

DAILY BIBLE

for Youth



2018
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06



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Scripture Union Korea

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Fear not, for I am with you;
be not dismayed, for I am your God;
I will strengthen you, I will help you,
I will uphold you with
my righteous right hand
Isaiah 41:10

2018




MEMO



5 / May

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How to Use Your Daily Bible for Youth



How to Use

Prepare

Designate a consistent time and place for your daily QT!

Pray

Pray immediately after you open your QT book and before you start to read.

Read

Read through the scripture at least three times.
Read it out! Mark it up!
Write it down!
Summarize the content and create a theme sentence.

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Covenant and Commandment

God's word is His covenant (promise) for us; at the same time, it is a commandment for us. If we trust in God's promise, it is only reasonable to be obedient to the commandment that comes with it.

Deuteronomy 1:1-18

God Keeps His Covenant(1-11)

'These are the words that Moses spoke to all Israel beyond the Jordan in the wilderness, in the Arabah opposite Suph, between Paran and Tophel, Laban, Hazeroth, and Dizahab. 'It is eleven days' journey from Horeb by the way of Mount Seir to Kadesh-barnea. 'In the fortieth year, on the first day of the eleventh month, Moses spoke to the people of Israel according to all that the LORD had given him in commandment to them, 'after he had defeated Sihon the king of the Amorites, who lived in Heshbon, and Og the king of Bashan, who lived in Ashtaroth and in Edrei. 'Beyond the Jordan, in the land of Moab, Moses undertook to explain this law, saying, ^{6a}'The LORD our God said to us in Horeb, 'You have stayed long enough at this mountain. 'Turn and take your journey, and go to the hill country of the Amorites and to all their neighbors in the Arabah, in the hill country and in the lowland and in the Negeb and by the seacoast, the land of the Canaanites, and Lebanon, as far as the great river, the river Euphrates. 'See, I have set the land before you. Go in and take possession of the land that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give to them and to their offspring after them.' ^{6b}'At that time I said to you, 'I am not able to bear you by myself. ⁷'The LORD your God has multiplied you, and behold, you are today as numerous as the stars of heaven. ⁸'May the LORD, the God of your fathers, make you a thousand times as many as you are and bless you, as he has promised you!

Israel's Leaders are Anointed(12-18)

¹²'How can I bear by myself the weight and burden of you and your strife? ¹³'Choose for your tribes wise, understanding, and experienced men, and I will appoint them as your heads.' ¹⁴'And you answered me, 'The thing that you have spoken is good for us to do.' ¹⁵'So I took the heads of your tribes, wise and experienced men, and set them as heads over you, commanders of thousands, commanders of hundreds, commanders of fifties, commanders of tens, and officers, throughout your tribes. ¹⁶'And I charged your judges at that time, 'Hear the cases between your brothers, and judge righteously between a man and his brother or the alien who is with him. ¹⁷'You shall not be partial in judgment. You shall hear the small and the great alike. You shall not be intimidated by anyone, for the judgment is God's. And the case that is too hard for you, you shall bring to me, and I will hear it.' ¹⁸'And I commanded you at that time all the things that you should do.

Understanding

Deuteronomy is a collection of sermons centering around God's commands and laws that Moses preached to a new group of Israelites (two generations after the Exodus) right before entering Canaan. Because the people of Israel were so disobedient, it took them 40 years to cover a distance that should have taken about 11 days. Moses preached from the east side of the Jordan River, in the land of the Moabites, where they could see the promised land of Canaan. God's covenant with the Israelites was that they would be given the land and the command to go and occupy their promised land (vv. 1-8). God made a covenant with Abraham that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars in the sky, so before going into Canaan, Israel had to organize their own ranks. This is why Moses chose wise and experienced people and anointed them as leaders and judges (vv. 9-18).

Applying

Who is God?

God always keeps His promises. Not only did God bring Israel out of Egypt, as He promised, but He also made them great in number. Then, how did the promise of giving them Canaan turn out? He was faithful. Is there a promise that God has given to you?

What is the lesson for me?

Christians need to respond to God's promises with faith. The first generation of the Exodus from Egypt spent 40 years travelling a distance that should have taken only 11 days because of their disobedience. Disobedience comes from a distrust of the promise, which results in distress. How are you responding to God's promises?

Praying

Help me to be obedient in trusting all the promises You have already kept for us, Lord.

Seek

As you read the passage, meditate on the question, 'Who is God?'

Reflect on how you can respond to the elements of God's character found in the scripture.

Apply

Move from thought to action. Recognize lessons from the scripture and find relevant ways to apply them to your life.

Prayer

Ask God to empower you to obey His word and live out what you've learned.

Introduction Deuteronomy

"You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might." (Deut. 6:5)

Remembering God's Law

Why was keeping the law emphasized for the Israelites? Couldn't they live happily without the pressure of having to keep the law? It's because God is the One who freed the Israelites from a life of slavery in Egypt to a new life lived in freedom. Before Israel's rescue, God's people were slaves under the control of the powerful ancient Egyptians. Now, the new life they were delivered into was not one with unlimited freedom, but of a life of obedience to God's will and commands. The book of Deuteronomy is not just a repetitive book of law imposed on the Israelites. It is a reminder of the astounding blessings and mercies God had poured out on Israel in days past. God gave the enslaved people of Israel, bound in a foreign land with little hope and prospect, freedom. God reaffirmed to His people that He is their Lord; He is a Lord that protects his people and provides for their needs. God did all of this because He loved them. The most important thing that Israel had to recognize while living in reconciliation with God in their promised land was the truth: they were loved by God. This is why the road to happiness for them was to trust in God's love and live within the parameters of His will. It is in this attitude of the heart where obedience to the law is expressed.

The Need to Recognize God's Love

Why was keeping the law emphasized for the Israelites? Couldn't they just live happily without having the pressure of having to keep the law? It's because God is the One who freed the Israelites from a life of slavery in Egypt to a new life. Before this happened, Israel were slaves who did what they were told by the Egyptians. Now, the new life they were given was not one where they could do whatever they wanted to or follow the trends of their neighboring countries, but a life obedient to God's will. The book of Deuteronomy is not just a book that repeats the conditions of the law. It is

a reminder of the astounding blessings and mercies God had poured out on Israel in days past. God gave the people of Israel, without hope in a land where they were slaves, freedom and became their new Lord, protecting them and giving them all that they needed. God did all of this because He loved them. The most important thing that Israel had to recognize while living a new life in a new land was the truth that they were loved by God. This is why the road to happiness for them was to trust in God's love and live under God's will. It is in this attitude of the heart where obedience to the law is expressed.

A New Life of Obedience

People who hear the message of God already know about the law. To them, the law is not something new. Deuteronomy is not another reminder about the law, but rather a lesson on who God, the Maker of the law, really is. It teaches that we, as God's chosen people, should observe it not just because it's the law, but rather because it is the will of the One, True God. This is why many prophets in the Old Testament spoke the words of Deuteronomy to the wayward hearts of the people of Israel. On top of that, Jesus and the apostles of the New Testament referred to Deuteronomy many times. For those of us living in the 21st century, we cannot apply every detail of the law to our lives. What we can take from Deuteronomy is the understanding of who the true Lord of the earth is and how His love gives us guidance. The truly joyful life mentioned in the book of Deuteronomy is not a life pursuing thing that will relieve our worries or fulfill our economic needs while ignoring God, but rather a life trusting in God's love, loving others, and living according to His will.



Covenant and Commandment

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Israel's Leaders are Anointed(12-18)

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Who is God?

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Praying

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Faith and Fear

The people of Israel rejected God's commands by being afraid of how big and strong the Amorites who lived in Canaan were. Because of the report from the Israelite spies and instead of trusting God's Word to have no fear, many doubted God's ability to fulfill His promise to deliver the land set before them. Who do I listen to?

Deuteronomy 1:19-33

Fear Among Israel's People (19-28)

¹⁹"Then we set out from Horeb and went through all that great and terrifying wilderness that you saw, on the way to the hill country of the Amorites, as the LORD our God commanded us. And we came to Kadesh-barnea. ²⁰And I said to you, 'You have come to the hill country of the Amorites, which the LORD our God is giving us. ²¹See, the LORD your God has set the land before you. Go up, take possession, as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has told you. Do not fear or be dismayed.' ²²Then all of you came near me and said, 'Let us send men before us, that they may explore the land for us and bring us word again of the way by which we must go up and the cities into which we shall come.' ²³The thing seemed good to me, and I took twelve men from you, one man from each tribe. ²⁴And they turned and went up into the hill country, and came to the Valley of Eshcol and spied it out. ²⁵And they took in their hands some of the fruit of the land and brought it down to us, and brought us word again and said, 'It is a good land that the LORD our God is giving us.' ²⁶"Yet you would not go up, but rebelled against the command of the LORD your God. ²⁷And you murmured in your tents and said, 'Because the LORD hated us he has brought us out of the land of Egypt, to give us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us. ²⁸Where are we going up? Our brothers have made our hearts melt, saying, "The people are greater and taller than we. The cities are great and fortified up to heaven. And besides, we have seen the sons of the Anakim there.'"

God our Defender(29-33)

²⁹Then I said to you, 'Do not be in dread or afraid of them. ³⁰The LORD your God who goes before you will himself fight for you, just as he did for you in Egypt before your eyes, ³¹and in the wilderness, where you have seen how the LORD your God carried you, as a man carries his son, all the way that you went until you came to this place.' ³²Yet in spite of this word you did not believe the LORD your God, ³³who went before you in the way to seek you out a place to pitch your tents, in fire by night and in the cloud by day, to show you by what way you should go.

Understanding

Moses explains to the second generation of the Exodus why the first generation, their predecessors, was not able to enter into Canaan. All they had to do was trust God's promises. Had the Israelites obeyed, they would have been able to take the land of Canaan as God had promised. However, they hesitated to go to Canaan, and suggested to Moses that he sent out spies to survey the land promised. The fruit brought by the spies proved that the land in Canaan was fertile. However, the Israelites disbelieved God would fulfill His promise of deliverance. They say the Amorites' size and fortified cities and feared God would fulfill His promise. Even though God had faithfully led them with His mighty hand, they rejected obedience to God's commands (vv. 19-33).

Applying

Who is God?

God is a god who guides and protects. God led them by a pillar of cloud by day and fire by night, all the while watching over them like a loving, faithful parent. Do you believe that God has guided and protected you up to now and will continue to guide and protect you?

What is the lesson for me?

Fear comes from mistrust and is not proportionate with faith. The reason why the people of Israel were disobedient to God's commands was because they did not trust in God's promises and were afraid of the Amorites living in Canaan. What are you afraid of, and what is the reason for that fear?

Praying

Help me trust in your guidance and protection, and to obey Your Word in the midst of struggles and fear.

The Result of Disobedience

Covenants, even promises made with God, can be nullified if the recipient is not faithful. Are God's promises a blessing or disadvantageous for us?

Deuteronomy 1:34-46

Promised Land Denied (34-39)

³⁴“And the LORD heard your words and was angered, and he swore, ³⁵‘Not one of these men of this evil generation shall see the good land that I swore to give to your fathers, ³⁶except Caleb the son of Jephunneh. He shall see it, and to him and to his children I will give the land on which he has trodden, because he has wholly followed the LORD!’ ³⁷Even with me the LORD was angry on your account and said, ‘You also shall not go in there. ³⁸Joshua the son of Nun, who stands before you, he shall enter. Encourage him, for he shall cause Israel to inherit it. ³⁹And as for your little ones, who you said would become a prey, and your children, who today have no knowledge of good or evil, they shall go in there. And to them I will give it, and they shall possess it.

