, as Jehovah, the God of thy fathers, hath promised thee. And it shall be, when ye are passed over the Jordan, that ye shall set up these stones, which I command you this day, in mount Ebal, and thou shalt plaster them with plaster*” (27:1-4).

1. The **first of four duties** to perform once in Canaan was to set up three great stones, plaster them (i.e., a mixture of lime, sand, and water, sometimes with hair or other fiber added, that hardens to a smooth solid and is used for coating walls and ceilings), and write upon the stones all the words of this law. The apparent reason for this act was that future generations would see and know the importance of keeping all of God’s laws.
2. Moses continues to place before the minds of Israel that God had “*promised*” Canaan to them and thereby they were to accept His gift through their obedience.
3. Mount Ebal was located about one mile to the North of Shechem. Ebal’s elevation is 3,083 feet. Mount Gerizim was located just south of Shechem (1 mile). Gerizim’s elevation is 2,889 feet. The city of Shechem rest between the two mountains in a valley.

B. “*And there shalt thou build an altar unto Jehovah thy God, an altar of stones: thou shalt lift up no iron tool upon them. Thou shalt build the altar of Jehovah thy God of unhewn stones; and thou shalt offer burnt-offerings thereon unto Jehovah thy God: and thou shalt sacrifice peace-offerings, and shalt eat there; and thou shalt rejoice before Jehovah thy God. And thou shalt write upon the stones all the words of this law very plainly. And Moses and the priests the Levites spake unto all Israel, saying, Keep silence, and hearken, O Israel: this day thou art become the people of Jehovah thy God. Thou shalt therefore obey the voice of Jehovah thy God, and do his commandments and his statutes, which I command thee this day” (27:5-10).*

1. The **second duty** of Israel, upon entering Canaan, was to build an altar of un-hewn and un-worked stones for the Lord. They were to offer burnt-offerings, peace-offerings, and therein eat with rejoicing. The day was to be a day of festive rejoicing and remembrance of the great things God had done for them.
2. This blessed day of rejoicing would mark the day that Israel, “*became the people of Jehovah thy God.*” Though the Israel that stood before Moses on this day were “*baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea, and did all eat the same spiritual food; and did all drink the same spiritual drink... that is Christ*” (I Cor. 10:2-3) they had not, as of yet, proved their complete faith in God by obeying His command to enter Canaan (see Deut. 1:21, 26). Upon entrance into Canaan they would be God’s possession. Here we note that God’s purchase of the people out of the land of Egypt (i.e., His redeeming them) was not all there was to making the people his possession (see Deut. 7:6-9). Man’s part was obedience to God’s will. Israel would only become the complete possession of God upon evidencing their faith in Him by taking Canaan as He had commanded. Likewise, Jesus Christ has died upon the cross redeeming mankind of

sin and making them God's own possession (see Col. 1:19ff; I Pet. 2:9). People do not belong to God; however, until they have obeyed His commandments (see Rom. 3:24ff).

- C. *“And Moses charged the people the same day, saying, These shall stand upon mount Gerizim to bless the people, when ye are passed over the Jordan: Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Joseph, and Benjamin. And these shall stand upon mount Ebal for the curse: Reuben, Gad, and Asher, and Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali. And the Levites shall answer, and say unto all the men of Israel with a loud voice,”* (27:11-14).
1. The **third** event to transpire was that six tribes of Israel were to stand upon Mount Gerizim (south of the city) and bless Israel.
 2. The **fourth** event was that six tribes of Israel were to stand to the north (Mount Ebal) and pronounce the curses (12 curses and one summarization curse). Note that the Levites were to be the spokesmen on this occasion.
- D. *“Cursed be the man that maketh a graven or molten image, an abomination unto Jehovah, the work of the hands of the craftsman, and setteth it up in secret. And all the people shall answer and say, Amen. Cursed be he that setteth light by his father or his mother. And all the people shall say, Amen. Cursed be he that removeth his neighbor's landmark. And all the people shall say, Amen. Cursed be he that maketh the blind to wander out of the way. And all the people shall say, Amen. Cursed be he that wresteth the justice due to the sojourner, fatherless, and widow. And all the people shall say, Amen. Cursed be he that lieth with his father's wife, because he hath uncovered his father's skirt. And all the people shall say, Amen. Cursed be he that lieth with any manner of beast. And all the people shall say, Amen. Cursed be he that lieth with his sister, the daughter of his father, or the daughter of his mother. And all the people shall say, Amen. Cursed be he that lieth with his mother-in-law. And all the people shall say, Amen. Cursed be he that smiteth his neighbor in secret. And all the people shall say, Amen. Cursed be he that taketh a bribe to slay an innocent person. And all the people shall say, Amen. Cursed be he that confirmeth not the words of this law to do them. And all the people shall say, Amen”* (27:15-26).
1. Let us note a few things about these curses. First, the curses indicate God's passionate distaste for idolatry, disrespect toward parents, unjust behavior, cruelty, sexual immorality, and murder. A “*curse*” is the same thing as being condemned to eternal damnation. The Apostle Peter associated the curse with false teachers and all unrighteous men (see II Pet. 2:9, 14). The Apostle Paul quoted from Deuteronomy 27:26 at Galatians 3:10 to indicate the hopeless condition people under the Mosaic Law were in. Christ is the answer to man's dilemma of sin today (see Gal. 3:13).
 2. Secondly, note once again, that God demands that His people be united in His laws. Moses repeatedly states, *“And all the people shall say, Amen.”* One disobedient man or woman can ruin the fellowship of man with God if his lawless actions are tolerated (see Deut. 23:14; I Cor. 1:1-10) (see study # 39).

Chapter 28

I. The Blessings of Obedience and Curse of Disobedience (28 all):

- A. *“And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of Jehovah thy God, to observe to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that Jehovah thy God will set thee on high above all the nations of the earth: and all these blessings shall come upon thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of Jehovah thy God”* (28:1-2).
1. Moses has carefully noted, in these three sermons, that God's blessings are contingent upon man's obedience to His will (see Deut. 11:22-23, 26ff).
 2. As Israel obeyed God He would bless them and cause them to be glorified among the nations round about them (see Deut. 26:18-19).
- B. *“Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy beasts, the increase of thy cattle, and the young of thy flock. Blessed shall be thy basket and thy kneading-trough. Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out. Jehovah will cause thine*

enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thee: they shall come out against thee one way, and shall flee before thee seven ways. Jehovah will command the blessing upon thee in thy barns, and in all that thou puttest thy hand unto; and he will bless thee in the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee. Jehovah will establish thee for a holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee; if thou shalt keep the commandments of Jehovah thy God, and walk in his ways. And all the peoples of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of Jehovah; and they shall be afraid of thee. And Jehovah will make thee plenteous for good, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which Jehovah swore unto thy fathers to give thee. Jehovah will open unto thee his good treasure the heavens, to give the rain of thy land in its season, and to bless all the work of thy hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow. And Jehovah will make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if thou shalt hearken unto the commandments of Jehovah thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them, and shalt not turn aside from any of the words which I command you this day, to the right hand, or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them” (28:3-14).

1. Note that God would bless Israel with physical substance such as fruitful land, cattle, and the womb of women. Not only so but God would defeat all their enemies in so much that the nations “shall see that thou art called by the name of Jehovah: and they shall be afraid of thee.”
 2. Obedience to the laws of God was vital to Israel receiving these blessings. Today, our blessings are spiritual in Christ Jesus. The obedient can expect to receive the grand blessing of forgiveness of sins and end the end an eternal home in heaven (see Eph. 1:4-7).
- C. “But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt **not** hearken unto the voice of Jehovah thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day, that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee. Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field. Cursed shall be thy basket and thy kneading-trough. Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, the increase of thy cattle, and the young of thy flock. Cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and cursed shalt thou be when thou goest out. Jehovah will send upon thee cursing, discomfiture, and rebuke, in all that thou puttest thy hand unto to do, until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly; because of the evil of thy doings, whereby thou hast forsaken me. Jehovah will make the pestilence cleave unto thee, until he have consumed thee from off the land, whither thou goest in to possess it. Jehovah will smite thee with consumption, and with fever, and with inflammation, and with fiery heat, and with the sword, and with blasting, and with mildew; and they shall pursue thee until thou perish. And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron. Jehovah will make the rain of thy land powder and dust: from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed. Jehovah will cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies; thou shalt go out one way against them, and shalt flee seven ways before them: and thou shalt be tossed to and from among all the kingdoms of the earth. And thy dead body shall be food unto all birds of the heavens, and unto the beasts of the earth; and there shall be none to frighten them away. Jehovah will smite thee with the boil of Egypt, and with the emerods, and with the scurvy, and with the itch, whereof thou canst not be healed. Jehovah will smite thee with madness, and with blindness, and with astonishment of heart; and thou shalt grope at noonday, as the blind gropeth in darkness, and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways: and thou shalt be only oppressed and robbed alway, and there shall be none to save thee. Thou shalt betroth a wife, and another man shall lie with her: thou shalt build a house, and thou shalt not dwell therein: thou shalt plant a vineyard, and shalt not use the fruit thereof. Thine ox shall be slain before thine eyes, and thou shalt not eat thereof: thine ass shall be violently taken away from before thy face, and shall not be restored to thee: thy sheep shall be given unto thine enemies, and thou shalt have none to save thee. Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given unto another people; and thine eyes shall look, and fail with longing for them all the day: and there shall be nought in the power of thy hand. The fruit of thy ground, and all thy labors, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed alway; so that thou shalt be mad for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see. Jehovah will smite thee in the knees, and in the legs, with a sore boil,”

whereof thou canst not be healed, from the sole of thy foot unto the crown of thy head. Jehovah will bring thee, and thy king whom thou shalt set over thee, unto a nation that thou hast not known, thou nor thy fathers; and there shalt thou serve other gods, wood and stone. And thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword, among all the peoples whither Jehovah shall lead thee away. Thou shalt carry much seed out into the field, and shalt gather little in; for the locust shall consume it. Thou shalt plant vineyards and dress them, but thou shalt neither drink of the wine, nor gather the grapes; for the worm shall eat them. Thou shalt have olive-trees throughout all thy borders, but thou shalt not anoint thyself with the oil; for thine olive shall cast its fruit. Thou shalt beget sons and daughters, but they shall not be thine; for they shall go into captivity. All thy trees and the fruit of thy ground shall the locust possess. The sojourner that is in the midst of thee shall mount up above thee higher and higher; and thou shalt come down lower and lower. He shall lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him: he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail. And all these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed; because thou hearkenedst not unto the voice of Jehovah thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which he commanded thee: and they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed for ever” (28:15-46).

1. Let us pause here and note a few things about these curses (statements of condemnation) pronounced upon the disobedient among God’s people.
 2. Here are a people who have the opportunity to defeat all nations that oppose them, to have every blessing a man could ever asks for, and experience the grandeur and praise of other nations because of the Lord’s favor and presence among them.
 3. Jehovah is warning them that all these blessings shall be taken away if they are disobedient. The life of mankind who chose to live apart from God’s laws is viewed as a living hell. To have one’s wife, children, and property taken away. To experience the pain of seeing one’s wife rapped and children taken into slavery by a ruthless nation. To see all of one’s labor fail because of a lack of rain, worms, and insects. To experience all these things unto one’s destruction was indeed a living hell.
 4. Let all be assured today that God’s blessings of salvation (i.e., see Acts 3:26) have their opposites as well. Man will experience not a temporary hell but eternal (see Rev. 20:10ff). Moses, by divine revelation, is revealing to us today a **type** of hell that will exist for the unfaithful of all times (see study # 47; Hell).
- D. *“Because thou servedst not Jehovah thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, by reason of the abundance of all things; therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies that Jehovah shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee”* (28:47-48).
1. We pause again within the pronouncement of curses upon the disobedient to note another important part of our lives.
 2. God demands that we serve and obey Him not because someone else is forcing us to but because it is what we personally desire to do. This is a major theme within the book of Deuteronomy (see here; Deut. 26:16; 6:4; 10:12-13, 20; 11:1, 13-14, 22). I must serve God because I recognize, by faith, that His promises and curses are real and will one day come to pass (see study # 45).
- E. *“Jehovah will bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; a nation of fierce countenance, that shall not regard the person of the old, nor show favor to the young, and shall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy ground, until thou be destroyed; that also shall not leave thee grain, new wine, or oil, the increase of thy cattle, or the young of thy flock, until they have caused thee to perish. And they shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fortified walls come down, **wherein thou trustedst**, throughout all thy land; and they shall besiege thee in all thy gates throughout all thy land, which Jehovah thy God hath given thee. And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, whom Jehovah thy God hath given thee, in the siege and in the distress wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee. The man that is tender among you, and very delicate, his eye shall be evil toward his brother, and toward the wife of his bosom, and*

toward the remnant of his children whom he hath remaining; so that he will not give to any of them of the flesh of his children whom he shall eat, because he hath nothing left him, in the siege and in the distress wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in all thy gates. The tender and delicate woman among you, who would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward her son, and toward her daughter, and toward her young one that cometh out from between her feet, and toward her children whom she shall bear; for she shall eat them for want of all things secretly, in the siege and in the distress wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates” (28:49-57).