Defeated in War due to Disobedience (40-46)

⁴⁰But as for you, turn, and journey into the wilderness in the direction of the Red Sea.’ ⁴¹“Then you answered me, ‘We have sinned against the LORD. We ourselves will go up and fight, just as the LORD our God commanded us.’ And every one of you fastened on his weapons of war and thought it easy to go up into the hill country. ⁴²And the LORD said to me, ‘Say to them, Do not go up or fight, for I am not in your midst, lest you be defeated before your enemies.’ ⁴³So I spoke to you, and you would not listen; but you rebelled against the command of the LORD and presumptuously went up into the hill country. ⁴⁴Then the Amorites who lived in that hill country came out against you and chased you as bees do and beat you down in Seir as far as Hormah. ⁴⁵And you returned and wept before the LORD, but the LORD did not listen to your voice or give ear to you. ⁴⁶So you remained at Kadesh many days, the days that you remained there.

Understanding

God was angry at Israel's distrust and disobedience. He declared that all who were not obedient to Him would not be able to enter into Canaan, the Promised Land. However, in His favor, God allowed Caleb and Joshua to enter the Promise Land to lead the second generation of Israel because of their trust in God's promise (vv. 34-39). God commanded those who feared entering Canaan to turn back and return to the desert. Only then did they recognize their sins and in their stubbornness. In attempts to correct their mistake they went up into the hill country to fight the Amorites. However, this was another prideful act of disobeying God's command. God was not with them and they were completely defeated by the Amorites (vv. 40-46).

Applying

Who is God?

God hears our words, but He ignores them as well. God heard the complaints, whines, and cries of Israel, but He did not listen to them after they disobeyed Him. What kind of words are coming out of my mouth right now? Are they words that turn God's ear to listen or ignore? Only those who are obedient recipients are able to take part in God's promises.

What is the lesson for me?

Although the people of Israel did not trust in God's promises were not able to enter Canaan, Joshua and Caleb, who wholeheartedly obeyed, were able to enter Canaan. How do I respond to God's promise?

Praying

Help me to become wholeheartedly obedient to Your Word even when I am scared or doubt.

Judgement and Mercy

Although the people of Israel may have wandered then passed away in the desert because they disobeyed God's commands, God's promise did not fail. God fulfilled the promise through a new generation.

Deuteronomy 2:1-25

Wandering the Desert (1-23)

¹"Then we turned and journeyed into the wilderness in the direction of the Red Sea, as the LORD told me. And for many days we traveled around Mount Seir. ²Then the LORD said to me, ³"You have been traveling around this mountain country long enough. Turn northward ⁴and command the people, "You are about to pass through the territory of your brothers, the people of Esau, who live in Seir; and they will be afraid of you. So be very careful. ⁵Do not contend with them, for I will not give you any of their land, no, not so much as for the sole of the foot to tread on, because I have given Mount Seir to Esau as a possession. ⁶You shall purchase food from them with money, that you may eat, and you shall also buy water from them with money, that you may drink. ⁷For the LORD your God has blessed you in all the work of your hands. He knows your going through this great wilderness. These forty years the LORD your God has been with you. You have lacked nothing." ⁸"So we went on, away from our brothers, the people of Esau, who live in Seir, away from the Arabah road from Elath and Ezion-geber. ⁹"And we turned and went in the direction of the wilderness of Moab. ¹⁰And the LORD said to me, ¹¹"Do not harass Moab or contend with them in battle, for I will not give you any of their land for a possession, because I have given Ar to the people of Lot for a possession." ¹²(The Emim formerly lived there, a people great and many, and tall as the Anakim. ¹³Like the Anakim they are also counted as Rephaim, but the Moabites call them Emim. ¹⁴The Horites also lived in Seir formerly, but the people of Esau dispossessed them and destroyed them from before them and settled in their place, as Israel did to the land of their possession, which the LORD gave to them.) ¹⁵"Now rise up and go over the brook Zered." ¹⁶So we went over the brook Zered. ¹⁷And the time from our leaving Kadesh-barnea until we crossed the brook Zered was thirty-eight years, until the entire generation, that is, the men of war, had perished from the camp, as the LORD had sworn to them. ¹⁸For indeed the hand of the LORD was against them, to destroy them from the camp, until they had perished. ¹⁹"So as soon as all the men of war had perished and were dead from among the people, ²⁰the LORD said to me, ²¹"Today you are to cross the border of Moab at Ar. ²²And when you approach the territory of the people of Ammon, do not harass them or contend with them, for I will not give you any of the land of the people of Ammon as a possession, because I have given it to the sons of Lot for a possession." ²³(It is also counted as a land of Rephaim. Rephaim formerly lived there—but the Ammonites call them Zam-zumim—²⁴a people great and many, and tall as the Anakim; but the LORD destroyed them before the Ammonites, and they dispossessed them and settled in their place, ²⁵as he did for the people of Esau, who live in Seir, when he destroyed the Horites before them and they dispossessed them and settled in their place even to this day. ²⁶As for the Avvim, who lived in villages as far as Gaza, the Caphtorim, who came from Caphtor, destroyed them and settled in their place.)

Storming to Heshbon (24-25)

²⁴"Rise up, set out on your journey and go over the Valley of the Arnon. Behold, I have given into your hand Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land. Begin to take possession, and contend with him in battle. ²⁵This day I will begin to put the dread and fear of you on the peoples who are under the whole heaven, who shall hear the report of you and shall tremble and be in anguish because of you."

Understanding

Israel returned to the desert because they refused to enter Canaan, God's promised land, and spent 40 long years wandering in the desert. The four decades Israel spent in the desert is a simultaneous testament of God's judgment and mercy. While the disobedient predecessors, the first generation of the Exodus, all passed away in the desert, there rose in their place the second generation successors. To return to Canaan from the desert, they would have to go through Edom (Seir), Moab, and Amonite country. Since God did not give those lands to Israel, He commanded them not to fight with those people. However, He commanded them to attack and take the land of the Amonites in Heshbon, east of the Jordan River, when they passed through that land (vv. 1-25).

Applying

Who is God?

God is a God of both love and justice. Though God punished the older generation by having them pass away in the desert, He protected and watched over the new generation. Do you see God only as a God of love? Are there things you should repent of before the God of justice acts?

What is the lesson for me?

Believers should not desire more than what God gives. Because God was going to give the nations of Edom (Seir), Moab, and Ammon to the descendants of Israel in the future, He commanded Israel not instigate any conflict with them. Do you desire what others have or create conflict because of your desire?

Praying

Protect me, Lord, in this desert-like world so that I may obediently trust in Your promises.

Expert vs. Underling

An expert can see the long game, but an underling can only see what's in front of them. King Sihon of Heshbon opposed Israel without seeing the long game and eventually lost everything

Deuteronomy 2:26-37

Blocking Israel(26-30)

²⁶“So I sent messengers from the wilderness of Kedemoth to Sihon the king of Heshbon, with words of peace, saying, ²⁷“Let me pass through your land. I will go only by the road; I will turn aside neither to the right nor to the left. ²⁸You shall 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 foot, ²⁹as the sons of Esau who live in Seir and the Moabites who live in Ar did for me, until I go over the Jordan into the land that the LORD our God is giving to us.’ ³⁰But Sihon the king of Heshbon would not let us pass by him, for the LORD your God hardened his spirit and made his heart obstinate, that he might give him into your hand, as he is this day.

Destroying Heshbon(31-37)

³¹And the LORD said to me, ‘Behold, I have begun to give Sihon and his land over to you. Begin to take possession, that you may occupy his land.’ ³²Then Sihon came out against us, he and all his people, to battle at Jahaz. ³³And the LORD our God gave him over to us, and we defeated him and his sons and all his people. ³⁴And we captured all his cities at that time and devoted to destruction every city, men, women, and children. We left no survivors. ³⁵Only the livestock we took as spoil for ourselves, with the plunder of the cities that we captured. ³⁶From Aroer, which is on the edge of the Valley of the Arnon, and from the city that is in the valley, as far as Gilead, there was not a city too high for us. The LORD our God gave all into our hands. ³⁷Only to the land of the sons of Ammon you did not draw near, that is, to all the banks of the river Jab-bok and the cities of the hill country, whatever the LORD our God had forbidden us.

Understanding

Israel did not want to engage with Heshbon and hoped to peacefully pass through. This is why they sent messengers to King Sihon of Heshbon to ask for safe passage. However, King Sihon would not allow them to pass through. Even though King Sihon's opposition started the battle, the truth is that it was God's plan to destroy Sihon through the battle (vv. 26-30). Israel defeated the army of Sihon and captured all his cities. King Sihon was not defeated because Israel fought better, rather it was God who allowed King Sihon and his country to fall into the hands of Israel because they had obeyed His commands. God did not command them to destroy everything because He did not respect life, but rather, to not leave a trace of sin (vv. 31-37).

Applying

Who is God?

God sovereignly guides His follower's every step. God used King Sihon's opposition and the ensuing battle to destroy Sihon and hand over all his cities to Israel. How do you react to unexpected opposition? Trust that God will lead you when opposition comes.

What is the lesson for me?

Winning or losing the battle is in God's hands. Israel was able to defeat King Sihon because God helped them. What are you currently battling? Are you fighting without God, on your own?

Praying

I trust in Your Word God. You have planned my way and are always victorious.



Faith Wins

The giants living in the Promise Land towered over the Israelites, just as they had forty years ago. However, the new generation of Israelites obediently trusted in God's promise. As a result, they were able to take the land east of the Jordan.

Deuteronomy 3:1-11

The Defeat of King Og of Bashan (1-7)

¹“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, to battle at Edrei. ²But the LORD said to me, ‘Do not fear him, for I have given him and all his people and his land into your hand. And you shall do to him as you did to Sihon the king of the Amorites, who lived at Heshbon.’ ³So the LORD our God gave into our hand Og also, the king of Bashan, and all his people, and we struck him down until he had no survivor left. ⁴And we took all his cities at that time—there was not a city that we did not take from them—sixty cities, the whole region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan. ⁵All these were cities fortified with high walls, gates, and bars, besides very many unwalled villages. ⁶And we devoted them to destruction, as we did to Sihon the king of Heshbon, devoting to destruction every city, men, women, and children. ⁷But all the livestock and the spoil of the cities we took as our plunder.

Taking the Land East of the Jordan River (8-11)

⁸So we took the land at that time out of the hand of the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, from the Valley of the Arnon to Mount Hermon ⁹(the Sidonians call Hermon Sirion, while the Amorites call it Senir), ¹⁰all the cities of the tableland and all Gilead and all Bashan, as far as Salecah and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan. ¹¹(For only Og the king of Bashan was left of the remnant of the Rephaim. Behold, his bed was a bed of iron. Is it not in Rabbah of the Ammonites? Nine cubits was its length, and four cubits its breadth, according to the common cubit.)

Understanding

After their victory in Heshbon, Israel continued their march north, making their way to the land of Bashan (another land controlled by the Amorites). Just as they had with King Sihon of Heshbon, God commanded Israel to destroy King Og of Bashan and take control of the land. King Og of Bashan was a large giant, as evident by his large bed (over 12 feet long, 6 feet wide). Also, Bashan was a region consisting of sixty cities fortified with high walls and impregnable gates. While the first generation disobeyed God's commands because they were afraid (Deut. 1:28), the second generation were obedient. As a result, they were victorious according to God's Word. Israel now controlled all of the land east of the Jordan and were ready to cross the Jordan River. They now were confident enough to take the land west of the Jordan: Canaan (vv. 1-11).

Applying

Who is God?

God is the One who gives victory. The reason why Israel was able to defeat the towering King Og of Bashan, along with his 60 fortified cities, was because God was with them. When God is with us, we can defeat opponents we couldn't defeat with our own strength. Pray that God will be with us. The key to victory is faith and obedience.

What is the lesson for me?

The old generation was defeated because they were afraid of the giants and did not believe in God's promises, but the new generation was victorious because they believed and obeyed God's promises. Are you following the formula for victory?

Praying

Help me to believe that God is with me to be victorious over anyone or any problem and that I will obey God's promises.

Receive God's Will

What would happen if an actor decided to do whatever they wanted and not follow the director's orders or the script? Though at times it is difficult and looks impossible, the wisest way to go is to follow and receive God's will.

Deuteronomy 3:12-29

Dividing Territories (12-22)

¹²“When we took possession of this land at that time, I gave to the Reubenites and the Gadites the territory beginning at Aroer, which is on the edge of the Valley of the Arnon, and half the hill country of Gilead with its cities. ¹³The rest of Gilead, and all Bashan, the kingdom of Og, that is, all the region of Argob, I gave to the half-tribe of Manasseh. (All that portion of Bashan is called the land of Rephaim. ¹⁴Jair the Manassite took all the region of Argob, that is, Bashan, as far as the border of the Geshurites and the Maacathites, and called the villages after his own name, Havvoth-jair, as it is to this day.) ¹⁵To Machir I gave Gilead, ¹⁶and to the Reubenites and the Gadites I gave the territory from Gilead as far as the Valley of the Arnon, with the middle of the valley as a border, as far over as the river Jabbok, the border of the Ammonites; ¹⁷the Arabah also, with the Jordan as the border, from Chinnereth as far as the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, under the slopes of Pisgah on the east. ¹⁸“And I commanded you at that time, saying, ‘The LORD your God has given you this land to possess. All your men of valor shall cross over armed before your brothers, the people of Israel. ¹⁹Only your wives, your little ones, and your livestock (I know that you have much livestock) shall remain in the cities that I have given you, ²⁰until the LORD gives rest to your brothers, as to you, and they also occupy the land that the LORD your God gives them beyond the Jordan. Then each of you may return to his possession which I have given you.’ ²¹And I commanded Joshua at that time, ‘Your eyes have seen all that the LORD your God has done to these two kings. So will the LORD do to all the kingdoms into which you are crossing. ²²You shall not fear them, for it is the LORD your God who fights for you.’

Raising Up Joshua (23-29)

²³“And I pleaded with the LORD at that time, saying, ²⁴‘O Lord GOD, you have only begun to show your servant your greatness and your mighty hand. For what god is there in heaven or on earth who can do such works and mighty acts as yours? ²⁵Please let me go over and see the good land beyond the Jordan, that good hill country and Lebanon.’ ²⁶But the LORD was angry with me because of you and would not listen to me. And the LORD said to me, ‘Enough from you; do not speak to me of this matter again. ²⁷Go up to the top of Pisgah and lift up your eyes westward and northward and southward and eastward, and look at it with your eyes, for you shall not go over this Jordan. ²⁸But charge Joshua, and encourage and strengthen him, for he shall go over at the head of this people, and he shall put them in possession of the land that you shall see.’ ²⁹So we remained in the valley opposite Beth-peor.

Understanding

Moses divided the land east of the Jordan amongst the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half-tribe of Manasseh. Moses commanded them to continue fight on the frontlines until the rest of the tribes gain the land west of the Jordan. He also encouraged Joshua to not be afraid because God would give them victory west of the Jordan as He had east of the Jordan (vv. 12-22). Although Moses prayed to God that he would be able to enter into Canaan, God did not allow it. God chose Joshua to be the leader of the new generation that would enter into Canaan (vv. 23-29).

Applying

Who is God?

God gives and takes away our responsibilities. God did not allow Moses to cross the Jordan by taking away his responsibility as the leader of the disobedient, old generation. God entrusted Joshua the responsibility of leading the new generation across the Jordan. What responsibility has God given you? Are you being responsible what God has entrusted to me?

What is the lesson for me?

As adopted sons and daughters of God, our way of thinking should not be others do not matter at the cost of our success. Moses told the tribes that were given land – Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh – to continue fighting on the frontlines along with the other tribes who hadn't been given land. Is someone or something that needs your help?

Praying

Help me to take ownership of my responsibilities, and live helping those in need.

Privilege and Responsibility

Generally speaking, we all desire to have privileges that others cannot have. However, those entrusted with specific privileges should live with an awareness of their responsibility, not just of their privilege.

Deuteronomy 4:1-14

Purpose of the Law (1-8)

¹“And now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the rules that I am teaching you, and do them, that you may live, and go in and take possession of the land that the LORD, the God of your fathers, is giving you. ²You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God that I command you. ³Your eyes have seen what the LORD did at Baal-peor, for the LORD your God destroyed from among you all the men who followed the Baal of Peor. ⁴But you who held fast to the LORD your God are all alive today. ⁵See, I have taught you statutes and rules, as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should do them in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. ⁶Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, ‘Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.’ ⁷For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as the LORD our God is to us, whenever we call upon him? ⁸And what great nation is there, that has statutes and rules so righteous as all this law that I set before you today?

Personally Written Laws (9-14)

⁹“Only take care, and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things that your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. Make them known to your children and your children’s children—¹⁰how on the day that you stood before the LORD your God at Horeb, the LORD said to me, ‘Gather the people to me, that I may let them hear my words, so that they may learn to fear me all the days that they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children so.’ ¹¹And you came near and stood at the foot of the mountain, while the mountain burned with fire to the heart of heaven, wrapped in darkness, cloud, and gloom. ¹²Then the LORD spoke to you out of the midst of the fire. You heard the sound of words, but saw no form; there was only a voice. ¹³And he declared to you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, that is, the Ten Commandments, and he wrote them on two tablets of stone. ¹⁴And the LORD commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and rules, that you might do them in the land that you are going over to possess.

Understanding

Since Moses was not able to enter Canaan with Israel’s second generation, he taught them God’s Law (Law & Commands). Obeying God’s law leads to life, but disobedience will lead to destruction just like Baal of Peor (Num. 25). Israel needed to live in the promised land of God with a new heart, obeying God’s law. When they kept God’s law, Israel became a great country of wise people (vv. 1-8). The laws of Israel were completely different than that of the neighboring Gentiles. This was because the law was made by God, not man. God appeared on Mount Sinai in glory and fire, personally speaking and writing the law onto tablets of stone (vv. 9-14).

Applying

Who is God?

God gave us the law and wants us to be blessed by obeying the law. God desired for the Israelites to enjoy the blessings of His promise by obeying His divine laws and regulations. Are you receiving God’s laws and regulations as a blessed command? How are you being blessed through obeying the law?

What is the lesson for me?

Our future depends on our attitude towards God’s Word. Israel’s future depended on how they responded to God’s laws and regulations. Keep in mind that when we obey God, the giver of every blessing and wisdom, we become greater and wiser.

Praying

Help me to obey Your Word. Help me to understand that blessing come from obeying your law.

There Is Nothing like God

Everyone is bound to hate one or two things. What is something that you hate? How would you feel if someone did something you hate? What is something God hates?

Deuteronomy 4:15-31

Do not Worship Idols (15-24)

¹⁵“Therefore watch yourselves very carefully. Since you saw no form on the day that the LORD spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire, ¹⁶beware lest you act corruptly by making a carved image for yourselves, in the form of any figure, the likeness of male or female, ¹⁷the likeness of any animal that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the air, ¹⁸the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the water under the earth. ¹⁹And beware lest you raise your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of heaven, you be drawn away and bow down to them and serve them, things that the LORD your God has allotted to all the peoples under the whole heaven. ²⁰But the LORD has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be a people of his own inheritance, as you are this day. ²¹Furthermore, the LORD was angry with me because of you, and he swore that I should not cross the Jordan, and that I should not enter the good land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance. ²²For I must die in this land; I must not go over the Jordan. But you shall go over and take possession of that good land. ²³Take care, lest you forget the covenant of the LORD your God, which he made with you, and make a carved image, the form of anything that the LORD your God has forbidden you. ²⁴For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.

The Result of Worshipping Idols (25-31)

²⁵“When you father children and children’s children, and have grown old in the land, if you act corruptly by making a carved image in the form of anything, and by doing what is evil in the sight of the LORD your God, so as to provoke him to anger, ²⁶I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that you will soon utterly perish from the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess. You will not live long in it, but will be utterly destroyed. ²⁷And the LORD will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the LORD will drive you. ²⁸And there you will serve gods of wood and stone, the work of human hands, that neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell. ²⁹But from there you will seek the LORD your God and you will find him, if you search after him with all your heart and with all your soul. ³⁰When you are in tribulation, and all these things come upon you in the latter days, you will return to the LORD your God and obey his voice. ³¹For the LORD your God is a merciful God. He will not leave you or destroy you or forget the covenant with your fathers that he swore to them.

Understanding

God is the living Creator of the universe, and that is why we should not worship any image of God or any other thing besides the only living God. Canaan, which Israel was about to enter into, had a culture of worshiping idols. This is why Moses warned them to not make any images to replace God (vv. 15-24). The land God had promised to Israel was beautiful and fertile. Depending on whether Israel could keep God’s commands and serve Him, that land could become a land of life and blessing or a land of judgment and destruction. Since idol worship is a betrayal against God, Israel had to believe and serve God without worshiping other gods (vv. 25-31).

Applying

Who is God?

God is our Creator so we should not try to create Him. The reason why God appeared as only a voice in the midst of a fire on Mount Sinai was so that Israel would not be able to make any image of Him. Are you limiting God to your own thoughts and experiences instead of knowing Him through the Word?

What is the lesson for me?

Idol worship is a foolish, evil sin. God commanded Israel to not make or serve an idol. Serving an idol that we make instead of God our Maker is an act of ignorance and arrogance that angers God. Is there something you seek more than God?

Praying

Help me to know You properly through Your Word and to serve more wholeheartedly.

Living and Future Miracle

Hymns and psalms often illustrate how looking back at our lives, allows us to see how there was nothing that the Lord's hands did not touch. There are many moments in our lives where God's grace and guidance were present even when we did not recognize it.

Deuteronomy 4:32-43

Israel Led by God's Grace (32-40)

³²"For ask now of the days that are past, which were before you, since the day that God created man on the earth, and ask from one end of heaven to the other, whether such a great thing as this has ever happened or was ever heard of. ³³Did any people ever hear the voice of a god speaking out of the midst of the fire, as you have heard, and still live? ³⁴Or has any god ever attempted to go and take a nation for himself from the midst of another nation, by trials, by signs, by wonders, and by war, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and by great deeds of terror, all of which the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes? ³⁵To you it was shown, that you might know that the LORD is God; there is no other besides him. ³⁶Out of heaven he let you hear his voice, that he might discipline you. And on earth he let you see his great fire, and you heard his words out of the midst of the fire. ³⁷And because he loved your fathers and chose their offspring after them and brought you out of Egypt with his own presence, by his great power, ³⁸driving out before you nations greater and mightier than you, to bring you in, to give you their land for an inheritance, as it is this day, ³⁹know therefore today, and lay it to your heart, that the LORD is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; there is no other. ⁴⁰Therefore you shall keep his statutes and his commandments, which I command you today, that it may go well with you and with your children after you, and that you may prolong your days in the land that the LORD your God is giving you for all time."

Three Cities of Refuge East of the Jordan (41-43)

⁴¹Then Moses set apart three cities in the east beyond the Jordan, ⁴²that the manslayer might flee there, anyone who kills his neighbor unintentionally, without being at enmity with him in time past; he may flee to one of these cities and save his life: ⁴³Bezer in the wilderness on the tableland for the Reubenites, Ramoth in Gilead for the Gadites, and Golan in Bashan for the Manassites.

Understanding

God brought Israel out of Egypt, and made a covenant with them on Mount Sinai. The people of Israel were witnesses of God's redemptive history through His intervention and speaking on their behalf. In displaying Himself, God made it known to them that He is the one true God of Israel. This is why Israel must remember and hold in their hearts the truth that there is no god besides God. Their new lives in the Promised Land should be lived following God's laws and commands (vv. 32-40). After delivering a long sermon, Moses designates three cities east of the Jordan "cities of refuge." A city of refuge is a place where a person who unintentionally kills someone may find safety. One city of refuge was delegated for each tribe living east of the Jordan.

Applying

Who is God?

God is interceding for His people. The history of Israel is evidence of God's miracles intervention for them. Take time to thank God by remembering all the things He has done for you. Then, praise God for all that He is doing and will do for you.

What is the lesson for me?

Jesus is the true City of Refuge. God created the cities of refuge to save the lives of those who unintentionally killed someone. Jesus is the city of refuge for our salvation. We are those meant to die because of sin. Who do you want to introduce this amazing City of Refuge (Jesus) to?