1. The Lord God Almighty is omniscience in that He knows the beginning from the end (see Isa. 46:9-10). Moses’ warnings are delivered by divine revelation and so these things came to pass at a time when Israel forgot God and forsook His commandments (see Jer. 5:23-25).
 2. Israel (the people of God in Judah) was besieged by Babylon, ate the flesh of their children in cannibalistic manner (Jer. 19:9; Lam. 4:10), and went into Babylonian captivity for seventy years (Jer. 25:11) for their ungodliness. Can we not see God’s warnings today (see Rom. 2:5ff)?
- F. *“If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, JEHOVAH THY GOD; then Jehovah will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues, and of long continuance, and sore sicknesses, and of long continuance. And he will bring upon thee again all the diseases of Egypt, which thou wast afraid of; and they shall cleave unto thee. Also every sickness, and every plague, which is not written in the book of this law, them will Jehovah bring upon thee, until thou be destroyed. And ye shall be left few in number, whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude; because thou didst not hearken unto the voice of Jehovah thy God. And it shall come to pass, that, as Jehovah rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you, so Jehovah will rejoice over you to cause you to perish, and to destroy you; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest in to possess it. And Jehovah will scatter thee among all peoples, from the one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which thou hast not known, thou nor thy fathers, even wood and stone. And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, and there shall be no rest for the sole of thy foot: but Jehovah will give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and pining of soul; and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear night and day, and shalt have no assurance of thy life. **In the morning thou shalt say, Would it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would it were morning! for the fear of thy heart which thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.** And Jehovah will bring thee into Egypt again with ships, by the way whereof I said unto thee, Thou shalt see it no more again: and there ye shall sell yourselves unto your enemies for bondmen and for bondwomen, and no man shall buy you”* (28:58-68).
1. Moses plainly states the conditions of escaping the dreadful curses enumerated in this text. Israel; i.e., the people of God, are to “*fear this glorious and fearful name, JEHOVAH THY GOD.*” Note that once again Moses connects obedience to God’s commandments to fear (see Deut. 5:29; 6:2). Those today that do not fear God will experience an eternal existence of damnation.
 2. Hell will be horrific existence defined. The rebellious will spend an eternity of agony. Within hell one may say in the morning, “*Would it were evening! And at evening thou shalt say, Would it were morning!*” (see study # 47) The insolvable problem with hell; however, will be that the wicked shall never die. During these current days of disobedience and consequential curses upon one’s physical being man may have “*no assurance of life*” and “*thy life shall hang in doubt before thee.*” Life and death; however, will not be a factor in the eternal pits of hell. One will go on suffering for ever. Hell will be a place of no ease, rest, and a place of eternal pining away of the soul.
 3. Hell will be the place of “*unquenchable fire*” (Matt. 3:12), “*black darkness*” (Jude 13), “*furnace of fire*” (Matt. 13:42), a place where “*the lake of fire and brimstone*” burn continuously (Rev. 14:10; 20:10; 21:8). Hell will be a place where the bodies of the wicked burn and the “*smoke of their torment*” rises continually (Rev. 14:11). Hell is “*where their*

worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched” (Mk. 9:43-48) [the maggot feasting upon the flesh of the undead and the fire that never goes out... a picture of internal and external misery is painted for the wicked]. Here is a place of the resurrected unjust of all history (cf. Acts 24:15). The prophet Isaiah foretold of such a horrible eternal abode for the wicked in the last verse of his prophecy (Isa. 66:22-24). This is none other than the “*eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels*” (Matt. 25:41) and all those “*not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire*” (Rev. 20:15).

Lessons Learned from Deuteronomy 27-28

- At Deuteronomy 27:9-10 and 28:47 Moses delivers **four requirements** of Israel that God continues to demand from you and I: **First**, Moses commands that Israel “*keep silent.*” Israel’s silence was in relation to doing unauthorized acts that they had not been commanded. God’s word was to dictate their actions. Today, the people of God must learn to leave their opinions out of spirituality (see Rom. 8:1ff; II Cor. 1:12; II Pet. 2:2). **Secondly**, Israel was commanded to “*hearken.*” God’s people are to be ready, willing, and eager to HEAR God’s will (see II Tim. 2:15). **Thirdly**, Israel was to “*obey*” the voice of Jehovah. Man’s salvation today and forever depends upon our obedience (see Col. 1:19-23). **Fourthly**, Israel was to display this obedience out of a heart that desired and passionately wanted to do the will of God (Deut. 28:47). The idea of serving God because this is one’s individual honest desire to do so has been a reoccurring thought established throughout this study (see Deut. 6:4; 10:12-13, 20; 11:1, 13-14, 22). God does not force anyone to serve!
- God’s blessings have ever been contingent upon our obedience (see Deut. 28:1-2, 9). God’s blessings, under the new covenant, are not physical but rather spiritual. Man will be blessed with the forgiveness of sins as he or she obeys God’s will (see Acts 3:22-26 compared to Gal. 3:14 and Eph. 1:3-7). To receive this blessing man must be baptized (Acts 2:38) and live faithfully throughout life (see Heb. 3-4).
- Lastly, we learn the horrific consequences of a disobedient life. Moses, with pin point accuracy, revealed future consequences of Israel’s disobedience (all of which took place for the Northern kingdom by Assyrian invasion and the Southern kingdom of Judah by Babylon because of their unfaithfulness [see Jer. 5:23-25]). Can we not see the warnings today (Rom. 2:3-9)? The author of Hebrews used the history of Israel’s unfaithfulness to challenge God’s people for all times to see the warnings and consequences of sin (see Heb. 3-4). A vivid picture of hell is depicted in the people’s horrific existence after disobedience in Deuteronomy 28. We ought to have no problem making the connection (i.e., seeing that Hell is an antitype of the existence of unfaithful Israel during the days of Assyrian and Babylonian occupation).

Chapter 29

I. Moses Commands the People’s Obedience (29 all):

- A. “*These are the words of the covenant which Jehovah commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the covenant which he made with them in Horeb. And Moses called unto all Israel, and said unto them, Ye have seen all that Jehovah did before your eyes in the land of Egypt unto Pharaoh, and unto all his servants, and unto all his land; the great trials which thine eyes saw, the signs, and those great wonders: but Jehovah hath not given you a heart to know, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day*” (29:1-4).
1. Moses not only reiterated the Law given at Horeb but also delivered additional divine laws here in Moab. After speaking these words (i.e., three sermons) Moses calls upon the people to remember all that their eyes had seen in relation to God’s works. Israel had seen the mighty power of God as Egypt was brought to her knees through the plagues and crushing blow of the Red Sea.
 2. Though Israel had seen all these signs and wonders “*Jehovah hath not give you a heart to know, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day.*” Though Israel saw the signs and wonders they did not really see them. This reminds us of the Parable of the sower at Matthew 13:10ff. Jesus had been teaching in parables and the disciples want to know why. The Lord explains that

- some are “*given*” understanding and some are not. Those who do not receive understanding are those who have hearts that have “*waxed gross*” (i.e., thick headed, stupid, dull) (Matt. 13:15).
3. We noted at Deuteronomy 27:9-10 that God’s people would only become His possession when they obeyed His commandments. God had specifically chosen Israel to be a people for His own possession (Deut. 7:6-8). God did not choose them because of any righteousness in them (see Deut. 9:6, 24) and neither did He choose them because they were great in number (Deut. 7:7). God’s sovereign choice of the people of Israel was due to His love for them (Deut. 7:8; Rom. 9:13-24). God had made a promise to Abraham and He intended to keep it (i.e., great nation, land, and seed promise of Gen. 12:1ff). Due to these great promises, the signs and wonders that the people saw in Egypt and during their forty years of wandering, and the warnings of the Law before them the people should have, with a spirit of fear, sought out the Lord’s will. With open eyes of understanding they ought to have been terrified to break God’s laws and at the same time anxious to receive His promises by faithful living. Those whom God did not give an understanding heart to were those whose hearts were ungrateful and filled with fleshly lusts of this world. They were fools in all since of the word.
- B. *“And I have led you forty years in the wilderness: your clothes are not waxed old upon you, and thy shoe is not waxed old upon thy foot. Ye have not eaten bread, neither have ye drunk wine or strong drink; that ye may know that I am Jehovah your God. And when ye came unto this place, Sihon the king of Heshbon, and Og the king of Bashan, came out against us unto battle, and we smote them: and we took their land, and gave it for an inheritance unto the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to the half-tribe of the Manassites. Keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do them, that ye may prosper in all that ye do”* (29:5-9).
1. Moses not only reminds the people of the signs and wonders performed in Egypt but also God’s miraculous care for them through the wilderness wanderings. The Lord miraculously provided them with bread to eat (manna) and wine (grape and pomegranate juice). Furthermore the Lord defeated their enemies for them and gave Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh lands that did not previously belong to them.
 2. Seeing that God had blessed Israel with so much they were expected to follow His commandments. As they followed the commandments of God their blessings would continue (see Deut. 28:1-14).
- C. *“Ye stand this day all of you before Jehovah your God; your heads, your tribes, your elders, and your officers, even all the men of Israel, your little ones, your wives, and thy sojourner that is in the midst of thy camps, from the hewer of thy wood unto the drawer of thy water; that thou mayest enter into the covenant of Jehovah thy God, and into his oath, which Jehovah thy God maketh with thee this day; that he may establish thee this day unto himself for a people, and that he may be unto thee a God, as he spake unto thee, and as he sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob”* (29:10-13).
1. Moses was addressing the entirety of Israel (even children and sojourners) in Moab. The assembly must have been a sight to behold.
 2. The purpose of the assembly was that all would “*enter into the covenant of Jehovah thy God...*” To enter into covenant or oath with God was to be “*established as a people belonging to God.*” The Lord’s purpose of driving out Canaan and giving the people great blessings was that His promise made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob may be established (i.e., fulfilled) (see Deut. 8:17-19; 9:4-5; 28:9).
 3. Israel would only belong to God as they obeyed His commandments. Israel would only receive blessings as they obeyed the voice of God. To enter into the covenant oath of God was thereby a conscientious decision, on the part of Israel, to obey God’s will that they may receive His protection and blessings (see Ex. 24:3 compared to Deut. 5:27-29). To this point, Israel had only failed to be established as God’s own possession because they had not obeyed His command to take Canaan (see Deut. 1:21, 26).
- D. *“Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath, but with him that standeth here with us this day before Jehovah our God, and also with him that is not here with us this day (for ye know how we dwelt in the land of Egypt, and how we came through the midst of the nations through*

which ye passed; and ye have seen their abominations, and their idols, wood and stone, silver and gold, which were among them)” (29:14-17).

1. All that stood with them this day; i.e., foreigners included, that were willing to obey the voice of God (i.e., enter into the covenant and oath of God) would be recipients of God’s blessings.
 2. Israel had passed through many lands and not only gained people that followed them but also they have had exposure to other religious cultures in the process of traveling great distances.
 3. Israel had seen with their eyes not only God’s great and miraculous works in Egypt and in the desert but they had also seen the abominations of the nations they passed through (see study # 51; Things that are an Abomination to God).
 4. Israel was now at a crossroad in their decisions that would affect them for all eternity. Israel was to either enter into covenant with God by accepting and doing His will or follow the abominations of the nations.
- E. *“lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from Jehovah our God, to go to serve the gods of those nations; lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood; and it come to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the stubbornness of my heart, to destroy the moist with the dry”* (29:18-19).
1. Moses had already delivered the danger of personal contamination through an individual’s wickedness at Deuteronomy 13. Such a one is depicted as *“gall and wormwood.”* *“Gall”* is spoken of by Jesus at Matthew 27:34 and Peter at Acts 8:23. Gall is “bitterness... a bitter ingredient in the analgesic (something that numbs pain) potion” (ISBE v. 2; pp. 392). *“Wormwood”* is found at Revelation 8:11 and means “used figuratively of bitter things, the term denotes the result of illicit sexual relations (Prov. 5:4), God’s punishment due to sin (Jer. 9:15; 23:15; Lam. 3:15, 19), and perverted justice (Amos 5:7; 6:12). In Deut. 29:18 (MT 17) the AV translates Heb. *lana* as ‘wormwood’ (RSV ‘bitter’) in a description of the bitter results of practicing idolatry” (ISBE v. 4, pg. 1117) (see study # 48; Identity of Sinners).
 2. The “bitter” results of practicing idolatry are enumerated below:
- F. *“Jehovah will not pardon him, but then the **anger of Jehovah** and his **jealousy** will smoke against that man, and all the curse that is written in this book shall lie upon him, and Jehovah will blot out his name from under heaven. And Jehovah will set him apart unto evil out of all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant that is written in this book of the law. And the generation to come, your children that shall rise up after you, and the foreigner that shall come from a far land, shall say, when they see the plagues of that land, and the sicknesses wherewith Jehovah hath made it sick; and that the whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and a burning, that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiim, which Jehovah overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath: even all the nations shall say, Wherefore hath Jehovah done thus unto this land? What meaneth the heat of this great anger? Then men shall say, Because they forsook the covenant of Jehovah, the God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, and went and served other gods, and worshipped them, gods that they knew not, and that he had not given unto them: therefore the anger of Jehovah was kindled against this land, to bring upon it all the curse that is written in this book; and Jehovah rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as at this day”* (29:20-28).
1. Those who “forsake” the covenant agreement of the oath of God are subject to the *“anger of Jehovah.”*
 - a. The Lord will not forgive such a one.
 - b. He shall receive the curses of Deuteronomy 28:15-68 (i.e., his life shall be a living hell).
 - c. The land that this idolater lives in shall be decimated to the point of causing astonishment by the nations.
 2. We have noted, to this point, that the people would be God’s possessions and attain the blessings only when they obeyed His words (i.e., entered into a covenant oath with God). A covenant is thereby a binding agreement recognized as law (see Ps. 111:9; Deut. 29:9; Lk. 16:16; Heb. 8:6). The American Heritage Dictionary (AHD) defines a covenant as “A binding

agreement made by two or more persons or parties; compact, Law (334) (see study # 16). When God's covenant was made and accepted by the people they became one in this agreement with God and themselves (i.e., fellowship). Note the change in pronouns as is indicated by highlighted color **red in the text** (jcr). The one individual who practiced idolatry eventually spread his bitter poison to others so that the whole land was infected and destroyed for this one man's initial involvement in idolatry. Let no child of God tolerate or sweep under the rug another's wicked doings (II Jn. 9-11) (see study # 39 and # 42).