Praying

Thank You, God, for guiding my life until now, and I praise the One who will continue to lead me.

Eternal Promise

When people write up contracts that have a determined time period, they have new contracts prepared when the initial contract expires. However, there is no need for this when we make a contract with God. This is because God's contract is 'forever.'

Deuteronomy 4:44-5:10

Land Gained through Obedience (4:44-49)

⁴⁴This is the law that Moses set before the people of Israel. ⁴⁵These are the testimonies, the statutes, and the rules, which Moses spoke to the people of Israel when they came out of Egypt, ⁴⁶beyond the Jordan in the valley opposite Beth-peor, in the land of Sihon the king of the Amorites, who lived at Heshbon, whom Moses and the people of Israel defeated when they came out of Egypt. ⁴⁷And they took possession of his land and the land of Og, the king of Bashan, the two kings of the Amorites, who lived to the east beyond the Jordan; ⁴⁸from Aroer, which is on the edge of the Valley of the Arnon, as far as Mount Sirion (that is, Hermon), ⁴⁹together with all the Arabah on the east side of the Jordan as far as the Sea of the Arabah, under the slopes of Pisgah.

Our Covenant (5:1-10)

¹And Moses summoned all Israel and said to them, "Hear, O Israel, the statutes and the rules that I speak in your hearing today, and you shall learn them and be careful to do them. ²The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. ³Not with our fathers did the LORD make this covenant, but with us, who are all of us here alive today. ⁴The LORD spoke with you face to face at the mountain, out of the midst of the fire, ⁵while I stood between the LORD and you at that time, to declare to you the word of the LORD. For you were afraid because of the fire, and you did not go up into the mountain. He said: ⁶"I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. ⁷"You shall have no other gods before me. ⁸"You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. ⁹You shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, ¹⁰but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

Understanding

Before Israel was about to enter into Canaan, Moses taught them about the Laws of God (laws and regulations they would be expected to keep). However, the laws and regulations Moses was speaking about were not new, Israel had already received them at Mount Sinai (4: 44-49). The truth is, those who heard God and made a covenant with Him at Mount Sinai were their ancestors (the first generation of the Exodus). However, since the covenant at Mount Sinai was not for a specific generation but for all of Israel, it also applied to the current people of Israel (the second generation of the Exodus). Since the Ten Commandments were personally written as a covenant with the people of Israel at Mount Sinai, it can be described as the foundation for constitutional law today (5: 1-10).

Applying

Who is God?

God is faithful to keep His promises to His children. Even though Israel went through a generational change in the desert, God's promise was still valid. Even today, God continues to show great mercy, in accordance to His promise, to those who obey His commandments. How much do you value God's promises? Are you keeping your part of God's promises?

What is the lesson for me?

To keep the Word, we need to hear and learn it well. Moses encouraged Israel to hear and learn the commands and laws God gave them and to keep them well. How is your attitude while listening to sermons and during free time?

Praying

Help me to listen to and understand Your Words well so that I may live in accordance to Your Word.

The Ten Commandments

Even on the most congested roads, following traffic laws leads to a safe passage. When we follow the do's and don'ts delivered in the Ten Commandments, our life's passages will be smooth and safe.

Deuteronomy 5:11-21

Loving God (11-15)

¹¹“You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain. ¹²“Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you. ¹³Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁴but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter or your male servant or your female servant, or your ox or your donkey or any of your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates, that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you. ¹⁵You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.

Loving Our Neighbor (16-21)

¹⁶“Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God commanded you, that your days may be long, and that it may go well with you in the land that the LORD your God is giving you. ¹⁷“You shall not murder. ¹⁸“And you shall not commit adultery. ¹⁹“And you shall not steal. ²⁰“And you shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. ²¹“And you shall not covet your neighbor's wife. And you shall not desire your neighbor's house, his field, or his male servant, or his female servant, his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's.”

Understanding

The Ten Commandments appear twice, in Exodus 20: 1-17 and Deuteronomy 5: 6-21. The Ten Commandments that appeared in Exodus was delivered to the first generation; the Commandments repeated in Deuteronomy were for the second generation. In short, the Ten Commandments are divided into two parts. The first four commandments relate to our relationship with God. The later six instruct us on how to interact with one another. As God's chosen people, Israel was commanded to not have any other gods, make and worship idols, or use God's name in vain. They were also instructed to keep the Sabbath Day holy. The people of Israel were expected to respect their parents, and were not allowed to kill, commit adultery, steal, give false testimony, or covet anything they don't have (vv. 11-21).

Applying

Who is God?

God is holy and worthy of praise. Thus, Israel was not allowed to use God's name in vain, and had to keep the Sabbath Day set aside as holy. Do you consider God's name and the Sabbath holy? Are you keeping God's commandments?

What is the lesson for me?

Love for God leads to love for others. The Ten Commandments begin with, 'The Lord Your God' and end with, 'Thy neighbor.' Loving our neighbor is another form and fruit of loving God. Do you have a good relationship with those around you, especially your family? How can you show God's love to them?

Praying

I pray that I would use the Ten Commandments as a foundation for a joyful life.



A Mediator of Covenant

The God we serve is great, glorious, and mighty in strength. It is expected that we fear (in awe) God and obey His Word.

Deuteronomy 5:22-33

Moses the Mediator (22-29)

²²“These words the LORD spoke to all your assembly at the mountain out of the midst of the fire, the cloud, and the thick darkness, with a loud voice; and he added no more. And he wrote them on two tablets of stone and gave them to me. ²³And as soon as you heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire, you came near to me, all the heads of your tribes, and your elders. ²⁴And you said, ‘Behold, the LORD our God has shown us his glory and greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire. This day we have seen God speak with man, and man still live. ²⁵Now therefore why should we die? For this great fire will consume us. If we hear the voice of the LORD our God any more, we shall die. ²⁶For who is there of all flesh, that has heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of fire as we have, and has still lived? ²⁷Go near and hear all that the LORD our God will say, and speak to us all that the LORD our God will speak to you, and we will hear and do it.’ ²⁸“And the LORD heard your words, when you spoke to me. And the LORD said to me, ‘I have heard the words of this people, which they have spoken to you. They are right in all that they have spoken. ²⁹Oh that they had such a heart as this always, to fear me and to keep all my commandments, that it might go well with them and with their descendants forever!

Obedience Leads to Prosperity (30-33)

³⁰Go and say to them, “Return to your tents.” ³¹But you, stand here by me, and I will tell you the whole commandment and the statutes and the rules that you shall teach them, that they may do them in the land that I am giving them to possess.’ ³²You shall be careful therefore to do as the LORD your God has commanded you. You shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. ³³You shall walk in all the way that the LORD your God has commanded you, that you may live, and that it may go well with you, and that you may live long in the land that you shall possess.

Understanding

Moses describes the scene when he received the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai. While receiving the Ten Commandments, the mountain was covered by smoke, thunder, and lightning. Witnessing the thick darkness and loud voice of God’s glory, Israel was fearful to the point of death. This is why they asked Moses to convey God’s Word to them. God accepted this proposition, speaking all the commandments, laws, and regulations to Moses. Moses then taught everything God told him to the people of Israel. God desired that Israel would have a heart that feared God and lived a life of obedience to God’s commands. This is how Israel would be able to live a blessed life in the land that God promised them (vv. 22-33).

Applying

Who is God?

God wanted Israel to live a blessed life by keeping God’s laws. Do you believe that God’s word is a blessed Word? Are you obedient to what God says?

What is the lesson for me?

Jesus is the true mediator. Just as Moses was raised as a mediator of the covenant between the people of Israel and God, God raised Jesus as a mediator of an eternal covenant between God and us. Praise Jesus, who sits on the right hand of God’s throne, as our mediator.

Praying

God, Thank you for providing Jesus as a mediator between You and me. Help me to live a life of obedience.

Teach Your Children

There are many useful things we can find in stationery stores. One of the most useful is a Post-it® Note. The convenient note can be stuck on most surfaces, they stay in place, don't easily fall off, and don't leave a stain. Try using them to write down memory verses?

Deuteronomy 6:1-9

Things to Teach Your Children (1-3)

¹“Now this is the commandment—the statutes and the rules—that the LORD your God commanded me to teach you, that you may do them in the land to which you are going over, to possess it, ²that you may fear the LORD your God, you and your son and your son's son, by keeping all his statutes and his commandments, which I command you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be long. ³Hear therefore, O Israel, and be careful to do them, that it may go well with you, and that you may multiply greatly, as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey.

Bind the Word to Your Heart (4-9)

⁴“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. ⁵You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. ⁶And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. ⁷You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. ⁸You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ⁹You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Understanding

The Word of God does not end with one generation, which is why it is so important for the next generation of children to meditate on the precious Word of God. Israel must teach God's Word to the next generation so that they too may keep it. This ensures they will turn out well and become a great nation (vv. 1-3). This is why they needed to keep God's Word with them and meditate on it day and night. They must love the Word with all their heart, and their children must also diligently learn and meditate on the Word. They must keep it on their body so that they won't forget. They were also commanded to place it on their doorposts, so that they would pass by it often. God's heart is shown here detailing ways to keep the Word close to them (vv. 4-9).

Applying

Who is God?

Does meditating on the Word only relate to pastors, teachers, parents, or other adults? God promised us that when we obey His Word and apply it to our lives, we will receive many blessings.

What is the lesson for me?

How close do you keep the word to yourself? Do you use a Post-it® Note to stick it somewhere you look often? We often use Post-it® Notes to help us with difficult math formulas or specific vocabularies. In the same way, how about doing the same strategy for God's Word, our application of that Word, and prayer topics? Those words, decisions, and prayers will be helpful in our lives.

Praying

Help me to become Your true child by learning and meditating on the Word You have given us so that I can be blessed by You.

Whoever Asks You

Will I be able to tell people, specifically my friends in school, about God if they ask me about God? Do you struggle to come up with an answer when you are asked about God or the Bible?

Deuteronomy 6:10-25

Do not put God to the Test (10-19)

¹⁰“And when the LORD your God brings you into the land that he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give you—with great and good cities that you did not build, ¹¹and houses full of all good things that you did not fill, and cisterns that you did not dig, and vineyards and olive trees that you did not plant—and when you eat and are full, ¹²then take care lest you forget the LORD, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. ¹³It is the LORD your God you shall fear. Him you shall serve and by his name you shall swear. ¹⁴You shall not go after other gods, the gods of the peoples who are around you—¹⁵for the LORD your God in your midst is a jealous God—lest the anger of the LORD your God be kindled against you, and he destroy you from off the face of the earth.

¹⁶“You shall not put the LORD your God to the test, as you tested him at Massah. ¹⁷You shall diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, and his testimonies and his statutes, which he has commanded you.

¹⁸And you shall do what is right and good in the sight of the LORD, that it may go well with you, and that you may go in and take possession of the good land that the LORD swore to give to your fathers ¹⁹by thrusting out all your enemies from before you, as the LORD has promised.

When Someone Asks You Later (20-25)

²⁰“When your son asks you in time to come, ‘What is the meaning of the testimonies and the statutes and the rules that the LORD our God has commanded you?’ ²¹then you shall say to your son, ‘We were Pharaoh’s slaves in Egypt. And the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand. ²²And the LORD showed signs and wonders, great and grievous, against Egypt and against Pharaoh and all his household, before our eyes. ²³And he brought us out from there, that he might bring us in and give us the land that he swore to give to our fathers. ²⁴And the LORD commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as we are this day. ²⁵And it will be righteousness for us, if we are careful to do all this commandment before the LORD our God, as he has commanded us.’

Understanding

God gave to Israel a beautiful castle city in a land full of valuable resources, homes, crops, vineyards, and olive trees. To worship idols after receiving all these blessings is an act of shameful disobedience. Doubting God, complaining and whining is also an act of a person who is not blessed. Even though God is not One to ignore His people’s thirst in the desert, Israel put God to the test in Massah. Moses warns them to not make the same mistake (vv. 10-19). The people of Israel must always be prepared to heed God’s guidance and teach His laws to the next generation. It is Israel’s command as God’s people to remember the Exodus and the time of wandering in the desert as well as teach God’s Word to their children (vv. 20-25).

Applying

Who is God?

Reflect on the many blessings God has given you. The appropriate response to these blessings is this: to give Him your all and to love Him with all your heart. Do you find yourself forgetting these blessings and thinking you accomplished things on your own?

What is the lesson for me?

In any situation, we must be ready to give an answer when someone asks who God is or what Jesus has done for us. Evangelism is not just simply, “Come to church with me” but to share the gospel of Jesus. Are you ready to answer for the gospel?

Praying

Help me to be ready to give an answer about God to anyone I meet.

Decisions towards Future Blessings

Though it may be in the distant-future, we need to pray for our future spouse. The initial focus must be faith. Is the priority for my future spouse their faith or money or looks?

Deuteronomy 7:1-11

Do not Intermarry with Them (1-5)

¹“When the LORD your God brings you into the land that you are entering to take possession of it, and clears away many nations before you, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations more numerous and mightier than you, ²and when the LORD your God gives them over to you, and you defeat them, then you must devote them to complete destruction. You shall make no covenant with them and show no mercy to them. ³You shall not intermarry with them, giving your daughters to their sons or taking their daughters for your sons, ⁴for they would turn away your sons from following me, to serve other gods. Then the anger of the LORD would be kindled against you, and he would destroy you quickly. ⁵But thus shall you deal with them: you shall break down their altars and dash in pieces their pillars and chop down their Asherim and burn their carved images with fire.

The Lord our God (6-11)

⁶“For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. ⁷It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the LORD set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, ⁸but it is because the LORD loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. ⁹Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations, ¹⁰and repays to their face those who hate him, by destroying them. He will not be slack with one who hates him. He will repay him to his face. ¹¹You shall therefore be careful to do the commandment and the statutes and the rules that I command you today.

Understanding

The people of Israel were not large in number or well trained in combat since they were former slaves of Egypt. However, they were able to defeat all of the people of Canaan because God fought for them. This is why Israel was commanded to destroy all of the idols in Canaan, and to not marry the Canaanites (vv. 1-5). The fight for God's Kingdom is not about numbers or physical strength. The key is whose side God is on. The reason why the smallest nation of nations, Israel, was able to be victorious was because God was smiling on the people of Israel. If Israel continued to live in the midst of God's Word, they would continue to reap blessings. As long as they loved His Word, the covenant of love would continue for a thousand generations (vv. 6-11).

Applying

Who is God?

What kind of person would you like for a spouse? The looks and knowledge that are there now will slowly disappear with time. However, whoever has accepted God in their hearts is the most beautiful and blessed person. From now on, pray for a spouse of faith.

What is the lesson for me?

When I hold onto God's Word and live according to it, God's blessing will continually be poured out. Protect your heart against the temptation of momentary gain. Rather, pray to receive blessings that continue on for a thousand generations by placing God as your priority.

Praying

Help me to become a faithful person and to meet a faithful spouse so that Your blessings will continue to be poured out forever.

Do Not Leave Anything behind

If we find our friends more reliable than God, friends can become idols. What do I rely on when I am in difficult situations?

Deuteronomy 7:12-26

God's Blessing Poured Out (12-16)

¹²"And because you listen to these rules and keep and do them, the LORD your God will keep with you the covenant and the steadfast love that he swore to your fathers. ¹³He will love you, bless you, and multiply you. He will also bless the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground, your grain and your wine and your oil, the increase of your herds and the young of your flock, in the land that he swore to your fathers to give you. ¹⁴You shall be blessed above all peoples. There shall not be male or female barren among you or among your livestock. ¹⁵And the LORD will take away from you all sickness, and none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which you knew, will he inflict on you, but he will lay them on all who hate you. ¹⁶And you shall consume all the peoples that the LORD your God will give over to you. Your eye shall not pity them, neither shall you serve their gods, for that would be a snare to you.

When You are Afraid (17-26)

¹⁷"If you say in your heart, 'These nations are greater than I. How can I dispossess them?' ¹⁸you shall not be afraid of them but you shall remember what the LORD your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt, ¹⁹the great trials that your eyes saw, the signs, the wonders, the mighty hand, and the outstretched arm, by which the LORD your God brought you out. So will the LORD your God do to all the peoples of whom you are afraid. ²⁰Moreover, the LORD your God will send hornets among them, until those who are left and hide themselves from you are destroyed. ²¹You shall not be in dread of them, for the LORD your God is in your midst, a great and awesome God. ²²The LORD your God will clear away these nations before you little by little. You may not make an end of them at once, lest the wild beasts grow too numerous for you. ²³But the LORD your God will give them over to you and throw them into great confusion, until they are destroyed. ²⁴And he will give their kings into your hand, and you shall make their name perish from under heaven. No one shall be able to stand against you until you have destroyed them. ²⁵The carved images of their gods you shall burn with fire. You shall not covet the silver or the gold that is on them or take it for yourselves, lest you be ensnared by it, for it is an abomination to the LORD your God. ²⁶And you shall not bring an abominable thing into your house and become devoted to destruction like it. You shall utterly detest and abhor it, for it is devoted to destruction.

Understanding

When something is repeated, it's because it's important. In our text, it repeatedly tells us that those who are awake in front of God have their lives guided by God. The blessings a child of God receives is greater and eternal compared with anything else in this world. Though they may have pity for the Gentiles they were about to displace, they need to wipe out all the roots of idol worship (vv. 12-16). Reality is scary and difficult, and a person of faith can be broken. Every time this happens, the people of Israel must remember the redemptive history of God, which is filled with victory in spite of reality. Also, they should not incorporate worldly idols into their lives, though they desired them. This will also be beneficial for Israel (vv. 17-26).

Applying

Who is God?

There is no such thing as 'almost there' when it comes to God. Idols must be completely wiped out from Israel. Disaster will come upon those who leave any trace of idolatry in their lives.

What is the lesson for me?

The only thing we should cling to when we become weak and make wrong decisions is the Word. Don't seek other things but return to the Word.

Praying

I rely on You, God. Guide me to get rid of all the idols in my heart so that I won't rely on anything but You.

Man Shall Not Live by Bread Alone

Satan brings temptation to lead us to sin, but God brings a test to evaluate our faith. Nobody likes tests, but they are a way to test our skills

Deuteronomy 8:1-10

Do not Live by Bread Alone (1-4)

¹“The whole commandment that I command you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land that the LORD swore to give to your fathers. ²And you shall remember the whole way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. ³And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. ⁴Your clothing did not wear out on you and your foot did not swell these forty years.

Guidance without Faults (5-10)

⁵Know then in your heart that, as a man disciplines his son, the LORD your God disciplines you. ⁶So you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God by walking in his ways and by fearing him. ⁷For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing out in the valleys and hills, ⁸a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey, ⁹a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing, a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you can dig copper. ¹⁰And you shall eat and be full, and you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land he has given you.

Understanding

God wanted to see if Israel truly relied on and obeyed Him. So He made them wander the desert for 40 years, and made them rely on Him with humble hearts. However, He did not bring a test that the people of Israel could not handle. To pass the test, they needed to meditate on the Word daily. Our physical bodies need food to live, but our spiritual bodies need God's Word (vv. 1-4). God's discipline is the same as a parent to their child. It is a loving discipline. This is to lead us to a path of obeying the commands of God our Father by meditating on His Word. A life led by God's guidance is one of prosperity and many fruits (vv. 5-10).

Applying

Who is God?

Do you eat every meal and snack but fast from the Word of God? Daily sit at the bountiful table of God's Word. Eat God's Word and grow spiritually.

What is the lesson for me?

The reason God gave His Word and puts us to the test is so that we can live a fruitful life as His children. Understand the heart of God the Father and joyfully obey His Word.

Praying

Work in my midst and let the bountiful Word of God feed my soul.

Be Cautious when You are Well

When everything is going well, when it seems as though my skills are finally shining through, it is very difficult to admit that everything is by God's grace. Recall the athletes who humbly gave God all the glory after winning medals during the last Olympics.

Deuteronomy 8:11-20

By My Power and Strength (11-17)

¹¹“Take care lest you forget the LORD your God by not keeping his commandments and his rules and his statutes, which I command you today, ¹²lest, when you have eaten and are full and have built good houses and live in them, ¹³and when your herds and flocks multiply and your silver and gold is multiplied and all that you have is multiplied, ¹⁴then your heart be lifted up, and you forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, ¹⁵who led you through the great and terrifying wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water, who brought you water out of the flinty rock, ¹⁶who fed you in the wilderness with manna that your fathers did not know, that he might humble you and test you, to do you good in the end. ¹⁷Beware lest you say in your heart, ‘My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.’

When you Forget the Lord (18-20)

¹⁸You shall remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your fathers, as it is this day. ¹⁹And if you forget the LORD your God and go after other gods and serve them and worship them, I solemnly warn you today that you shall surely perish. ²⁰Like the nations that the LORD makes to perish before you, so shall you perish, because you would not obey the voice of the LORD your God.

Understanding

Moses emphasizes that Israel should not forget God and His Word. They should not become arrogant and forget that it is by God's grace that their cattle and land have increased. This is because it is God who led Israel out of Egypt and a life of slavery. It is by His power and not ours (vv. 11-17). When they forget the Lord their God and worship idols, a scary judgment will come upon them. Israel will lose everything and will be destroyed. Just as all other nations who served idols and opposed God were destroyed, so will Israel if they do not listen to His voice and follow His ways (vv. 18-20).

Applying

Who is God?

Has it been a long time since you checked whether God's Word has been bound to your heart as often as you check my updates on social media? The most dangerous thing in a world with so many things to see and hear is missing out on the one thing we must see and hear: God's Word.

What is the lesson for me?

You need to be careful when you are doing 'well' (by the world's standard). Getting good grades and having great relationships with friends is not because you are relevant. Come down from your high horse and give glory to God.

Praying

Wake me up from my pride when I feel like Your blessings come from my abilities or strength. Help me to confess Your grace and give all glory to You.



A Stiff-Necked People

What do my friends call me? Israel's nickname was 'a stiff-necked people.' If God were to give me a nickname, what would it be?

Deuteronomy 9:1-12

Due to the Wickedness of the People (1-5)

¹"Hear, O Israel: you are to cross over the Jordan today, to go in to dispossess nations greater and mightier than you, cities great and fortified up to heaven, ²a people great and tall, the sons of the Anakim, whom you know, and of whom you have heard it said, 'Who can stand before the sons of Anak?' ³Know therefore today that he who goes over before you as a consuming fire is the LORD your God. He will destroy them and subdue them before you. So you shall drive them out and make them perish quickly, as the LORD has promised you.

⁴"Do not say in your heart, after the LORD your God has thrust them out before you, 'It is because of my righteousness that the LORD has brought me in to possess this land,' whereas it is because of the wickedness of these nations that the LORD is driving them out before you. ⁵Not because of your righteousness or the uprightness of your heart are you going in to possess their land, but because of the wickedness of these nations the LORD your God is driving them out from before you, and that he may confirm the word that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

Stiff-Necked People (6-12)

⁶"Know, therefore, that the LORD your God is not giving you this good land to possess because of your righteousness, for you are a stubborn people. ⁷Remember and do not forget how you provoked the LORD your God to wrath in the wilderness. From the day you came out of the land of Egypt until you came to this place, you have been rebellious against the LORD. ⁸Even at Horeb you provoked the LORD to wrath, and the LORD was so angry with you that he was ready to destroy you. ⁹When I went up the mountain to receive the tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant that the LORD made with you, I remained on the mountain forty days and forty nights. I neither ate bread nor drank water. ¹⁰And the LORD gave me the two tablets of stone written with the finger of God, and on them were all the words that the LORD had spoken with you on the mountain out of the midst of the fire on the day of the assembly. ¹¹And at the end of forty days and forty nights the LORD gave me the two tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant. ¹²Then the LORD said to me, 'Arise, go down quickly from here, for your people whom you have brought from Egypt have acted corruptly. They have turned aside quickly out of the way that I commanded them; they have made themselves a metal image.'