3. The Law that binds the people with God is of a divine origin rather than religious laws that proceed from the fleshly mind of man (i.e., opinions) (see II Pet. 2:1).
4. Let us note some interesting comparisons here in relation to worshipping idols (false gods):
 - a. First, the apostle Paul said to the Corinthians, "*Being therefore always of good courage, and knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord (for we walk by faith, not by sight); we are of good courage, I say, and are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord*" (II Cor. 5:6-8). The faithful Christian is of "*good courage*" knowing that while we live in these earthly bodies that groan in pain, we are not without hope. We will be resurrected from the dead one day, stand before the Lord in judgment, and live with the Lord forever if we have lived faithfully. Such hope motivates us to "*walk by faith, not by sight.*" The word "*sight*" (*eidōs*) is "that which is seen, form, shape, figure" (LS 226). It is used in other passages of the NT. The apostle John said, "*My little children, guard yourselves from idols*" (I Jn. 5:21). The word "*idols*" (*eidolon*) is from the root word *eido* and Latin *Video*. It is defined as "a form, shape, figure; image or statue; hence, an idol, image of a god" (Moulton 117). The word *eido* is used in II Cor. 5:7, again in II Cor. 6:16, ("*And what agreement hath a temple of God with idols?*"). Liddell and Scott define *eido* as "to see, perceive, behold" (227). Idolatry is worship that occurs in conjunction with what one physically sees. The Christian's worship is dictated by the word of God alone (Col. 3:17). What we do not "see" in God's word we cannot possibly participate else it is termed idolatry (i.e., perceive, that which is seen, a form or figure) (see Deut. 4:12-16). The Apostle Paul would later say, "*The things which ye both learned and received and heard and saw in me, these things do: and the God of peace shall be with you*" (Phil. 4:9). People who perform religious acts that have not been revealed by the mind of God are certainly accursed and due God's fierce anger (see Jeremiah 23:16-22).
 - b. It becomes apparent that "idolatry" comes in forms other than simply wood, stone, and metal worship. The idea of seeing things through the divine eyes of God's revelation as opposed to seeing things through one's own human opinions and perception is at the root of a discussion of idolatry. One may exclaim with vigor that he would not participate in idolatry, yet have no problem with worshipping God in unauthorized ways. Consider Isaiah 46:12 in its context of idolatry. Those idolaters of Judah were "*stouthearted, that are far from righteousness.*" I Samuel 15:23 states the nature of idolatry as well. "*For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as idolatry and teraphim. Because thou has rejected the word of Jehovah, he hath also rejected thee from being king.*" The rebellious are stouthearted and stubborn as is evidenced by their rejection of the authority of God. Saul did what **he** thought was best rather than what God commanded and so it was with Judah in the days of Isaiah. Many today want to do what they think best rather than following God's divine standard. Children's church, theatrics, food fest, lock-ins, and games to name a few are ways some churches are attempting to raise attendance. Christians are to therefore "*guard*" ourselves from idols (religious service that has as its foundation my opinions rather than divine revelation).
 - c. We may consequently draw some conclusions. To participate in idolatry is to react based upon human perception (opinions) of spiritual or religious benefit. With this divine instruction before us we may, with confidence, say that false teachers and all who follow their damning doctrines are idolaters (see study # 28)! Consider the fact that those who reject God's laws for their own religious opinions are deemed to have the spirit of the "*son*

of perdition” (II Thess. 2:3) and “*antichrist*” (I Jn. 2:18-26). False teachers reject God’s laws, make up their own laws, and thereby “*set himself forth as God*” (II Thess. 2:4). No, the false teacher is not really God; however, by their rejection of an area of truth and establishing other doctrines they have set themselves forth as a god (a lawgiver). Said men are “*cursed*” (see Deut. 13:6ff; 27:15; Gal. 1:6-9; II Pet. 2:14). Those who accept these men’s doctrines have participated in idolatry. The false teacher and idolater will not be spared by God (see here in Deuteronomy and II Pet. 2:4-5, 12). Said study ought to forever settle within the minds of saints today what our attitude should be toward those who teach false doctrine. They are idolaters and those who spare in sympathy (see Deut. 13:8) or accept their teachings are idolaters. God does not spare the false teacher nor their followers and neither should the saints of God (see II Pet. 2:1ff) (see study # 39 and # 42).

- G. “*The secret things belong unto Jehovah our God; but the things that are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law*” (29:29).
1. Areas that God has not revealed are not areas that man may form opinions in their mind, begin preaching these opinions as divine truths, and demanding that all others follow their opinions or be in sin.
 2. There are things that man cannot know. We cannot predict or calculate the providential work of God in anyone’s life (see Eccl. 8:17). Neither can we know things that God has not revealed. We can; however, know all revealed truth (see study # 49; Can We Know Truth?). God expects us to know that we may “*do all the words of this law.*”
 3. Moses’ point is that man is not at liberty to do things that they have not seen or heard from God (see also Deut. 4:12-16). To do so is to participate in idolatry! The conclusion of this most import study then is that when one practices religious service that is unauthorized by God they are participating in idolatry and they will not be spared.

Lessons Learned from Deuteronomy 29

- Moses calls Israel’s attention to two things that they have seen with their eyes. First, Israel had seen the mighty signs and wonders of God while in Egypt and in the wilderness way (Deut. 29:2-3). Secondly, Israel had seen the abominations of the nations (see Deut. 29:17). Let us recall that Moses had reminded Israel at Deuteronomy 4:9 to not “*forget the things which thine eyes saw, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life; but make them known unto thy children and thy children’s children...*” That which Israel had seen was God’s fearful appearance and deliverance of the Ten Commandments on Sinai. Israel was thereby warned not speak words or construct images which the saw not with their eyes and ears (see Deut. 4:12ff). Again, God called upon Israel to recall what they had **seen with their eyes** in relation to His love at Ex. 19:4 and Deut. 10:16-22. Herein is a great lesson on Bible interpretation and the authority of God. We can only perform religious acts that have been revealed by God (i.e., that which we **see** and hear) (see Phil. 4:9). We are not at liberty to do anything else (see studies # 12, and # 13) (see study # 52; Things God’s People “SEE”).
- The seeing of God’s wonders and signs ought to have produced fear and consequential obedience within the hearts of Israel (Deut. 29:9).
- The seeing of the abominations of the nations would bring the people of God to a crossroads in their spiritual eternity. If Israel saw in these idols divine benefit they consequentially rejected all God represented.
- Many deluded their minds with the abominations of the nations. These people said, “*I shall have peace, though I walk in the stubbornness of my heart, to destroy the moist with the dry*” (Deut. 29:19b) (see study # 50; Self Delusion).
- Four grand lessons are thereby learned from this chapter. First, one learns that walking by faith rather than human perception and opinions will see one into eternity with God (see II Cor. 5:6-8). Secondly, we learn that no matter who makes a decision to follow human opinions in the realm of religious service God’s promises to the faithful remain. Thirdly, we learn that God is a God of anger and wrath and will thereby in no way spare or pity the idolater (Deut. 29:28) (see study # 20). Lastly, we learn lessons regarding the

authority of God. Man must respect the silence of the scriptures and accept God's revealed will (see Deut. 29:29) (see study # 13).

Chapter 30

I. Moses Leaves the Decision of Blessings and Curses in the hands of the People (30 All):

- A. *“And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither Jehovah thy God hath driven thee, and shalt return unto Jehovah thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul; that then Jehovah thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the peoples, whither Jehovah thy God hath scattered thee”* (30:1-3).
1. The Lord knew that Israel would disappoint Him. He is now, through Moses, pronouncing the end before the beginning. Only deity can do such (see Isa. 46:10). Though Israel's intention was to obey every word of God they eventually sin against God's divine will. The Lord said, *“Oh that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!”* (Deut. 5:28-29). This chapter takes into consideration a time when God's people would fall away in sin and then return, through a heart of sorrow and repentance, unto the Lord.
 2. Once again Moses reiterates the theme of this book. God's desire is that man would serve Him with all his heart and soul (see study # 53; Man's Love for God); i.e., that man's obedience occurs not only out of a sense of duty, gratitude for what God has done for them, and because it is the right thing to do but also because it is what a man's earnest desire to do is. We should serve God because we see that He loves us, provides for us, and is *“compassionate”* toward us when we fail and humbly ask for His forgiveness. We recall that the theme of the book of Exodus was God's care and love for Israel. This idea is seen in Exodus 19:4-6 which states, *“Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be mine own possession from among all peoples: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation.”*
 3. The message of the Pentateuch becomes more and more clear. Man is to **look** upon God's wondrous works, love, and law and be determined to follow His every commanded direction. When man's heart is set on serving God then they are recognized as His possession (see Deut. 14:2; 26:18; 27:9-10).
- B. *“If any of thine outcasts be in the uttermost parts of heaven, from thence will Jehovah thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee: and Jehovah thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. And Jehovah thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live (compare this to Deut. 29:4)”* (30:4-6).
1. Herein is the root of a contrite heart produced within mankind. God knew man would disappoint Him because all make the wrong choices from time to time (see Eccl. 7:20; Rom. 3:23). That which separates a child of God from all else is their ability to see their error and humbly seek out God's forgiveness. Those who have such a humble approach to life will regain God's favor and blessings (see Lev. 26:40-42; Isa. 57:15).
 2. Note that Moses states, *“God will circumcise thy heart... to love God with all thy heart and soul...”* At Deuteronomy 10:16 Moses commands the people to do this. This phrase is found throughout the Bible (see Ezek. 11:19; 36:26; Jer. 31:31 etc.). Paul commanded this at Romans 2:28-29. The Apostle Paul tell us exactly what this means at Colossians 2:11 saying, *“In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.”* Here is one who has purposed to cut sin out of

his or her life. When one lives with such purpose they are expressing and evidencing their faith and love toward God (this is all He wants from us!).

C. *“And Jehovah thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, that persecuted thee. And thou shalt return and obey the voice of Jehovah, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day. And Jehovah thy God will make thee plenteous in all the work of thy hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, for good: for Jehovah will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers; **if thou shalt obey the voice of Jehovah thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law; if thou turn unto Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul**” (30:7-10).*

1. The blessings of obedience belong to the humble, contrite, obedient, grateful, lovers of God. All God’s blessings on into eternity are conditioned upon man’s obedience (see Col. 1:22-23).
2. Moses, for the third time in this chapter, commands obedience in connection with one’s turning to God with all the heart and soul. Indeed this is the great commandment in the word of God (see Matt. 22:37).

D. *“For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not too hard for thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, and make us to hear it, that we may do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, and make us to hear it, that we may do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it” (30:11-14).*

1. The commandment which Moses has delivered is that God’s people obey His every word from the heart with all one’s might and effort. This is not something that God has requested that is overly hard to do. God’s commandments are not too difficult or so far out of reach to obtain that one cannot reach God’s requirements. God has not set a goal so high as to reach the heavens or across the sea but rather His will is right in front of them and is very obtainable to the one who so **desires** to obtain. Here is the answer to the question posed above. We ask, why did Moses say at Deuteronomy 29:4 that Jehovah had not given Israel a heart to know, hear, and see? God gives only such gifts to those who desire them with all their heart and soul! (see study # 18 and # 49).
2. The Apostle Paul quoted from Deuteronomy 30:12-14 at Romans 10:6-8. I am clipping and pasting my personal notes of Romans 10:6-7 here for the reader’s benefit:

A. *“But the righteousness which is of faith saith thus, Say not in thy heart, who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down:) or, who shall descend into the abyss? (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead.)” (Romans 10:6-7).*

1. The *“righteousness which is of faith”* is a phrase depicting the sinner who has been cleansed from sin due to an obedient faith. Justification comes of one’s obedience (cf. Eph. 1:7). The same phrase; i.e., *“righteousness of faith”* was used to describe the obedient faith of Abraham (cf. Rom. 4:12-13 and also the Gentiles at Rom. 9:30).
2. This being the case, as the OT reveals, one should not say within that we need to bring Christ down from heaven to prove this (He was already here and did that). Neither should one say within that there must be a resurrection of a dead one in the Hadean world to testify as to whether or not Paul is telling the truth.

B. *“But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach:” (Romans 10:8).*

1. Consider Deuteronomy 30:11-14 with what Paul is now saying. Moses told Israel that God’s laws were not too hard to follow or to know and understand. Even so, the *“righteousness which is of faith”* is not too difficult to follow and know if only one would give some effort. Jesus said, *“ye shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free”* (Jn. 8:31) (see study # 65; Can We Know Truth?).
2. Secondly, note a very important fact about *“faith.”* Paul connects *“the word of faith”* to the *“righteousness which is of faith.”* Following the progression of thought it is easily determined that Paul speaks of the gospel message (the word of faith) that brings about one’s *“righteousness”* through instructions (see remaining thoughts in this chapter). Faith and righteousness is thereby brought about by God’s word. The word of God is a message that must be heeded and the only way one will heed said words is through hearing and believing. If I have no faith in one’s instructions I certainly will not follow them.