Understanding

Even though the sons of Anak were great and tall, any strong person will be defeated if God is fighting against them. Though castle cities were huge and the city walls reached the sky, that was no problem for God. Israel needed to know that it was not because of their righteousness but because of the wickedness of the sons of Anak that God defeated them (vv.1-5). Israel's nickname was 'a stiff-necked people.' God gave them this title as a reflection of the endless number of times they were reprimanded for their pride. They angered God numerous times during the Exodus and even made a golden calf to be an idol because they couldn't wait for the tablets of the covenant to be made. This is why everything is God's grace, not Israel's victories (vv. 6-12).

Applying

Who is God?

Disobedience is scarier than any opponent. With faith, we can face any opposition, but if we forget about our faith in God, then we will be defeated by the smallest things. Do you have the faith to defeat your enemies?

What is the lesson for me?

Are you a 'stiff-necked' person or a prostrate person before God? A faithful person is one who kneels and bows their head before God.

Praying

I want to be someone who is humble and only gives glory to You. Change my prideful heart into a pure and humble one.

The Sin of Disobedience

A doctor performing surgery on patient with a malignant tumor cannot only take out the cancerous parts of the tumor. A healthy recovery is only possible once the tumor has been completely removed. In the same way, all idols and sin in our hearts need to be completely removed.

Deuteronomy 9:13-29

The case of the Golden Calf (13-21)

¹³“Furthermore, the LORD said to me, ‘I have seen this people, and behold, it is a stubborn people. ¹⁴Let me alone, that I may destroy them and blot out their name from under heaven. And I will make of you a nation mightier and greater than they.’ ¹⁵So I turned and came down from the mountain, and the mountain was burning with fire. And the two tablets of the covenant were in my two hands. ¹⁶And I looked, and behold, you had sinned against the LORD your God. You had made yourselves a golden calf. You had turned aside quickly from the way that the LORD had commanded you. ¹⁷So I took hold of the two tablets and threw them out of my two hands and broke them before your eyes. ¹⁸Then I lay prostrate before the LORD as before, forty days and forty nights. I neither ate bread nor drank water, because of all the sin that you had committed, in doing what was evil in the sight of the LORD to provoke him to anger. ¹⁹For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure that the LORD bore against you, so that he was ready to destroy you. But the LORD listened to me that time also. ²⁰And the LORD was so angry with Aaron that he was ready to destroy him. And I prayed for Aaron also at the same time. ²¹Then I took the sinful thing, the calf that you had made, and burned it with fire and crushed it, grinding it very small, until it was as fine as dust. And I threw the dust of it into the brook that ran down from the mountain.

Provoked the Lord to Wrath (22-29)

²²“At Taberah also, and at Massah and at Kibroth-hattaavah you provoked the LORD to wrath. ²³And when the LORD sent you from Kadesh-barnea, saying, ‘Go up and take possession of the land that I have given you,’ then you rebelled against the commandment of the LORD your God and did not believe him or obey his voice. ²⁴You have been rebellious against the LORD from the day that I knew you. ²⁵So I lay prostrate before the LORD for these forty days and forty nights, because the LORD had said he would destroy you. ²⁶And I prayed to the LORD, ‘O Lord GOD, do not destroy your people and your heritage, whom you have redeemed through your greatness, whom you have brought out of Egypt with a mighty hand. ²⁷Remember your servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Do not regard the stubbornness of this people, or their wickedness or their sin, ²⁸lest the land from which you brought us say, “Because the LORD was not able to bring them into the land that he promised them, and because he hated them, he has brought them out to put them to death in the wilderness.” ²⁹For they are your people and your heritage, whom you brought out by your great power and by your outstretched arm.’

Understanding

The biggest weakness of Israel's pride was their lack of patience. They committed a deadly crime of worshipping a golden calf. God became enraged and the tablets with the Ten Commandments were destroyed. God remembers the sin of the people of Israel (vv. 13-21). Israel also provoked the Lord to wrath at Taberah, Massah, and Kibroth-hattaavah. Even though Israel was commanded to go up and take possession of the land, they rebelled against His commands and did not obey. The roots of disobedience were deep and old, leading to repetition. This is why Moses was always prostrate praying before God (vv. 22-29).

Applying

Who is God?

Sin is familiar. Turning the God that had delivered them out of slavery into a golden calf and worshipping it was a familiar practice to Israel considering it was a common in Egypt. Is there a sin that is so familiar to you that it hasn't been removed?

What is the lesson for me?

God already knows our disobedience. Only when we repent before God as soon as we recognize this truth, will He forgive. Is there a sin for which you should go down on your knees in repentance before the Lord?

Praying

I am the same as the people of Israel in that I have built familiar idols and have not followed the Word. Help me to repent and turn back to You, God.

God of Patience

The only reason why there is still hope for those who have repeatedly sinned and made mistakes is because God is patient.

Deuteronomy 10:1-22

God Gives Second Chances (1-11)

¹“At that time the LORD said to me, ‘Cut for yourself two tablets of stone like the first, and come up to me on the mountain and make an ark of wood. ²And I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets that you broke, and you shall put them in the ark.’ ³So I made an ark of acacia wood, and cut two tablets of stone like the first, and went up the mountain with the two tablets in my hand. ⁴And he wrote on the tablets, in the same writing as before, the Ten Commandments that the LORD had spoken to you on the mountain out of the midst of the fire on the day of the assembly. And the LORD gave them to me. ⁵Then I turned and came down from the mountain and put the tablets in the ark that I had made. And there they are, as the LORD commanded me.” ⁶(The people of Israel journeyed from Beeroth Bene-jaakan to Moserah. There Aaron died, and there he was buried. And his son Eleazar ministered as priest in his place. ⁷From there they journeyed to Gudgodah, and from Gudgodah to Jotbathah, a land with brooks of water. ⁸At that time the LORD set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the ark of the covenant of the LORD to stand before the LORD to minister to him and to bless in his name, to this day. ⁹Therefore Levi has no portion or inheritance with his brothers. The LORD is his inheritance, as the LORD your God said to him.) ¹⁰“I myself stayed on the mountain, as at the first time, forty days and forty nights, and the LORD listened to me that time also. The LORD was unwilling to destroy you. ¹¹And the LORD said to me, ‘Arise, go on your journey at the head of the people, so that they may go in and possess the land, which I swore to their fathers to give them.’

God Demands Obedience (12-22)

¹²“And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, ¹³and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD, which I am commanding you today for your good? ¹⁴Behold, to the LORD your God belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it. ¹⁵Yet the LORD set his heart in love on your fathers and chose their offspring after them, you above all peoples, as you are this day. ¹⁶Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no longer stubborn. ¹⁷For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who is not partial and takes no bribe. ¹⁸He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing. ¹⁹Love the sojourner, therefore, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt. ²⁰You shall fear the LORD your God. You shall serve him and hold fast to him, and by his name you shall swear. ²¹He is your praise. He is your God, who has done for you these great and terrifying things that your eyes have seen. ²²Your fathers went down to Egypt seventy persons, and now the LORD your God has made you as numerous as the stars of heaven.

Understanding

God heard Moses’ desperate prayer of intercession (9: 25-29), forgave the people of Israel for making and worshipping the golden calf, and gave them the Ten Commandments again. He forgave Aaron for making the idol and when he passed away, he made his son, Eleazar, the high priest. He then chose the tribe of Levi to serve God along by maintaining the Ark of the Covenant. This was to protect an unholy Israel from dying in front of a holy God (vv. 1-11). God wanted Israel to be in awe of Him, and to serve Him with all their hearts and strength. He also wanted them to follow His instructions with everything they had. He asked that they imitate Him, to love the fatherless, the widow, and the sojourner (vv. 12-22).

Applying

Who is God?

God restored the covenantal relationship. Hearing Moses’ prayer, he restored the covenant broken by Israel’s sin and idol worship, and once again gave to the Israelites the ten commandments, the words of the covenant. Are we grateful for the grace by which we, sinners, have been made people of God?

What is the lesson for me?

God’s people must look after the weak and alienated, because they are the objects of God’s interest, and because the Israelites were also cared for by God in Egypt and in the wilderness. Are we and our churches taking care of those in need?

Praying

Thank you for being patient through all my mistakes. Help me to become a person worthy of Your patience.

Learn from the Past Today

God is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. So, it is time to decide what kind of choices you will make in front of the everlasting God.

Deuteronomy 11:1-17

The Great Things Witnessed by Israel (1-17)

¹“You shall therefore love the LORD your God and keep his charge, his statutes, his rules, and his commandments always. ²And consider today (since I am not speaking to your children who have not known or seen it), consider the discipline of the LORD your God, his greatness, his mighty hand and his outstretched arm, ³his signs and his deeds that he did in Egypt to Pharaoh the king of Egypt and to all his land, ⁴and what he did to the army of Egypt, to their horses and to their chariots, how he made the water of the Red Sea flow over them as they pursued after you, and how the LORD has destroyed them to this day, ⁵and what he did to you in the wilderness, until you came to this place, ⁶and what he did to Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, son of Reuben, how the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households, their tents, and every living thing that followed them, in the midst of all Israel. ⁷For your eyes have seen all the great work of the LORD that he did. ⁸“You shall therefore keep the whole commandment that I command you today, that you may be strong, and go in and take possession of the land that you are going over to possess, ⁹and that you may live long in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers to give to them and to their offspring, a land flowing with milk and honey. ¹⁰For the land that you are entering to take possession of it is not like the land of Egypt, from which you have come, where you sowed your seed and irrigated it, like a garden of vegetables. ¹¹But the land that you are going over to possess is a land of hills and valleys, which drinks water by the rain from heaven, ¹²a land that the LORD your God cares for. The eyes of the LORD your God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year. ¹³“And if you will indeed obey my commandments that I command you today, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul, ¹⁴he will give the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the later rain, that you may gather in your grain and your wine and your oil. ¹⁵And he will give grass in your fields for your livestock, and you shall eat and be full. ¹⁶Take care lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them; ¹⁷then the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you, and he will shut up the heavens, so that there will be no rain, and the land will yield no fruit, and you will perish quickly off the good land that the LORD is giving you.

Understanding

God took a group of 70 people and increased their number to the number of stars in the sky, and performed many amazing things for them in Egypt and in the desert. This is why Israel must learn from their history how powerful and great God is, and how essential His discipline is as well. The history of Israel teaches us to love God and to follow His laws and commands (vv. 1-7). The Promised Land is a land so beautiful that it had been described metaphorically as a land flowing with milk and honey. However, unlike Egypt where they could conveniently retrieve water from the Nile River, the land was barren unless God brought rain down. So, Canaan could be a fertile land of prosperity if Israel only loved and served God, but it could become a land of judgment and death if they served another god aside from the Lord (vv. 8-17).

Applying

Who is God?

God wants the people He saved to be obedient. Because He didn't want them to go down the road of death by doing things their own way, God emphasized that they needed to be obedient to His commands. How do you respond to the command to be obedient to God?

What is the lesson for me?

Moses taught the new generation that was about to enter into Canaan that throughout their history, they needed to be obedient to God. Learning history is not just to know about the past, but also to learn lessons that come from knowing the past. How do you think God wants you to live when you look back at God's redemptive history?

Praying

Help me to remember and be thankful for the blessings you have given me in the past and to build a tomorrow that You want for me.

Obedience Is the Only Way to Live

There are many roads in life. However, all those roads lead to two destinations. One is the road to blessings, and the other curses. Which road are you on?

Deuteronomy 11:18-32

Do Everything to Remember God's Word (18-25)

¹⁸"You shall therefore lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ¹⁹You shall teach them to your children, talking of them when you are sitting in your house, and when you are walking by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. ²⁰You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, ²¹that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers to give them, as long as the heavens are above the earth. ²²For if you will be careful to do all this commandment that I command you to do, loving the LORD your God, walking in all his ways, and holding fast to him, ²³then the LORD will drive out all these nations before you, and you will dispossess nations greater and mightier than you. ²⁴Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours. Your territory shall be from the wilderness to the Lebanon and from the River, the river Euphrates, to the western sea. ²⁵No one shall be able to stand against you. The LORD your God will lay the fear of you and the dread of you on all the land that you shall tread, as he promised you.