E. *“See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; in that I command thee this day to love Jehovah thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his ordinances, that thou mayest live and multiply, and that Jehovah thy God may bless thee in the land whither thou goest in to possess it. But if thy heart turn away, and thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish; ye shall not prolong your days in the land, whither thou passest over the Jordan to go in to possess it. I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that I have set before thee life and death, the blessing and the curse: therefore choose life, that thou mayest live, thou and thy seed; to love Jehovah thy God, to obey his voice, and to cleave unto him; for he is thy life, and the length of thy days; that thou mayest dwell in the land which Jehovah sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them” (30:15-20).*

1. Moses brings his audience to a point of decision here at the end of his third sermon in the plains of Moab. The prophet of God states, *“I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil.”* Moses has revealed the compassionate nature of God in that He would bless Israel if only they would obey and turn to Him with all their heart (i.e., if they do sin be sorry about it and give diligence to do better). Those who reject God’s commandments will experience a living hell on this earth and on into eternity (see Deut. 28 for the blessings of obedience and curses of disobedience). These five verses conclusively prove that man has a choice in the matter of salvation. Moses writes, *“choose life”* and thereby indicates man’s part in his eternal abode (see study # 54; Calvinism / Unconditional Election).
 - a. Again they have come to a crossroad in their choices (see Deut. 29:10). Israel had seen with their eyes God’s might (Deut. 29:2-3) and they had seen with their eyes the abominations of the nations (Deut. 29:17) that had seen God’s care (Ex. 19:4; Deut. 29:5-6). What direction will they **choose**?
 - b. The life and death that man has a choice in participating today is spiritual (see Eph. 2:1ff).
2. Note that a man’s heart can be *“drawn away”* to serve other gods. One that is *“drawn away”* is one who at one time expressed faith in God and evidenced that faith through their obedience. Man is drawn away from the faith today to serve other gods through the efforts of false teachers. The Apostle John wrote, *“These things have I written unto you concerning them that would lead you astray”* (I Jn. 2:26). False teachers lead the faithful away from truth by teaching things that they have not seen in the scriptures (remember, God has warned against this in this study [see notes at the end of chapter 29]). These teachers of error teach their opinions and cause the way of truth to be evil spoken of by enticing un-steadfast souls (see II Pet. 2:1-2, 14). Those who follow erroneous teaching are just as guilty as the false teacher. The false teacher likens himself to a god because in arrogance and wreck-less abandonment of God’s will he establishes his own laws (see II Thess. 2:1ff). Those who follow these *“different doctrines”* (see Gal. 1:6) are guilty of idolatry (i.e., they are giving heed to another god). The scriptures are thereby replete with warnings to brethren that they may watch on behalf of the souls of men so that the ungodly lead them not astray from the truth (see Rom. 16:16ff). The Apostle Peter wrote, *“Beware lest, being carried away with the error of the wicked, ye fall from your own steadfastness”* (II Pet. 3:17). Again, Jesus said, *“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves. By their fruit you shall know them”* (Matt. 7:15-16). Jesus, on another occasion, said, *“Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Then understood they that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees”* (Matt. 16:11-12) (see study # 28).

Lessons Learned from Deuteronomy 30

- The grand lesson that just jumps out at one while studying Deuteronomy 30 is that on five occasions Moses commands Israel to love the Lord God Almighty with all one’s heart, soul, and mind (see Deut. 30:2, 6, 10, 16, 20). This has been a reoccurring theme in Deuteronomy (see Deut. 6:4; 19:9; 26:16 etc.). We recall the words of Jesus when asked by a testing Pharisee regarding the *“great commandment”* in the Word of God. Jesus said that the great commandment is to *“Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, mind, and soul”* (see

Matt. 22:37). Throughout history man has illustrated this love toward God by calling upon his name for aid in this life (see Gen. 12:8 and Acts 22:16). Those who develop a true love for God put Him above all things and people in this life. The greatest affection one has should not be toward his wife, children, or money it should be toward God. We are to be a people of purpose. We ought to circumcise our hearts to serve the Lord with all our might (i.e., purpose to achieve his will and remove sin from our lives) (see Deut. 30:6; Rom. 2:28-29; Col. 2:11).

- A secondary, and most important, lesson is that Moses reminds Israel of some things that they had seen with their eyes. The observant eye will take note of his surroundings and conclude that God is (see Rom. 1:20). The observant will also see God's great power (Deut. 29:2-3) and the abomination of those of the world (Deut. 29:17). The purposeful Christian will not engage himself in religious acts that he has not seen (see Deut. 4:12ff). Deuteronomy 30:15, 19 brings out another thing that Israel must "*see*." Israel must see that God has given them a choice in this life. God demands that man take His prescribed course in life (i.e., seek out forgiveness and love God with all one's heart). History reveals God's will for man to make the right choice in the lives of men like Elijah (see I Kg. 18:20) and Joshua (Josh. 24:14-15). Those who are unsteady in their faith (i.e., fence riders who are unstable in their faith) (see II Pet. 3:16) will not be tolerated by God (Rev. 3:14-16).
- Lastly, we learn that when God asks us to obey him with all our heart, mind, and soul He is not demanding the impossible (Deut. 30:11-14). So many people foolishly proclaim, "We're not perfect," "You are not perfect," "No one is perfect" in order to justify their foolish and sinful decisions in life. Jesus commands perfection in man's life (see Matt. 5:48). Perfection is a life without sin made possible by the blood of Jesus Christ (see Col. 1 all). The apostle Paul quoted from Deuteronomy 30:11-14 at Romans 10:6-8. The message of Romans is that man is justified by an obedient faith in Jesus Christ (see Rom. 3:24ff; 5:1ff; etc.). Paul's reason for quoting from Deuteronomy 30 was to illustrate that man's justification was not a matter that was overly difficult to obtain. Let us lay aside all excuses of spiritual weakness, admit that we were wrong about our sinful acts, and call upon the name of Jesus for aid.

Chapter 31

Moses concludes his third sermon in Moab with demoralizing words for the unfaithful yet invigorating for those, such as Joshua, who truly believed in God.

- I. Moses reminds Israel of their Responsibility to Possess Canaan and Commissions Joshua as the next Military Leader (31:1-8):**
- A.** *"And Moses went and spake these words unto all Israel. And he said unto them, I am a hundred and twenty years old this day; I can no more go out and come in: and Jehovah hath said unto me, Thou shalt not go over this Jordan" (31:1-2).*
- 1. The third and final sermon is concluded with words that would demoralize some and invigorate others.** "*All these words*" that Moses spoke "*unto all Israel*" were done in the plains of Moab while Moses was 120 years old (see study # 55; Moses). The whole of Israel (men, women, and children) heard these words (see Deut. 29:10-11). The prophet of God is now feeling his age.
 - 2.** Moses would not be allowed to enter into Canaan due to his sin at the waters of Meribah (see Numb. 20:12).
- B.** *"Jehovah thy God, he will go over before thee; he will destroy these nations from before thee, and thou shalt dispossess them: and Joshua, he shall go over before thee, as Jehovah hath spoken. And Jehovah will do unto them as he did to Sihon and to Og, the kings of the Amorites, and unto their land; whom he destroyed. And Jehovah will deliver them up before you, and ye shall do unto them according unto all the commandment which I have commanded you. **Be strong and of good courage, fear not, nor be affrighted at them: for Jehovah thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.**" (31:3-6).*
- 1.** Though Moses would not be with the people he assures them that God would be with them. They were to be led by Joshua as Moses had earlier stated (see Deut. 1:34-39). Joshua, along

with Caleb, was the only two of the twelve spies that went into Canaan that brought back a favorable report. While the wicked ten spies brought the evil report of pessimism, Joshua and Caleb reacted in faith and proclaimed that with the help of God they can defeat Canaan (see Numb. 13:30 – 14:10). Moses said that it was Joshua who “*wholly followed Jehovah*” (Deut. 1:36).

2. Herein we find that God’s promise (i.e., he will not fail nor forsake) is contingent upon the people’s obedience to His commandments (see study # 3).
 3. Moses tells all Israel that Joshua would be their new leader and that God would be with them. Moses reminds them of God’s command that they had earlier broken and thereby wandered in the wilderness for forty years.
 - a. The command was to “*dispossess Canaan*” yet they failed (see Deut. 1:21, 26, 29-32).
 - b. The command was not to be afraid of the people of Canaan yet they failed (Deut. 1:29-32).
 - c. Furthermore, on this second chance, God **commanded** Israel to do something unto the inhabitants of Canaan. Every thing that breathed in Canaan was to be killed... “*thou shalt save alive nothing that breaths; but thou shalt utterly destroy them:... as Jehovah thy God hath commanded thee*” (Deut. 20:16-18).
- C. “*And Moses called unto Joshua, and said unto him in the sight of all Israel, Be strong and of good courage: for thou shalt go with this people into the land which Jehovah hath sworn unto their fathers to give them; and thou shalt cause them to inherit it. And Jehovah, he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed” (31:7-8).*
1. Moses brings Joshua before all the people and officially commissions him as their next military leader so that all may faithfully follow his lead. Jehovah would be with Joshua and thereby the people were to recognize God’s divine presence in this next leader of Israel.
 2. Moses, for the second time in this chapter, reveals that God will be with Israel, He will not fail nor forsake them as they fearlessly attacked the Canaanites.

II. **Moses calls upon Israel to Read all this Law in the hearing of the people once every Seven Years (31:9-13):**

- A. “*And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, that bare the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, and unto all the elders of Israel. And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of every seven years, in the set time of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles, when all Israel is come to appear before Jehovah thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing. Assemble the people, the men and the women and the little ones, and thy sojourner that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear Jehovah your God, and **observe to do** all the words of this law; and that their children, who have not known, may hear, and learn to fear Jehovah your God, as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over the Jordan to possess it” (31:9-13).*
1. Moses delivers a copy of these sermons (the Law of God) to the priest. Moses instructs the priest to have the entire law read in the hearing of the people once every seven years during the feast of tabernacles. This was one of three annual feasts where all Israel was to gather in Jerusalem to celebrate or mark the conclusion of the harvest season. The Feast of Tabernacles (Booths) was conducted on the 15th day of the 7th month Tishri. The first day of the feast, i.e., the 15th of Tishri, was to be a holy convocation and the people were to do no work. Seven straight days were to be spent making a fire sacrifice unto Jehovah God and then on the eighth day they were to close the feast with another holy convocation (see Leviticus 23:33ff).
 2. The whole of the law was to be read that men, women, and children would “*hear, learn, fear, and obey Jehovah your God*” (see Jn. 6:44-45; Rom. 10:17).

III. **Joshua Officially Commissioned and Moses commanded to Expose Israel’s “Imaginations” through a Song (31:14-30):**

- A. “*And Jehovah said unto Moses, Behold, thy days approach that thou must die: call Joshua, and present yourselves in the tent of meeting, that I may give him a charge. And Moses and Joshua went, and presented themselves in the tent of meeting. And Jehovah appeared in the Tent in a pillar of cloud: and the pillar of cloud stood over the door of the Tent. And Jehovah said unto Moses,*

Behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers; and this people will rise up, and play the harlot after the strange gods of the land, whither they go to be among them, and will forsake me, and break my covenant which I have made with them” (31:14-16).

1. To “break a covenant” one must have agreed to be in covenant together (i.e., the agreement to obey God’s commands for return of Him blessing them and never failing to be with them against their enemies). Israel apparently entered into this covenant agreement with God through the hearing of the Law as is indicated at Deuteronomy 29:10-12. Note that the hearing of the law bound the people to follow it.
 2. Jehovah, in the hearing of Moses and Joshua, reveals the wickedness of Israel’s future. There will come a day in the future that *“this people will rise up, and play the harlot after strange gods of the land... they will forsake me, and brake my covenant...”*
 3. Moses had earlier revealed Israel’s failures of refusing to obey God’s command to possess Canaan and he also reminded them of their wickedness at Sinai saying, *“Ye had sinned against Jehovah your God; ye had made you a molten calf: ye had turned aside quickly out of the way which Jehovah had commanded you”* (Deut. 9:16). After cataloguing Israel’s acts of rebellion at Deuteronomy 9 Moses concludes saying, *“Ye have been rebellious against Jehovah from the day that I knew you”* (Deut. 9:24). Though Israel had proclaimed that they would do all of God’s commands the Lord knew that they were a rebellious people (see Ex. 19:8). God said, *“Oh that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!”* (Deut. 5:29).
 4. Though Jehovah said he would not forsake Israel they would indeed forsake Him in the future (see Deut. 31:6). Man controls his own eternal destiny. Voluntary obedience to God places one in a state of salvation whereas disobedience leads to God’s forsaking (see study # 56; Man’s Free Will).
- B. *“Then my anger shall be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide my face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall come upon them; so that they will say in that day, Are not these evils come upon us because our God is not among us? And I will surely hide my face in that day for all the evil which they shall have wrought, in that they are turned unto other gods”* (31:17-18).
1. Jehovah God is a God of fierce anger against those who break His covenant law (see Deut. 29:24, 28).
 2. Note that the day Israel forsakes God’s commandments is the day that God *“forsakes them and hides his face from them.”* Let us recall that Moses had encouraged the people saying, *“Be strong and of good courage, fear not, nor be affrighted at them: for Jehovah thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee”* (Deut. 31:6). As long as Israel put their faith and obedience in God He would never fail nor forsake them. The moment; however, Israel forsook God and break His commandments (see Deut. 31:16b) is the moment God forsakes them (Deut. 31:17). The reason God forsakes and hides his face from them so that people say, *“Our God is not among us”* is because of *“all the evil which they shall have wrought, in that they are turned unto other gods”* (Deut. 31:18).
 - a. Herein is a lesson on the holy nature of God and His divine expectations of man. God participates in no sin (see James 1:13; I Jn. 1:5).
 - b. God continues to demand man’s perfection in every way (Matt. 5:48). He gives us all the necessary teaching and means to achieve said forgiveness (Acts 2:38; Col. 1:19ff).
 - c. Man’s favor with God is thereby conditioned upon one’s obedience (see study # 3).
- C. *“Now therefore write ye this song for you, and teach thou it the children of Israel: put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel. For when I shall have brought them into the land which I swore unto their fathers, flowing with milk and honey, and they shall have eaten and filled themselves, and waxed fat; then will they turn unto other gods, and serve them, and despise me, and break my covenant. And it shall come to pass, when many evils and troubles are come upon them, that this song shall testify before them as a witness; for it shall not be*

*forgotten out of the mouths of their seed: **for I know their imagination** which they frame this day, before I have brought them into the land which I swear” (31:19-21).*

1. Let us remember that at this point Jehovah is speaking to Moses and Joshua alone regarding the people’s future faith failures. These private thoughts were about to be made public. What mood would you say the people are in right now? They have heard three sermons that have convicted them of sin (I have not read much of anything that commends their behavior). I find just the contrary. I find Moses writing, “*ye have been rebellious since the day I knew you*” (Deut. 9:24). I find Moses reminding the people of all their failures to keep God’s will (i.e., from the hearing and receiving of the law and consequentially forming a golden calf / Deut. 9:16 to their traveling to Canaan only to rebel against God’s will / Deut. 9:23 and finally through their wilderness wanderings / Deut. 11:6). Furthermore Jehovah now says, “*For I know their **imagination**s which they frame this day*” (see study # 57; Fleshly Reasoning). The people will continue to be rebellious and disobedient. What confidence, what encouraging words, what a positive sermon on the part of Moses, as he by divine revelation, reveals these depressing words. Moses utterly hammers the people through Deuteronomy. Those who look for a “positive” sermon from the pen of Moses in Deuteronomy can forget it. Many today want “positive” sermons with cute stories to make them laugh and feel warm inside yet this was not the preaching style of Moses. Moses considered life too short and eternity too long to not boldly expose the error that must be corrected in man if he realistically would make it to heaven (see study # 58; Preachers and Preaching).
 2. What is going on here? Let us recall that Moses has called upon the people to **make a choice** (Deut. 30:15, 19) (see study # 56). He has commanded them on a multitude of times to Love the lord God with all their heart, mind, and soul (see Deut. 30:15-16 and many other passages in Deuteronomy). He has warned them of the hellish existence for their disobedience (see Deut. 27:26; 28:15, 47). Israel has seen some wondrous things (Deut. 11:7; 29:2-3) and they had seen the abominations of the nations (Deut. 29:17). Once in Canaan they will be free to make a choice as to serve Jehovah with all their heart or do according to the abominations of the peoples around them. It is their choice and many will choose abominable living.
 3. The book of Deuteronomy is a realistic warning. It is not a book of syrup and positive preaching. Deuteronomy is a book that exposes a man’s inner sinful (Deut. 9:16), rebellious (Deut. 9:24), stubborn (Deut. 29:19), stiff necked (Deut. 31:27), and vain imagination (Deut. 31:21) ways (see study # 58). There will always; however, be a remnant convicted by such perceived negative preaching in that they see the curses and want no part of them because they truly fear and love the Lord God with all their heart, mind, and soul.
- D. “*So **Moses wrote this song the same day, and taught it the children of Israel. And he gave Joshua the son of Nun a charge, and said, Be strong and of good courage; for thou shalt bring the children of Israel into the land which I swear unto them: and I will be with thee**” (31:22-23).*
1. The song Moses writes is recorded at Deuteronomy 32. The function of the song was to expose the dark minds of many of the people of Israel so that they would be without excuse as they experience the hellish torment of God’s fierce curse against the disobedient. This song of warning was “*taught to the children of Israel.*” They heard these words and would be faced with a choice once in Canaan. Serve God or be a part of this prophetic song of man’s failures. Nothing has changed through NT preaching (see Rom. 2:3ff).
 2. Joshua is once again told that God will be with him in the conquest.
- E. “*And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites, that bare the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it by the side of the ark of the covenant of Jehovah your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee. **For I know thy rebellion, and thy stiff neck: behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious against Jehovah; and how much more after my death?**” (31:24-26)*
1. Having completed the three sermons and writing these laws in a book Moses delivers it to the priests and commands them to place it on the side of the Ark of the Covenant.

2. Moses explains to the priests that the book of law would serve as a witness against them (i.e., he was telling them that they were going to fail God and suffer the curses written therein because God knows their rebellion, imaginations, and hard hearted ways).
 3. As Moses speaks directly (face to face) to the priests he tells them that they had been rebellious throughout the days he has been acquainted with them and he is confident that they will continue to be rebellious after his death. Again, what do you suppose the priests' reaction to such words would be? What will your reaction be? Jesus spoke the same way to the Pharisees right to their face (see Matt. 12:34; 15:7, 12; 23:33). What was their reaction? (see Matt. 26:4). This is why Moses goes down in history as a great man of faith. He did not speak words that were expected to gain him favor with the people but rather sought after the favor of God (see John the baptizer at Matt. 3:7, Elijah's statement at I Kings 18:21; and Jeremiah at Jer. 38:1-6). Moses was thought so highly of by God that Jeremiah records that even if, "*Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind would not be toward this people: cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth*" (Jer. 15:1) in relation to Jeremiah's pleas for God's forbearance (see study # 55 and # 58).
- F. "*Assemble unto me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers, that I may speak these words in their ears, and call heaven and earth to witness against them. For I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days; because ye will do that which is evil in the sight of Jehovah, to provoke him to anger through the work of your hands. And Moses spake in the ears of all the assembly of Israel the words of this song, until they were finished*" (31:27-30).
1. The priests, elders, and officers were representatives of all the people. These men heard these disparaging words and were to relay them to all Israel (Deut. 31:19).
 2. Moses tells the elders and officers of the people the same thing he told the priests. Moses had little confidence in the people's faith. He said, "*For I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves.*" While the people were called upon to remember all the wondrous signs God had performed before them and warned regarding the abominations they saw we find Moses also paying attention to some things. Moses lived his life seeing Israel's rebellious spirit and thereby makes his conclusion (see study # 55).
 3. We wonder sometimes why the church of Christ is so few in number in comparison to denominational bodies. We wonder why churches split. We wonder why faithful brethren often turn into unfaithful... i.e., they fall away from the faith. We wonder why our children, wives, and husbands do not have interest in the Bible. We wonder why there is so much ignorance when it comes to Bible knowledge among God's people. We wonder and wonder yet fail to look out about us. Elders, preachers, and Bible class teachers need to be more impressed with the terror of God than with this world. Let us identify and call out sin before it is everlasting too late (see study # 58). God knows man's imaginations. God knows where man's heart is. Its no wonder that Jesus said, "*Enter ye in by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leads to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby. For narrow is the gate, and straitened the way, that leads unto life, and FEW are they that find it*" (Matt. 7:13-14). How are you responding to these words? We ought to all choose Godliness now and forevermore seeing there are so many who choose a cursed eternity.

Lessons from Deuteronomy 31

- Moses delivered the words of God in the hearing of all people. The hearing of the word of God equated to their responsibility to follow its regulations (Deut. 29:10-12; 31:14-16). Likewise, all God's words of salvation have now been delivered through the New Testament (Jude 3). All are to hear, learn, fear, and obey God (Jn. 6:44-45).
- God will not fail nor forsake the faithful (i.e., He will keep His promises) (Deut. 31:6, 8). The NT reveals God's view toward sin (Rom. 12:9; I Jn. 1:5; 3:4). Those who choose a life of sin have forsaken God and thereby God has no choice but to give them up to the uncleanness of their minds (see Rom. 1:26). History

reveals that the majority had always forsaken God (see Gen. 6 and the story of Noah). Jesus said that this is the way it will always be (Matt. 7:13-14).

- What is your response to these three “negative” sermons? The Lord never one time commends Israel through Moses in these sermons. He simply hammers them by exposing all their weaknesses. You and I have a choice. I can hear the stringent laws of the NT and obey them or I can hear them, be offended, and walk away from the Lord (see Jn. 6:66) (see study # 58).

Chapter 32

I. The Song of Moses: Part I / God’s Care for Israel (32:1-14):

- A. *“Give ear, ye heavens, and I will speak; And let the earth hear the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain; My speech shall distil as the dew, As the small rain upon the tender grass, And as the showers upon the herb. For I will proclaim the name of Jehovah: Ascribe ye greatness unto our God. The Rock, his work is perfect; For all his ways are justice: A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, Just and right is he”* (32:1-4).
1. Moses begins his divinely inspired song by doing three things. First, Moses calls all of creation to *“Give ear”* to the song. Secondly, he defines his words as divine sustenance that makes things grow healthy. Thirdly, he commands all creation to *“Ascribe ye greatness unto our God.”* All creation is to view or credit God with the greatest of all in existence. Lastly, Moses identifies the divine characteristics of God.
 2. Note the divine characteristics of God (see study # 59; The Identity of God):
 - a. God is *“The Rock.”* Jacob had ascribed the rock like identity to God at Genesis 49:24 by referring to him as a *“stone.”* David often referred to God as a Rock (II Sam. 22:1-3, 32; Psalms 18:1-2, 46; 19:14; 31:2-4; 62:1-7; 71:3; 95:1). There are multitudes of *“Rock”* statements in Psalms and other parts of the Bible. Seven themes seem to consistently surface when identifying the illustration of a Rock:
 1. God is a Rock in the sense that man can depend upon him for protection against enemies.
 2. God provides inner strength and stability as our Rock through His laws.
 3. God cannot be penetrated by any enemies.
 4. God does not change and thereby represents a constant in man’s life.
 5. God is our helper in times of need
 6. God is a refuge or shelter in the stormy times of life.
 7. God’s love will never fail us... He will always be there for us.
 - b. The *“work”* of God is perfect (see study # 60; The Work of God). God’s work is the salvation of man’s soul. He continues to do all things possible for Israel’s success now and on into eternity.
 - c. All God’s *“ways are justice.”* Jeremiah identified God as just (Jeremiah 9:23-24). To be just is to be *“consistent with moral right; righteous... the principle of moral rightness”* (AHD 695). God’s *“ways”* define right. He is the standard or measuring stick that all of humanity are measured by (see study # 44).
 - d. God is *“faithful”* in that when He gives a promise He keeps it.
 - e. Lastly, God is *“without iniquity.”* Iniquity is the complete opposite of justice and right things. Iniquity is error (I Jn. 3:4). God’s ways define justice and thereby things that do not measure up to God are deemed iniquity (see study # 44; # 59). This perspective helps us to understand how no sin can exist with God. All God’s ways are just and thereby if one performs an act that God has not performed it is sinful (against the nature of God and man).
- B. *“They have dealt corruptly with him, they are not his children, it is their blemish; They are a perverse and crooked generation”* (32:5).