Remember God's Blessing and Curse (26-32)

²⁶"See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: ²⁷the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you today, ²⁸and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside from the way that I am commanding you today, to go after other gods that you have not known. ²⁹And when the LORD your God brings you into the land that you are entering to take possession of it, you shall set the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal. ³⁰Are they not beyond the Jordan, west of the road, toward the going down of the sun, in the land of the Canaanites who live in the Arabah, opposite Gilgal, beside the oak of Moreh? ³¹For you are to cross over the Jordan to go in to take possession of the land that the LORD your God is giving you. And when you possess it and live in it, ³²you shall be careful to do all the statutes and the rules that I am setting before you today.

Understanding

Moses commands Israel to do everything they can to remember God's Word and to teach it to one another. He emphasized that they should write Scripture down and put it on their wrists, their foreheads, on their doorposts and gates, so that they could remember the Words of God. He also encouraged them to teach their children the Word of God whenever they are sitting down or standing up or walking. If they obey His Word and keep His commands, God will give them the Promised Land (vv. 18-25). God proclaimed to Israel blessings and curses simultaneously. The reason why God warned Israel of the curses along with the promised blessings was so that the saved people would not fall into sin again (vv. 27-32).

Applying

Who is God?

He gives us choices because he desires for us to obey freely out of our own will and desire. There is no middle ground between these choices. If we do not love God, it means we have contempt for him. Are we choosing the way to life, of loving and obeying God?

What is the lesson for me?

Israel did everything they could to remember the word of God. They made every effort to bind God's word in their hearts in everything that they did. What effort are you taking to bind God's word onto your heart? How about writing down and placing a memory verse on a location that you see daily?

Praying

Help me to be obedient and remember Your Word as a saved person.

God's Way

The focus of worship should be God. That is why we need to worship God in a manner He desires, not in the way we want to.

Deuteronomy 12:1-19

Worship in the Chosen Place (1-14)

¹“These are the statutes and rules that you shall be careful to do in the land that the LORD, the God of your fathers, has given you to possess, all the days that you live on the earth. ²You shall surely destroy all the places where the nations whom you shall dispossess served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree. ³You shall tear down their altars and dash in pieces their pillars and burn their Asherim with fire. You shall chop down the carved images of their gods and destroy their name out of that place. ⁴You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way. ⁵But you shall seek the place that the LORD your God will choose out of all your tribes to put his name and make his habitation there. There you shall go, ⁶and there you shall bring your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and the contribution that you present, your vow offerings, your freewill offerings, and the firstborn of your herd and of your flock. ⁷And there you shall eat before the LORD your God, and you shall rejoice, you and your households, in all that you undertake, in which the LORD your God has blessed you. ⁸“You shall not do according to all that we are doing here today, everyone doing whatever is right in his own eyes, ⁹for you have not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance that the LORD your God is giving you. ¹⁰But when you go over the Jordan and live in the land that the LORD your God is giving you to inherit, and when he gives you rest from all your enemies around, so that you live in safety, ¹¹then to the place that the LORD your God will choose, to make his name dwell there, there you shall bring all that I command you: your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and the contribution that you present, and all your finest vow offerings that you vow to the LORD. ¹²And you shall rejoice before the LORD your God, you and your sons and your daughters, your male servants and your female servants, and the Levite that is within your towns, since he has no portion or inheritance with you. ¹³Take care that you do not offer your burnt offerings at any place that you see, ¹⁴but at the place that the LORD will choose in one of your tribes, there you shall offer your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I am commanding you.

Eat according to the Law (15-19)

¹⁵“However, you may slaughter and eat meat within any of your towns, as much as you desire, according to the blessing of the LORD your God that he has given you. The unclean and the clean may eat of it, as of the gazelle and as of the deer. ¹⁶Only you shall not eat the blood; you shall pour it out on the earth like water. ¹⁷You may not eat within your towns the tithe of your grain or of your wine or of your oil, or the firstborn of your herd or of your flock, or any of your vow offerings that you vow, or your freewill offerings or the contribution that you present, ¹⁸but you shall eat them before the LORD your God in the place that the LORD your God will choose, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, and the Levite who is within your towns. And you shall rejoice before the LORD your God in all that you undertake. ¹⁹Take care that you do not neglect the Levite as long as you live in your land.

Understanding

Once Israel entered into the Promised Land, they needed to get rid of the people who worshipped idols, and destroy all the idols and temples of idol worship in that land. God warned Israel that they should not be influenced by or follow the people who worship idols. For Israel, they were to worship God in the place God chooses, in the way God instructed (vv. 1-14). God blessed Israel by giving them a land to possess, the ability to live in peace, and the ability to eat as much meat from their livestock. He also commanded them to eat with the slaves and the Levites. He especially told them not to cut out the Levites from the Promised Land. This was to lead many more people to recognize God and give Him glory through sharing in His blessings (vv. 15-19).

Applying

Who is God?

God wants worship according to His ways. This is because the focus of worship is God, not people. Just as God wanted Israel to worship according to His ways, how does He want you to worship Him?

What is the lesson for me?

When they were prospering and eating well, the Israelites were required to take care of the people who were ignored, of lower status, and especially ministers who had no other means of making a living. Is there something that God has given you to use? How are you using it?

Praying

Give me the wisdom to worship You and to share the things that You have blessed me with.

Do Not Follow the Ways of This Land

Israel was instructed to not follow the ways of the land of Canaan. This is because they were a people of God, not of Canaan.

Deuteronomy 12:20-32

God's Commands (20-32)

²⁰“When the LORD your God enlarges your territory, as he has promised you, and you say, ‘I will eat meat,’ because you crave meat, you may eat meat whenever you desire. ²¹If the place that the LORD your God will choose to put his name there is too far from you, then you may kill any of your herd or your flock, which the LORD has given you, as I have commanded you, and you may eat within your towns whenever you desire. ²²Just as the gazelle or the deer is eaten, so you may eat of it. The unclean and the clean alike may eat of it. ²³Only be sure that you do not eat the blood, for the blood is the life, and you shall not eat the life with the flesh. ²⁴You shall not eat it; you shall pour it out on the earth like water. ²⁵You shall not eat it, that all may go well with you and with your children after you, when you do what is right in the sight of the LORD. ²⁶But the holy things that are due from you, and your vow offerings, you shall take, and you shall go to the place that the LORD will choose, ²⁷and offer your burnt offerings, the flesh and the blood, on the altar of the LORD your God. The blood of your sacrifices shall be poured out on the altar of the LORD your God, but the flesh you may eat. ²⁸Be careful to obey all these words that I command you, that it may go well with you and with your children after you forever, when you do what is good and right in the sight of the LORD your God. ²⁹“When the LORD your God cuts off before you the nations whom you go in to dispossess, and you dispossess them and dwell in their land, ³⁰take care that you be not ensnared to follow them, after they have been destroyed before you, and that you do not inquire about their gods, saying, ‘How did these nations serve their gods?’—that I also may do the same.’ ³¹You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way, for every abominable thing that the LORD hates they have done for their gods, for they even burn their sons and their daughters in the fire to their gods. ³²“Everything that I command you, you shall be careful to do. You shall not add to it or take from it.

Understanding

Worship must happen in every aspect of life. God spoke to them not only about the cattle and lamb used for offering at the temple, but also about the meat they ate for food every day. Anyone, whether they are clean or unclean, was able to eat meat but all were commanded to not eat the blood. This is why we need to give God glory wherever we are and whenever we eat (vv. 20-28). We need to worship God according to His ways, not the ways of the world. The people of Canaan sacrificed their children as an offering, and God warned His people not to follow those evil ways (vv. 29-32).

Applying

Who is God?

God wanted the people of Israel to live differently from the people of Canaan. This is why Israel had to live according to God's laws and commands, not the ways of Canaan. In what ways are you listening to God's Word so that you don't follow the ways of the world?

What is the lesson for me?

We need to be people who are sensitive to God's will, not skilled in the ways of the world. Are there things that your friends do that are displeasing to the God that you follow? Write down the things that you did while with your friends that you shouldn't have done or followed, and what ways you can be an example to them.

Praying

Help me to become sensitive to Your Word and not the trends of the world.



Idol Worship Slowly Creeping In

The Bible says that idolatry is thinking of something else more precious than God (Col. 3:5). What this means is that if there is something in your heart that you desire aside from or more than God, then that is idolatry.

Deuteronomy 13:1-18

Look Out for Idol Worshipers (1-11)

¹“If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, ²and the sign or wonder that he tells you comes to pass, and if he says, ‘Let us go after other gods,’ which you have not known, ‘and let us serve them,’ ³you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams. For the LORD your God is testing you, to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. ⁴You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear him and keep his commandments and obey his voice, and you shall serve him and hold fast to him. ⁵But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has taught rebellion against the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you out of the house of slavery, to make you leave the way in which the LORD your God commanded you to walk. So you shall purge the evil from your midst. ⁶“If your brother, the son of your mother, or your son or your daughter or the wife you embrace or your friend who is as your own soul entices you secretly, saying, ‘Let us go and serve other gods,’ which neither you nor your fathers have known, ‘some of the gods of the peoples who are around you, whether near you or far off from you, from the one end of the earth to the other, ⁸you shall not yield to him or listen to him, nor shall your eye pity him, nor shall you spare him, nor shall you conceal him. ⁹But you shall kill him. Your hand shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. ¹⁰You shall stone him to death with stones, because he sought to draw you away from the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. ¹¹And all Israel shall hear and fear and never again do any such wickedness as this among you.

Communal Temptation (12-18)

¹²“If you hear in one of your cities, which the LORD your God is giving you to dwell there, ¹³that certain worthless fellows have gone out among you and have drawn away the inhabitants of their city, saying, ‘Let us go and serve other gods,’ which you have not known, ¹⁴then you shall inquire and make search and ask diligently. And behold, if it be true and certain that such an abomination has been done among you, ¹⁵you shall surely put the inhabitants of that city to the sword, devoting it to destruction, all who are in it and its cattle, with the edge of the sword. ¹⁶You shall gather all its spoil into the midst of its open square and burn the city and all its spoil with fire, as a whole burnt offering to the LORD your God. It shall be a heap forever. It shall not be built again. ¹⁷None of the devoted things shall stick to your hand, that the LORD may turn from the fierceness of his anger and show you mercy and have compassion on you and multiply you, as he swore to your fathers, ¹⁸if you obey the voice of the LORD your God, keeping all his commandments that I am commanding you today, and doing what is right in the sight of the LORD your God.

Understanding

Israel was told that when a false prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, comes and shows a sign of wonder and miracles to tempt people to worship idols, they should not listen to them. They need to rely on God and keep His commands. The temptation of idolatry not only comes from false prophets, but also from family, friends, and those closest to us. In those situations, we need to strongly oppose them just as we should oppose a false prophet (vv. 6-11). If one castle city tempts its people to worship idols, then all the people and animals in that city must be destroyed and the city must be demolished as well. This is because when the root of idolatry is not completely removed, then an idolater becomes one family, one family into one city, and then the entire nation of Israel would be in danger of being idol worshippers (vv. 12-18).

Applying

Who is God?

God wants us to serve Him in every situation. It is never easy to always look at God. This is because Satan approaches us and tries to turn our eyes away from Him, sometimes covertly and other times directly. Train yourself to keep your heart with God's Word.

What is the lesson for me?

Don't go to fortune-tellers in pursuit to know about your future. Our future, as God's chosen people, is in God's hands. Going to a fortune-teller is the same as admitting we don't trust God. If you are truly worried about your future, go on your knees and give your concerns to God. The Lord will take responsibility for your life.

Praying

Protect me from many temptations, and give me wisdom to discern the world's messages.

Special People Pursue Holiness

Special people do not eat or say everything. Holiness is living a life set apart compared to the world as God's special people. Are you living a holy life?