1. While God is identified as the just standard that man is judged perfect or imperfect the people are depicted as a “*blemish*.” The idea of a “*blemish*” is to have an imperfection within one’s being (see Lev. 22:20-21) and thereby unacceptable to the perfect God (Lev. 21:16-23).
 2. The unacceptable blemish of Israel is revealed by Moses to be threefold:
 - a. Israel has “*dealt corruptly with him* (God).” When one violates the holy and just standard of God’s will he has not performed according to God’s creative will for that individual (see Rom. 1:26-27). When Israel made the golden calf they had greatly erred (see Deut. 9:16).
 - b. Israel was “*perverse*” in that they committed fornication with the “*daughters of Moab*” (Numb. 25:1).
 - c. They were a “*crooked generation*” in that they failed to do God’s will that they may receive His promises (Deut. 1:21, 26ff). Moses, on a number of occasions throughout this study, identified Israel as **rebellious** (see Deut. 1:26; 9:24; 31:27).
 3. Note that Moses identifies Israel further by saying, “*they are not his children*.” True children would love their father and do what he tells them to do but Israel was likened unto an ungrateful foreigner (see Jn. 14:15).
- C. “*Do ye thus requite Jehovah, O foolish people and unwise? Is not he thy father that hath bought thee? He hath made thee, and established thee*” (32:6).
1. Moses asks the people, “*Do ye thus requite Jehovah?*” To “*requite*” is to “make repayment or return for: *requite another’s love*” (AHD 1050). The height of foolishness is to not return the great love that God has shown toward man. Israel had repaid God’s favor, protection, and care for them with disobedience. They go down in history as the ungrateful ones (see study # 61; Ungrateful). What about all of humanity today? God has given His son to redeem man from sin. How do we repay him?
 2. Moses reminds Israel that God is their “*father that hath bought thee*.” How was Israel “*bought*.” God “*redeemed*” Israel out of Egyptian bondage through the miraculous and powerful signs and wonders performed (see Deut. 7:8). Israel was now God’s own possession (Deut. 7:6). Christians today also belong to God (I Pet. 2:9). God bought us through the blood sacrifice of Jesus upon the cross (cf. Acts 20:28; I Cor. 6:20; 7:23). Christians are redeemed from the bondage of sin by the blood of Jesus (Col. 1:20ff) (see study # 19).
 3. Israel was the established mighty nation because of God.
- D. “*Remember the days of old, Consider the years of many generations: Ask thy father, and he will show thee; Thine elders, and they will tell thee. When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, When he separated the children of men, He set the bounds of the peoples According to the number of the children of Israel. For Jehovah’s portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance*” (32:7-9).
1. Moses calls upon the blemished people to remember the “*days of old*.” Their fathers and elders had told them the stories of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They had been told of God’s power as revealed in the flood of Genesis 6. They knew all these things. They were a people chosen by God’s sovereign will to fulfill His ultimate promise to man (i.e., the forgiveness of sins) (see Rom. 9:6ff).
 2. While mankind enjoy a “*portion*” in the physical things of this life such as riches, wealth, and honor (see Eccl. 2:24; 5:19) God’s source of joy is His people that are faithful to Him. Shall we deprive God of this joy? Israel did!
- E. “*He found him in a desert land, And in the waste howling wilderness; He compassed him about, he cared for him, He kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle that stirreth up her nest, That fluttereth over her young, He spread abroad his wings, he took them, He bare them on his pinions. Jehovah alone did lead him, And there was no foreign god with him. He made him ride on the high places of the earth, And he did eat the increase of the field; And he made him to suck honey out of the rock, And oil out of the flinty rock; Butter of the herd, and milk of the flock, With fat of lambs, And rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats, With the finest of the wheat; And of the blood of the grape thou drankest wine” (32:10-14).*
1. Israel was the “*apple of his* (God’s) *eye*” (see study # 22). God’s pleasure was to be in His faithful people. He exercised tender care for them. He is compared to an “*eagle*” that cares

and protects her nest (see also Exodus 19:4). The Lord guided them through the wilderness with a pillar of cloud by day and fire by night. He provided them with manna to eat and water to drink. He took care of them all the way.

2. Israel “*rode on the high places of the earth...*” ate the increase of the field, sucked honey out of unlikely places as with being blessed with oil, wine, and bread. Furthermore God blessed them with Butter, milk, lambs, rams, and goats. Truly Israel was children who were completely cared for both physically and emotionally. God loved them and took care of them. He was their Rock.

II. The Song of Moses: Part II / Israel’s Provocation (32:15-33):

- A. “*But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked: Thou art waxed fat, thou art grown thick, thou art become sleek; Then he forsook God who made him, And lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation*” (32:15).
 1. The term “*Jeshurum*” is found four times in the OT (i.e., Deut. 32:15; 33:5, 26; Isa. 44:2) and means “upright one... the beloved one” (ISBE vol. 2, pp. 1033). Interestingly, both Jesus (see Matt. 3:17) and the church (Col. 3:12; I Thess. 1:4; Jude 1) are termed the “*beloved*” of God.
 2. The beloved of God (i.e., they were cared for with much sustenance and protection against enemies) “*waxed fat, and kicked.*” When Israel’s bellies were full they “*forsook God*” (see Deut. 31:16). This song seems to take on a prophetic purpose. Israel has proven themselves rebellious and God, by divine ability, professes their future failures. Not only have they failed Him in the past but they will continue to fail him in the future. Once in Canaan they will occupy lands, cattle, and vineyards that they did not have to work for and thereby, in a state of comfort and ease, forsake and “*lightly esteem*” the God (Rock) of their salvation. They placed no value on God after their bellies were full and they had peace. How often do men do the same thing today? When things go well we often forget to give God thanks (see study # 61).
- B. “*They moved him to jealousy with strange gods; With abominations provoked they him to anger. They sacrificed unto demons, which were no God, To gods that they knew not, To new gods that came up of late, Which your fathers dreaded not. Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, And hast forgotten God that gave thee birth*” (32:16-18).
 1. Having left God, as though He were not important in their lives, they began to follow other gods of the nations. Israel was warned about **seeing** and emulating the abominations of the nations about them in relation to idolatry at Deuteronomy 4:12ff; 29:17.
 2. Israel disregarded God’s warnings regarding idolatry and thereby “*moved him to jealousy... and provoked him to anger.*” Here were a people who were cared for yet did not **requite** that love. Any parent today would be moved to jealousy and anger if a beloved child forsook our love and care another family that did not represent truth.
- C. “*And Jehovah saw it, and abhorred them, Because of the provocation of his sons and his daughters. And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be: For they are a very perverse generation, Children in whom is no faithfulness*” (32:19-20).
 1. God saw all their wickedness. He saw that they had waxed fat, were ungrateful, unmindful and lightly esteemed Him, and eventually totally forgot him. The Lord took note of their perverted and unfaithful ways. It ought to cause man to tremble when they read, “*And Jehovah saw it*” (see study # 62; Having a sense of Shame).
 2. The consequence of their perverted actions was a “*provocation*” of God (see Heb. 3:8-15). God hid his face from them (the Rock that was their protection against enemies, loving care, provided inner strength and stability in life).
- D. “*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 that are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation. For a fire is kindled in mine anger, And burneth unto the lowest Sheol, And devoureth the earth with its increase, And setteth on fire the foundations of the mountains. I will heap evils upon them; I will spend mine arrows upon them: They shall be wasted with hunger, and devoured with burning heat and bitter destruction; and the teeth of beasts will I send upon them, With the poison of crawling things of the dust. Without shall the sword bereave, and in the chambers terror; It shall destroy both young man and virgin, The suckling with the man*”

of gray hairs. I said, I would scatter them afar, I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men; were it not that I feared the provocation of the enemy, Lest their adversaries should judge amiss, Lest they should say, Our hand is exalted, And Jehovah hath not done all this” (32:21-27).

1. The provocation of God, in that they forsook his commandments and lightly esteemed his love, would have grave consequences.
 2. The Lord would provoke them to anger, heap evils upon them, cause them to starve, devour them with burning heat, bite them with poisonous insects and beasts, kill them with the sword of war, and scatter them throughout the earth.
 3. God will not; however, exterminate them completely.
- E. *“For they are a nation void of counsel, And there is no understanding in them. Oh that they were wise, that they understood this, That **they would consider their latter end!**” (32:28-29).*
1. God’s anger is due to the people being *“void of counsel... and having no understanding.”* They had forgotten God and cared nothing about spiritual things.
 2. God’s desire is that Israel would *“consider their latter end”* (see a similar request of God at Deuteronomy 5:29). This is sound advice for all mankind today. Why not “consider our latter end” before putting God out of our lives?
- F. *“How should one chase a thousand, And two put ten thousand to flight, Except their Rock had sold them, And Jehovah had delivered them up? For their rock is not as our Rock, Even our enemies themselves being judges. For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, And of the fields of Gomorrah: Their grapes are grapes of gall, Their clusters are bitter: Their wine is the poison of serpents, And the cruel venom of asps” (32:30-33).*
1. The Rock, i.e., God, had *“bought”* Israel from Egypt (see Deut. 32:6). The Lord redeemed Israel and they belonged to Him. Now; however, they had become unprofitable to Him and He **sells** them to other nations to be abused. The people no longer belong to God. The sad thing about this is that He truly wanted them. God did everything possible for them to succeed with Him. They simply were ungrateful and turned their backs on him (it was their choice).
 2. Israel now belonged to the wicked nations that are compared to Sodom and Gomorrah. They are cruel and uncaring people. A stark contrast is given. Israel now serves a master that cares nothing for them and is cruel. God was everything but this to them.
 3. A great lesson may be learned here in relationship to God’s prescribed discipline of I Corinthians 5:1ff. The sinner of Corinth was to be *“delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus”* (I Cor. 5:5). God sells such a one... they are no longer His child... they belong to Satan... they have returned to a fleshly existence... As they experience this loss of God’s love they will find cruelty and hatred in the world and be motivated to return to the care and love of God and His people (see study # 63; Church Discipline).

III. The Song of Moses: Part III / The Judgment of God (32:34-42):

- A. *“Is not this laid up in store with me, Sealed up among my treasures? Vengeance is mine, and recompense, At the time when their foot shall slide: For the day of their calamity is at hand, And the things that are to come upon them shall make haste. For Jehovah will judge his people, And repent himself for his servants; When he seeth that their power is gone, And there is none remaining, shut up or left at large” (32:34-36).*
1. The day of God’s judgment against the ungrateful nation of Israel has come. This day shall be a day of vengeance and recompense (reward for evil acts).
 2. Herein is a principle that is well established throughout the NT. God will have the final say and judgment of ungrateful mankind (see Rom. 12:17-19; Heb. 10:26-31) (see study # 64; The Day of Judgment).
- B. *“And he will say, Where are their gods, The rock in which they took refuge; Which did eat the fat of their sacrifices, and drank the wine of their drink-offering? Let them rise up and help you, Let them be your protection” (32:37-38).*

1. Moses challenges the people to call upon their gods that they have now accepted for “*help and protection.*” Wood and stone will help no one just as false doctrines do not help or provide protection of any sort (see study # 65; Idolatry).
 2. These two words; i.e., help and protection, identify what is meant by the term “*Rock.*”
- C. “*See now that I, even I, am he, And there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal; And there is none that can deliver out of my hand. For I lift up my hand to heaven, And say, As I live for ever, If I whet my glittering sword, And my hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine adversaries, And will recompense them that hate me. I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, And my sword shall devour flesh; With the blood of the slain and the captives, From the head of the leaders of the enemy. Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people: For he will avenge the blood of his servants, And will render vengeance to his adversaries, And will make expiation for his land, for his people*” (32:39-42).
1. Here is a fearful and sobering statement. Who is it that will fight with Jehovah? God alone kills, makes alive, wounds, and heals. The gods of the nations did not exist and thereby could offer Israel no hope, help, or protection (see study # 65).
 2. Jehovah will thereby sharpen his sword and devour in judgment all that forsake and hate His Holy Name. This bloody scene is reminiscent of Isaiah’s statement at Isaiah 63:1-6 and John’s statement in Revelation 14:17-20. Beloved the day of God’s great wrath and vengeance (i.e., judgment) will be an awful day for the unfaithful. While the world of ungodly sees the terror there “*is none that can deliver out of the hand of God*” (see study # 64).

IV. Moses’ admonition and Command to Die on Mount Nebo (32:43-52):

- A. “*And Moses came and spake all the words of this song in the ears of the people, he, and Hoshea the son of Nun. And Moses made an end of speaking all these words to all Israel; And he said unto them, Set your heart unto all the words which I testify unto you this day, which ye shall command your children to observe to do, even all the words of this law. For it is no vain thing for you; because it is your life, and through this thing ye shall prolong your days in the land, whither ye go over the Jordan to possess it*” (32:43-47).
1. Moses has boldly proclaimed these words of condemnation in the hearing of “*all Israel.*” Moses, like the prophets that shall come after, spoke necessary words for man’s salvation (see study # 55).
 2. Moses recommends that the people “*set their hearts*” (i.e., make it their purpose in this life) to “*observe to do, even all the words of this law*” (see study # 45).
 3. The observance of God’s laws will never be a vain endeavor. Lawful living “*is your life.*” Man is created to be a lawful being. To do otherwise is to rebel against our created natures.
- B. “*And Jehovah spake unto Moses that selfsame day, saying, Get thee up into this mountain of Abarim, unto mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, that is over against Jericho; and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession; and die in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people, as Aaron thy brother died in mount Hor, and was gathered unto his people: because ye trespassed against me in the midst of the children of Israel at the waters of Meribah of Kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin; because ye sanctified me not in the midst of the children of Israel. For thou shalt see the land before thee; but thou shalt not go thither into the land which I give the children of Israel*” (32:48-52).
1. After Moses had delivered his song unto Israel God spoke to him. Moses was commanded to climb Mount Nebo that he might at least have a view of the land of Canaan before he died.
 2. I find it interesting that even after the prophetic words of Moses’ song has been delivered God continues to fulfill His promise of giving the land to the rebellious people. Truly He is a God of purpose (i.e., the salvation of man), patience, and love.
 3. When one looks back over the life of Moses it seems a bit stringent that God would not allow him to enter into Canaan due to one sin. Moses had sinned at the “*waters of Meribah of Kadesh... in that ye sanctified me not in the midst of the children of Israel.*” One mistake kept Moses out of Canaan. First, this tells us that Joshua must have been a man of impeccable character and secondly it tells us that God will not tolerate any error (see study # 66; Tolerance).

Lessons Learned from Deuteronomy 32 (The Song of Moses):

- A contrast is made between God, the perfect Rock, and the blemished people of Israel (Deut. 32:1-5). God loved Israel and viewed them as the “*apple of mine eye*” (Deut. 32:10). Israel; however, did not return God’s love and protection (Deut. 32:6). Their perversity provoked God to anger (Deut. 32:19) and caused God to abhor them (Deut. 32:19). The author of Hebrews warns us today saying that those who similarly requite God’s love with disobedience will never enter Canaan (see Heb. 3:8 – 4:12).
- Another lesson that we find in this son is that a Day of Judgment surely comes to the world. Those who live ungratefully toward God now shall pay on into eternity. God Day of Judgment is depicted in graphic terms (see Deut. 32:19). The prophet Isaiah used similar language to describe this great and horrible day (see Isa. 63:1-6). Likewise, the apostle John used the same bloody language to depict the horrific nature of God’s wrath being poured out upon the sons of disobedience (Rev. 14:17-20).

Chapter 33

I. Moses confers Blessings unto the tribes of Israel with the exception of Simeon (33:1-25):

- A. “*And this is the blessing, wherewith Moses the man of God blessed the children of Israel before his death. And he said, Jehovah came from Sinai, And rose from Seir unto them; He shined forth from mount Paran, And he came from the ten thousands of holy ones: At his right hand was a fiery law for them. Yea, he loveth the people; All his saints are in thy hand: And they sat down at thy feet; Every one shall receive of thy words. Moses commanded us a law, An inheritance for the assembly of Jacob. And he was king in Jeshurun, When the heads of the people were gathered, All the tribes of Israel together*” (33:1-5).
1. Moses, Like Jacob at Genesis 49, uses his last words to bless Israel. The American Heritage Dictionary tells us that the word “*bless*” can be used in reference to sanctifying one, to invoke divine favor upon, to confer well-being or prosperity upon one, to endow, as with talent... happy” (187). The objective in Moses’ “*blessing*” directed at Israel is that they would experience God’s divine favor through obedience.
 2. Moses begins his blessing to the people by scanning the history of God’s relationship to Israel. God has always “*loved*” Israel (see Ex. 19:4; Deut. 32:10-12) and proved this to be so by delivering a law to them that is depicted in a two fold fashion:
 - a. *First*, the Law of God is depicted as being “*fiery*” or “*fire*.” Israel had “*sat down at thy feet and received thy words*” when receiving the Law at Sinai. They experienced the fire and smoke and were terrified at the sight (see Ex. 19:16-21; 20:18-21). This scene would not soon be loosed from the minds of the people of God. They experienced the awesome power of God and were thereby thoroughly impressed by the seriousness of His Laws.
 - b. *Secondly*, the law is depicted as “*an inheritance* (or possession).” Upon receiving the Law of God He became their King. Their greatest possession, as citizens of God’s kingdom, was the law. The law distinguished Israel from all other nations (see Deut. 4:8). They were sanctified through law keeping and thereby brought nigh unto God (see study # 67; The Nature of Law).
- B. “*Let Reuben live, and not die; Nor let his men be few*” (33:6).
1. First, let us take note that all the names of Jacob’s sons are mentioned in this blessing with the exception of **Simeon**. Jacob had prophesied that Simeon would be scattered among the other tribes due to his part in avenging Dinah of the Shechemites (see Gen. 49:5-7). When Joshua divides the land we find Simeon being dispersed within Judah (see Josh. 19:2-9).
 2. Jacob wrote of Reuben saying, “*Reuben, thou art my first-born, my might, and the beginning of my strength; The pre-eminence of dignity, and the pre-eminence of power. Boiling over as water, thou shalt not have the pre-eminence; Because thou wentest up to thy father’s bed; Then defiledst thou it: he went up to my couch*” (49:3-4). The preeminence among all the brothers belonged to Reuben due to his being the first born of Jacob; however, he forfeited this right with his sin. Reuben had lain with Rachel’s handmaid Bilhah (Jacob’s wife) (Gen. 35:22).

Though he sinned, Moses continues the blessing of Jacob for this tribe rather than seeing them blotted out in death.

- C. *“And this is the blessing of Judah: and he said, Hear, Jehovah, the voice of Judah, And bring him in unto his people. With his hands he contended for himself; And thou shalt be a help against his adversaries”* (33:7).
1. Jacob had reserved the greatest blessing upon Judah at Genesis 49:8-12 saying, *“Judah, thee shall thy brethren praise: Thy hand shall be on the neck of thine enemies; Thy father’s sons shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion’s whelp; From the prey, my son, thou art gone up: He stooped down, he couched as a lion, And as a lioness; who shall rouse him up? The Scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh come: And unto him shall the obedience of the peoples be. Binding his foal unto the vine, And his ass’s colt unto the choice vine; He hath washed his garments in wine, And his vesture in the blood of grapes: His eyes shall be red with wine, And his teeth white with milk”* (49:8-12). Judah was to experience preeminence, great power, and authority among his brethren. Jacob states that the *“scepter”* of sovereignty and authority will not depart from Judah *“until Shiloh come.”* The name *“Shiloh”* is *“A title of the Messiah (Gen. 49:10)”* (The New Unger’s Bible Dictionary pp. 1182). The author of Hebrews states, *“For it is evident that our Lord hath sprung out of Judah...”* (Heb. 7:14). The genealogies of Matthew 1:1ff illustrate the lineage of Christ through Judah (cf. Matt. 1:2-3). The importance of Jacob’s announcement was that he made a prophetic proclamation of who the promised Messiah would come.
 2. Jehovah will certainly *“help”* Judah!
- D. *“And of Levi he said, Thy Thummim and thy Urim are with thy godly one, Whom thou didst prove at Massah, With whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah; Who said of his father, and of his mother, I have not seen him; Neither did he acknowledge his brethren, Nor knew he his own children: For they have observed thy word, And keep thy covenant. They shall teach Jacob thine ordinances, And Israel thy law: They shall put incense before thee, And whole burnt-offering upon thine altar. Bless, Jehovah, his substance, And accept the work of his hands: Smite through the loins of them that rise up against him, And of them that hate him, that they rise not again”* (33:8-11).
1. The Urim and Thummim was worn by the high priest upon his breast plate (see Ex. 28:29-30). *“The breastplate must have contained a pocket of some kind inside, for in it were deposited the Urim and Thummim, which seem to have been tangible objects (ISBE Vol. 3; pp. 961). “Even such early writers as Josephus, Philo, and the rabbis, are unable to furnish any precise information as to what the Urim and Thummim really were... it seems evident that they were something of a material nature, which being put into the breast piece after the latter had been prepared and put on, formed the means through which the high priest was enabled to ascertain the will of Jehovah in regard to any important matter affecting the theocracy”* (The New Unger’s Bible Dictionary pp. 1030).
 2. Not only did the people prove God at Meribah but also Moses, Aaron, and all the priests (see Ex. 17:1ff). There was a spirit of conviction within Levi that comes to the forefront of all the people of God. The Levites had forsaken their own mothers, fathers, children, and brethren when they observed the law of God. They put God first in their lives as all others ought to do today (see Matt. 10:37; 19:29). The convicted spirit of the Levites exhibited itself when they drew their swords against their brethren when they sinned with the golden calf (see Ex. 32:26-29). Again this spirit was portrayed in Phinehas as he ran a spear through two fornicators and with his zeal stayed the fierce anger of God (see Numb. 25:8). They had the prescribed spirit of God in relation to sinful things (see Deut. 7:26) (see study # 35).
 3. The high calling of Levi was that they be teachers of the law of God (see Lev. 10:11) and attend to the temple with its sacrifices. Moses calls upon God’s protection against Levi’s enemies that may rise up against him (those such as Korah / Numb. 16:1ff).
- E. *“Of Benjamin he said, The beloved of Jehovah shall dwell in safety by him; He covereth him all the day long, And he dwelleth between his shoulders”* (33:12).

1. Jacob wrote of Benjamin, *“Benjamin is a wolf that raveneth: In the morning she shall devour the prey, And at even he shall divide the spoil”* (Gen. 49:27). Benjamin was the second son born to Jacob through his beloved wife Rachel. The tribe of Benjamin was to inherit the small portion of land just north west of the Dead Sea. The people of Benjamin were powerful and warlike. Benjamin is thereby compared to a ravening wolf devouring prey.
 2. As Benjamin occupied a special place in Jacob’s heart even so the Lord would show this love by protecting them against their enemies.
- F.** *“And of Joseph he said, Blessed of Jehovah be his land, For the precious things of heaven, for the dew, And for the deep that coucheth beneath, And for the precious things of the fruits of the sun, And for the precious things of the growth of the moons, And for the chief things of the ancient mountains, And for the precious things of the everlasting hills, And for the precious things of the earth and the fullness thereof, And the good will of him that dwelt in the bush. Let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, And upon the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren. The firstling of his herd, majesty is his; And his horns are the horns of the wild-ox: With them he shall push the peoples all of them, even the ends of the earth: And they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, And they are the thousands of Manasseh”* (33:13-17).
1. Many words, in comparison to the other sons, are reserved for Joseph who is represented by Ephraim and Manasseh. Joseph was the favored and well beloved son of Jacob being the firstborn of his beloved Rachel. By far the lands of Joseph (i.e., Ephraim and Manasseh) exceeded the other tribes in land mass.
 2. Jacob had revealed that Joseph’s lands would be fruitful; however, not without problems from enemies (see Gen. 49:22-26). Though the enemies bow and arrow would vex Joseph he would nonetheless prevail against them. God’s blessings and help would be with Joseph and others would look to him as the rock of Israel for influence and strength.
- G.** *“And of Zebulun he said, Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out; And, Issachar, in thy tents. They shall call the peoples unto the mountain; There shall they offer sacrifices of righteousness: For they shall suck the abundance of the seas, And the hidden treasures of the sand”* (33:18-19).
1. While Moses blesses Zebulun’s goings out Jacob had said, *“Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea; And he shall be for a haven of ships; And his border shall be upon Sidon”* (Gen. 49:13). Interestingly, this prophecy actually came to pass for Asher rather than Zebulun. Zebulun did not border the Mediterranean or the Sea of Galilee but was rather located between Asher and Naphtali (cf. Joshua 13-21).
 2. Moses blesses Issachar in their tent dwellings. Jacob said, *“Issachar is a strong ass, Couching down between the sheepfolds: And he saw a resting-place that it was good, And the land that it was pleasant; And he bowed his shoulder to bear, And became a servant under taskwork”* (Gen. 49:14-15). Issachar’s inheritance in Canaan was small and located due south of Zebulun. Issachar seemed only interested in gaining wages through agriculture rather than warring with the Canaanites and helping his brethren. He couched in his land as a lazy ass content to be left alone.
- H.** *“And of Gad he said, Blessed be he that enlargeth Gad: He dwelleth as a lioness, And teareth the arm, yea, the crown of the head. And he provided the first part for himself, For there was the lawgiver’s portion reserved; And he came with the heads of the people; He executed the righteousness of Jehovah, And his ordinances with Israel”* (33:20-21).
1. Again, Jacob had said of Gad, *“Gad, a troop shall press upon him; But he shall press upon their heel”* (Gen. 49:19).
 2. Gad’s inheritance lie to the east of the Jordan River. Gad was to be vexed by various attacks of troops yet prevail. He is likened unto a lioness for veracity and thereby given a large amount of land to expand.
- I.** *“And of Dan he said, Dan is a lion’s whelp, That leapeth forth from Bashan”* (33:22).
1. Jacob had compared Dan to a *“snake in the way, an adder in the path, that bites the horse’s heels, so that his rider falls backward”* (see Gen. 49:16-17).

2. Moses, on the other hand compares Dan to “*a lion’s whelp*.” Dan would bring trouble to his enemies like a young lion leaping out of the brush in ambush. Dan’s inheritance in Canaan would border the Mediterranean Sea to the south and west of Ephraim.
- J. “*And of Naphtali he said, O Naphtali, satisfied with favor, And full with the blessing of Jehovah, Possess thou the west and the south*” (33:23).
1. Jacob had compared Naphtali to a free moving gazelle saying, “*Naphtali is a hind let loose: He giveth goodly words*” (Gen. 49:21). The inheritance of Naphtali was a large plot of land primarily to the North West of the Sea of Galilee.
 2. We pause here to take note of the animal comparisons to the sons of Jacob. Each of these animals represent territorial and free roaming ideas. Israel would roam free in Canaan and devour their prey (i.e., the Canaanites).
- K. “*And of Asher he said, Blessed be Asher with children; Let him be acceptable unto his brethren, And let him dip his foot in oil. Thy bars shall be iron and brass; And as thy days, so shall thy strength be*” (33:24-25).
1. Jacob blessed Asher by saying, “*Out of the Asher his bread shall be fat, And he shall yield royal dainties*” (49:20). Asher would occupy a fertile soil in Canaan. The inheritance of Asher would lie due west of Naphtali and bordered the Mediterranean Sea.
 2. Moses adds to Jacob’s blessing by praying for many children that are full of strength.
- II. **Moses Identifies God to Israel as their true Rock (33:26-29):**
- A. “*There is none like unto God, O Jeshurun, Who rideth upon the heavens for thy help, And in his excellency on the skies. The eternal God is thy dwelling-place, And underneath are the everlasting arms. And he thrust out the enemy from before thee, And said, Destroy. And Israel dwelleth in safety, The fountain of Jacob alone, In a land of grain and new wine; Yea, his heavens drop down dew*” (33:26-28).
1. Jehovah is depicted as “*the Rock*” at Deuteronomy 32:3-4 and throughout the “Song of Moses.” This term signified man’s ability to depend upon him for protection against enemies, inner strength and stability through His laws, an unchanging constant in man’s life, helper in times of need, a refuge or shelter in the stormy times of life, and his great love wherewith he loves mankind. Moses, once again, conjures up these thoughts within the minds of his readers. God will help, provide a dwelling place, and exercise everlasting love to His people. God offers a land that has had his people’s enemies thrust out and blessed with grain and new wine (see study # 22).
 2. Jehovah is “*eternal*” and there is “*none like*” Him!
- B. “*Happy art thou, O Israel: Who is like unto thee, a people saved by Jehovah, The shield of thy help, And the sword of thy excellency! And thine enemies shall submit themselves unto thee; And thou shalt tread upon their high places*” (33:29).
1. As there is none like Jehovah there is likewise none like Israel whom God has saved.
 2. Israel had received God’s laws, protection, and blessings of sustenance. They were divinely cared for. They received portions that other nations did not (i.e., divine aid in times of war, hunger, and thirst). The greatest portion; however, that Israel received was His laws (see Rom. 3:1ff).

Lessons Learned from Deuteronomy 33

- God’s love for man is made manifest through revelation (i.e., LAW). The greatest possession for God’s people is His Law (Deut. 33:1-5). Jesus brought this great possession that manifest God’s love toward humanity in New Testament times (see Matt. 4:23). Some men tried to invent their own spiritual laws (Matt. 16:11ff; II Pet. 2:1ff). The law of God alone gave the provision for the forgiveness of sins (Matt. 26:26-28).
- God’s rich blessings are reserved for those who are convicted by God’s laws to be sanctified from the world of sin (Deut. 33:8-11). Levi demonstrated this spirit at Exodus 32:26-29 as did Phinehas at Numbers 25:8. God richly blessed them because they had a proper attitude toward sin (see Deut. 7:26; Rom. 12:9). These convicted and sanctified people put God before any human relationships (see Matt. 10:37; 19:29).

- Lastly, Moses writes, *“Happy art thou, O Israel: Who is like unto thee, a people saved by Jehovah”* (Deut. 33:29). We may ask the same question about New Testament Christians. “Who can be likened unto the Christian?” A people who have God’s love (I Jn. 4:10ff). Christians are forgiven of sins (Rom. 3:24ff), purchased of God for His own possession (Acts 20:28; I Pet. 2:9), and a people who God gives help to in times of heartaches and even sin (Heb. 2:18; I Jn. 2:1ff). Truly we are a blessed people (see study # 68; Who is Like the Christian?).

Chapter 34

I. Moses views the land of Canaan from Pisgah and then Dies (34 all):

- A. *“And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho. And Jehovah showed him all the land of Gilead, unto Dan, and all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, unto the hinder sea, and the South, and the Plain of the valley of Jericho the city of palm-trees, unto Zoar”* (34:1-3).
1. After completing the three sermons, his song, and blessing the people Moses follows God’s instructions and ascends mount Nebo. Nebo was a mountain range that included a peak called Pisgah. Mount Pisgah is located approximately 10 miles Due East of the Northern most portion of the Dead Sea.
 2. High upon Mount Pisgah Moses was able to view the land that Israel would soon occupy.
- B. *“And Jehovah said unto him, This is the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither”* (34:4).
1. The land of Canaan was the land that God had previously sworn to *“Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob”* (see Gen. 12:1ff).
 2. The land of Canaan was to be a *“gift”* from God. Throughout this study we have had the lesson of God’s gifts burned within our minds. God’s gifts have ever been conditioned upon man’s obedience. Israel would continue to receive the gift of Canaan as they obeyed God’s word (see Deut. 1:19-30).
- C. *“So Moses the servant of Jehovah died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of Jehovah. And he buried him in the valley in the land of Moab over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day. And Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated. And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days: so the days of weeping in the mourning for Moses were ended”* (34:5-8).
1. Moses’ life now ends at the age of 120 years old. Note that his strength remained within and he showed no signs of weakness due to age. No man knows where the body of Moses was buried. Consider the fact that Satan and Michael the arch angel contended with each other over *“the body of Moses”* (see Jude 1:9). The design of this appears to be so that no man would be guilty of worshipping a shrine made unto Moses.
 2. Israel mourned the death of Moses for thirty days (a fact that illustrates their love, appreciation, and respect). Jacob was likewise mourned over for approximately 77 days (see Gen. 50:1-10).
- D. *“And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him: and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as Jehovah commanded Moses. And there hath not arisen a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom Jehovah knew face to face, in all the signs and the wonders, which Jehovah sent him to do in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all his land, and in all the mighty hand, and in all the great terror, which Moses wrought in the sight of all Israel”* (34:9-12).
1. Joshua was picked as Moses’ successor to lead Israel into Canaan (see Deut. 3:28; 31:3). Moses had *“laid his hands upon”* Joshua and thereby he was *“full of the spirit of wisdom.”* The wisdom of Joshua was through the *“spirit”* and thereby he was divinely endowed to speak and lead Israel (see Numb. 11:26-29) (see study # 69; Divine Inspiration).

2. The character of Moses is a fascinating study of one who started out with a lack of personal confidence (see Ex. 4:1ff) to a man of great spiritual stature. The Lord thought very highly of Moses and proclaims, “*There hath not arisen a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses.*” The Lord knew and spoke with Moses “*face to face.*” There would be another prophet, later, that would be greater than Moses. Moses spoke of Jesus when he said, “*A prophet shall the Lord God raise up unto you from among your brethren, like unto me; to him shall ye hearken in all things whatsoever he shall speak unto you*” (Deut. 18:15; Acts 3:22).
3. Let us close out this study with a Character sketch of Moses.

Appendix Study

Moses

Introduction

Moses was God’s man of the hour. The Lord made His choice of Moses manifest to both Jews and heathens by performing signs through him (see Ex. 4:29; 7:6-9; 17:8-12). Jehovah found something special in Moses early on in his life (see Ex. 2:2; Acts 7:20). Moses was somewhat aware of God’s special interest in him early on (see Acts 7:25). Through time Moses developed a wonderful relationship with God. When Moses died, the scriptures tell us that “*there hath not arisen a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom Jehovah knew face to face*” (Deut. 34:10). Some fourteen hundred years after Moses’ death he was found, in spirit form, appearing before Jesus, Peter, James, and John at the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt. 17:1ff). Moses was given the divine tasks of delivering the people from Egyptian bondage, delivering God’s law to them, and bringing them to the land of promise. Through these three events we learn much about one of the most respected men in the word of God (see Jn. 9:28-29; Acts 6:11; Jude 1:9).

The Early Days of Moses

Moses’ life can be divined into three forty year sections. His first forty years were lived out in Egypt (Acts 7:22-23). Moses was born in Egypt to Amram of the tribe of Levi and Jochebed his wife (Ex. 2:1ff; 6:20). The Hebrews had been multiplying at an alarming rate in Egypt (Ex. 1:12). Pharaoh of Egypt consequently passes an edict to murder all male Hebrew babies to avert the population explosion (Ex. 1:22). Jochebed prepares an ark for baby Moses and places him within hoping that God would save the child. By the providence of God the daughter of Pharaoh finds Moses and raises him as her own child in Egypt. Forty years would pass in Moses’ life as he was trained in the ways of Egypt (Acts 7:22). Parallel to his Egyptian training Moses was being taught the law of Jehovah God as well (Acts 7:23). Through time Moses developed faith and conviction in the ways of the Lord. He left Egypt, at the age of forty, due to his faith (see Heb. 11:24-27).

The Middle Period of Moses’ Life

The second period of Moses’ life extends from his fortieth year to the eightieth (Ex. 7:6-9; Acts 7:23, 29). Moses fled Egypt and comes to Midian where he meets and marries a Midianite woman named Zipporah (Ex. 2:20-22). Moses spends forty years in Midian and has a son name Gershom. Eventually, the Lord calls unto Moses from a burning bush and briefs him on his mission in Egypt. He is to go to Egypt and deliver the Hebrews out of their bondage (Ex. 3:1-10). Moses reveals a lack of confidence and fear on several occasions during his conversation with the Lord. Moses said, “*Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?*” (Ex. 3:11). Moses was afraid that **no one would believe him** (Ex. 4:1) and that **no one would listen** to him because he was **not eloquent** with words (Ex. 4:10). Moses concludes that God should send someone else (Ex. 4:13). At this point the Lord’s patience with Moses runs out and he commands Moses to do His will (Ex. 4:14ff). God saw something in Moses that Moses did not see in his

own self. Here was a man who lacked confidence, conviction, faith, and fear. Moses was not the man that we read about in the book of Deuteronomy at this point. Like all of us, it took time (I Cor. 3:1-3), tribulations (James 1:2ff), study (II Tim. 2:15), and effort (Phil. 3:13-14) to become the great man of faith, courage, confidence, and conviction.

The Last Period of Moses' Life

The last period of Moses' life is from his eightieth to one hundred and twentieth years (Ex. 7:7; Deut. 34:7). Moses obeys the will of God and returns to Egypt from Midian at the age of 80 (Ex. 7:7). His objective is to command Pharaoh of Egypt, in the name of Jehovah God, to let the Hebrews go out of Egypt that they may serve God (Ex. 5:1-2). Moses' commandment, by the authority of Jehovah God, irritated Pharaoh. The Egyptian ruler hardens his heart against Jehovah because it was not something that he wanted to do (see Ex. 10:3). Ten plagues are sent upon Egypt that the Lord may show the world His great might (Rom. 9:17). Eventually Pharaoh allows the Hebrews to leave and Moses directs them to Sinai where they would receive the law of God.

The people's faith in Moses, as God's spokesman, was established at Sinai. When they saw the smoke, fire, and heard the thundering they were terrified (Ex. 19:16; 20:18-21). God spoke the Ten Commandments to the people in their hearing and delivered the rest of the law through Moses. God then commanded Israel to enter into Canaan and accept his gift of the land that was promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob yet when Israel came to Canaan they rebelled through a spirit of fear (see Numb. 13:25-14:3; Deut. 1:19-26). Due to this sin Israel would wander in the wilderness for forty years and most would die (see Numb. 14:29-34).

The last days of Moses are spent preaching to Israel in the plains of Moab at the end of their years of wandering. Moses prepares the people to enter into a land that was occupied by wicked men who practiced idolatry (see Deut. 9:5). Moses looks back on his experiences with Israel and proclaims, "*Ye have been rebellious against Jehovah from the day that I knew you*" (Deut. 9:24). When Moses completes his final words to Israel he indicates little confidence in their future dedication to Jehovah (see Deut. 31:27). Moses too had sinned against God and was thereby unable to enter into Canaan (see Numb. 20:10-13) though he pleaded with the Lord to let him enter in (Deut. 3:23-29). Moses had now faithfully completed his divinely appointed threefold tasks. Moses' life ends at the top of Mount Pisgah (Deut. 34:1-8).

What Lessons can we learn from the Life of Moses?

A detailed study of the life of Moses will yield many lessons for the Christian. As Moses went about to fulfill his duty of delivering Israel from Egyptian bondage, delivering God's law to the people, and bringing them to the promised land there are many God approved and valuable character traits exposed. We find a man who was not strong in the beginning of mission yet through time he became strong in the Lord (Ex. 3-4). The first lesson that we learn when studying the life of Moses is that it **takes time and effort** to develop the Christian virtues (II Pet. 1:5-10). Gospel preaching will certainly produce this type of approach to life (see Rom. 1:5). Secondly, Moses was a man of great **faith** (Numb. 12:7; Heb. 3:5; 11:23ff). Moses' faith was made evident by his obedient acts (Heb. 11:1ff.). Those who proclaim a faith in Jesus Christ today will evidence that belief by their obedient acts (see Jn. 3:36). Thirdly, Moses was a man of great **conviction** (see Ex. 32:15-21, 26; Numb. 16:1-7, 15). The more heaven, hell, and eternity come to be real in a man's life the more convicted he will be. Fourthly, we find Moses being a man who **feared God** rather than man (Heb. 12:21). Moses put the fear of God on display when convicting Israel of their sins (Deut. 9:24; 31:27; 32:5). To fear or favor man over God is great folly. Fifthly, many today would not have the **courage** to stand before an assembly of thousands upon thousands and expose their error yet Moses did (Deut. 29:10-11). The New Testament Christian can do no less today (see Eph. 5:11). The sixth, and final lesson, comes in the area of being **meek**. The scriptures reveal Moses to be one of the meekest men upon the earth (see Numb. 12:3). Jesus tells us that the meek shall inherit the earth (Matt. 5:5). The character trait of being meek is defined as gentle, patient, forgiving and humble" (Moulton 340; LS 666; AHD 782). The Christian's prescribed being seems to be summed up in the word meek. Said people know they are sinners, are humbled by the human experience, and are thereby patient with all who strive against Satan.

The importance of Moses in the history of man cannot be overstated. Moses foretold of the coming of Christ (Deut. 18:15; Acts 3:22; 7:37; 26:22; Jn. 1:45). He was a lawgiver (Jn. 1:17). The Law Moses delivered was simply a shadow of the new Covenant under Jesus Christ (Heb. 8:5). Moses' law would eventually be understood as inferior to the Law of Jesus Christ in that it had no power to remove sin (see Heb. 7:18-19; 10:1-4). Due to the Law's inferiority it was identified by the Apostle Paul as the "*ministration of death*" (see II Cor. 3:7ff). The Law of Moses simply identified sin (Gal. 3:19) and thereby served as a tutor to bring man to Christ (Gal. 3:24). Moses knew of Christ's coming and thereby was persuaded of the rewards of heaven for all humanity (Heb. 11:24-27). We too can be a people of such faith, conviction, fear, and meekness if we will but apply ourselves to Gods' will.