Deuteronomy 14:1-21

The Special People of God (1-21)

¹"You are the sons of the LORD your God. You shall not cut yourselves or make any baldness on your foreheads for the dead. ²For you are a people holy to the LORD your God, and the LORD has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. ³"You shall not eat any abomination. ⁴These are the animals you may eat: the ox, the sheep, the goat, ⁵the deer, the gazelle, the roebuck, the wild goat, the ibex, the antelope, and the mountain sheep. ⁶Every animal that parts the hoof and has the hoof cloven in two and chews the cud, among the animals, you may eat. ⁷Yet of those that chew the cud or have the hoof cloven you shall not eat these: the camel, the hare, and the rock badger, because they chew the cud but do not part the hoof, are unclean for you. ⁸And the pig, because it parts the hoof but does not chew the cud, is unclean for you. Their flesh you shall not eat, and their carcasses you shall not touch. ⁹"Of all that are in the waters you may eat these: whatever has fins and scales you may eat. ¹⁰And whatever does not have fins and scales you shall not eat; it is unclean for you. ¹¹"You may eat all clean birds. ¹²But these are the ones that you shall not eat: the eagle, the bearded vulture, the black vulture, ¹³the kite, the falcon of any kind; ¹⁴every raven of any kind; ¹⁵the ostrich, the nighthawk, the sea gull, the hawk of any kind; ¹⁶the little owl and the short-eared owl, the barn owl ¹⁷and the tawny owl, the carrion vulture and the cormorant, ¹⁸the stork, the heron of any kind; the hoopoe and the bat. ¹⁹And all winged insects are unclean for you; they shall not be eaten. ²⁰All clean winged things you may eat. ²¹"You shall not eat anything that has died naturally. You may give it to the sojourner who is within your towns, that he may eat it, or you may sell it to a foreigner. For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. "You shall not boil a young goat in its mother's milk.

Understanding

Among all people on the earth, God chose the Israelites as His. As His chosen race, they were to live a life that was different from the rest of the world because they were set apart by the love of God. It was against God's will to cut one's self or shave their head for the dead, as was the custom of the Gentiles. It was in this way that Israel could show that they trusted and obeyed God, by not following the ways of the Gentiles. Also, they had dietary restrictions and ate according to what God had commanded of them. As His chosen people, Israel needed to remember who they are and live a holy life by obeying God's will (vv. 1-21).

Applying

Who is God?

God not only chooses and saves us, but also considers us His beloved children. Because we have received this special selection, we need to value ourselves. Are you discrediting your worth by committing sins? Walk away from the sins of the world that have nothing to do with being a child of God.

What is the lesson for me?

We should not be a part of things that are not aligned with being God's people. If you see someone polluting their body or mind with things that don't belong as God's children, go and tell them 'you are a valuable child of God.' Then pray that they would see themselves as valuable.

Praying

Help me to reflect Your glory by obeying Your Word and living a holy life.

Everything Is the Lord's

Everything I have was originally God's. Thankfully God gave us those things to use. What is your response to knowing this truth?

Deuteronomy 14:22-29

Annual Tithes (22-27)

²²“You shall tithe all the yield of your seed that comes from the field year by year. ²³And before the LORD your God, in the place that he will choose, to make his name dwell there, you shall eat the tithe of your grain, of your wine, and of your oil, and the firstborn of your herd and flock, that you may learn to fear the LORD your God always. ²⁴And if the way is too long for you, so that you are not able to carry the tithe, when the LORD your God blesses you, because the place is too far from you, which the LORD your God chooses, to set his name there, ²⁵then you shall turn it into money and bind up the money in your hand and go to the place that the LORD your God chooses ²⁶and spend the money for whatever you desire—oxen or sheep or wine or strong drink, whatever your appetite craves. And you shall eat there before the LORD your God and rejoice, you and your household. ²⁷And you shall not neglect the Levite who is within your towns, for he has no portion or inheritance with you.

Tithes every Three Years (28-29)

²⁸“At the end of every three years you shall bring out all the tithe of your produce in the same year and lay it up within your towns. ²⁹And the Levite, because he has no portion or inheritance with you, and the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, who are within your towns, shall come and eat and be filled, that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands that you do.

Understanding

God's people, as a token of thanks for everything He has given, are called to offer God 10% of everything they earn. We should give Him everything, but God allowed us to use it according to His will and use the smaller portion as a confession of faith. In this way, the faithful learn how to fear and be in awe of God (v. 23) and to remember that it is God's blessing (v. 24) that they have received (vv. 22-27). Aside from the annual tithe, Israel was called to offer a tithe every three years to help those who are in need. We need to use a portion of our income to help those who are in need. This is God's will (vv. 28-29).

Applying

Who is God?

The people's tithe was not simply a tenth of their profit, but their invitation for God to sit in the first seat and an acknowledgement that all their possessions came from God. Are we inviting God to take first place and acknowledging that everything we have comes from God?

What is the lesson for me?

A tithe is an acknowledgement of God's sovereignty and a demonstration of thanks for all he has blessed us with. It is also a way of sharing that joy with others. Looking after people in difficult situations is the duty of all Christians who have received God's grace. Let my life's purpose be to follow Jesus' commands.

Praying

I will give to the Lord what I have with a fearful heart, and to share with those in need.

Imitating God's Kindness

How do you feel when you see poor people or those in difficult situations? Do you look down on them? God's heart breaks for them and wants us to help them.

Deuteronomy 15:1-23

The Year of Release (1-18)

¹"At the end of every seven years you shall grant a release. ²And this is the manner of the release: every creditor shall release what he has lent to his neighbor. He shall not exact it of his neighbor, his brother, because the LORD's release has been proclaimed. ³Of a foreigner you may exact it, but whatever of yours is with your brother your hand shall release. ⁴But there will be no poor among you; for the LORD will bless you in the land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance to possess—⁵if only you will strictly obey the voice of the LORD your God, being careful to do all this commandment that I command you today. ⁶For the LORD your God will bless you, as he promised you, and you shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow, and you shall rule over many nations, but they shall not rule over you. ⁷"If among you, one of your brothers should become poor, in any of your towns within your land that the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart or shut your hand against your poor brother, ⁸but you shall open your hand to him and lend him sufficient for his need, whatever it may be. ⁹Take care lest there be an unworthy thought in your heart and you say, 'The seventh year, the year of release is near,' and your eye look grudgingly on your poor brother, and you give him nothing, and he cry to the LORD against you, and you be guilty of sin. ¹⁰You shall give to him freely, and your heart shall not be grudging when you give to him, because for this the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake. ¹¹For there will never cease to be poor in the land. Therefore I command you, 'You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land.' ¹²"If your brother, a Hebrew man or a Hebrew woman, is sold to you, he shall serve you six years, and in the seventh year you shall let him go free from you. ¹³And when you let him go free from you, you shall not let him go empty-handed. ¹⁴You shall furnish him liberally out of your flock, out of your threshing floor, and out of your winepress. As the LORD your God has blessed you, you shall give to him. ¹⁵You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God redeemed you; therefore I command you this today. ¹⁶But if he says to you, 'I will not go out from you,' because he loves you and your household, since he is well-off with you, ¹⁷then you shall take an awl, and put it through his ear into the door, and he shall be your slave forever. And to your female slave you shall do the same. ¹⁸It shall not seem hard to you when you let him go free from you, for at half the cost of a hired worker he has served you six years. So the LORD your God will bless you in all that you do.

A life dedicated for the gospel

¹⁹"All the firstborn males that are born of your herd and flock you shall dedicate to the LORD your God. You shall do no work with the firstborn of your herd, nor shear the firstborn of your flock. ²⁰You shall eat it, you and your household, before the LORD your God year by year at the place that the LORD will choose. ²¹But if it has any blemish, if it is lame or blind or has any serious blemish whatever, you shall not sacrifice it to the LORD your God. ²²You shall eat it within your towns. The unclean and the clean alike may eat it, as though it were a gazelle or a deer. ²³Only you shall not eat its blood; you shall pour it out on the ground like water.

Understanding

God commanded that every seven years all debt, no matter how much, must be erased. Also, one should lend without a begrudging heart. Aside from God, there is no eternal master or eternal slave. God wanted Israel to respect one another in this fashion. Slaves were set free after seven years. They were also given provisions by which to live (vv. 1-18). To remember that they had been spared when all the first born in Egypt were killed, God asked Israel to offer up the first-born male of every cattle and sheep as a sacrifice (vv. 19-23).

Applying

Who is God?

God is the One who led Israel from a land of slavery to a new land of freedom and opportunity. However, God's kindness does not end there. He offered relief and release for those who were in economic difficulty or became slaves again because of their debt. God's kindness never ends. Do you feel God's protective touch?

What is the lesson for me?

There are many people today who are facing economic difficulty because of debt, and others who are hanging on by thread. What are some ways in which I can help them? Pray that this world would become a place where those who are in difficult economic situations are given second chances, and a place where the weak are treated with respect.

Praying

Help me to imitate Your great kindness and have a heart of love.

Feasts, a Day to Remember God's Grace

Commemorations are designed to recognize important events. What we are called to keep is not just a commemoration, but also something to remember and think about.

Passover(1-8)

The gospel delivered with tears and humility

¹“Observe the month of Abib and keep the Passover to the LORD your God, for in the month of Abib the LORD your God brought you out of Egypt by night. ²And you shall offer the Passover sacrifice to the LORD your God, from the flock or the herd, at the place that the LORD will choose, to make his name dwell there. ³You shall eat no leavened bread with it. Seven days you shall eat it with unleavened bread, the bread of affliction—for you came out of the land of Egypt in haste—that all the days of your life you may remember the day when you came out of the land of Egypt. ⁴No leaven shall be seen with you in all your territory for seven days, nor shall any of the flesh that you sacrifice on the evening of the first day remain all night until morning. ⁵You may not offer the Passover sacrifice within any of your towns that the LORD your God is giving you, ⁶but at the place that the LORD your God will choose, to make his name dwell in it, there you shall offer the Passover sacrifice, in the evening at sunset, at the time you came out of Egypt. ⁷And you shall cook it and eat it at the place that the LORD your God will choose. And in the morning you shall turn and go to your tents. ⁸For six days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a solemn assembly to the LORD your God. You shall do no work on it.

Feast of Weeks(9-12)

⁹“You shall count seven weeks. Begin to count the seven weeks from the time the sickle is first put to the standing grain. ¹⁰Then you shall keep the Feast of Weeks to the LORD your God with the tribute of a freewill offering from your hand, which you shall give as the LORD your God blesses you. ¹¹And you shall rejoice before the LORD your God, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, the Levite who is within your towns, the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow who are among you, at the place that the LORD your God will choose, to make his name dwell there. ¹²You shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt; and you shall be careful to observe these statutes.

Feast of Booths(13-17)

¹³“You shall keep the Feast of Booths seven days, when you have gathered in the produce from your threshing floor and your winepress. ¹⁴You shall rejoice in your feast, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, the Levite, the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow who are within your towns. ¹⁵For seven days you shall keep the feast to the LORD your God at the place that the LORD will choose, because the LORD your God will bless you in all your produce and in all the work of your hands, so that you will be altogether joyful. ¹⁶“Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God at the place that he will choose: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Booths. They shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed. ¹⁷Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God that he has given you.

Understanding

God declared three feasts for Israel to remember God's grace. Because it is easy to forget what God has done under the pressure and routine of life, God commanded them keep the three feasts as a 'celebration.' They were to celebrate Passover to remember and thank God for bringing them out of Egypt (vv. 1-8). The Feast of Weeks, also known as Pentecost, started 50 days after Passover, and was to be celebrated together with the Levites, the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow. This was to remember God's generosity (vv. 9-12). He also commanded them to celebrate the Feast of Booths for seven days. This festival was held after they had gathered the produce from the fields and was celebrated with the poor for an entire week to remember their time in the desert and how God had guided them (vv. 13-17).

Applying

Who is God?

God provides His endless grace even when we are unaware. We forget and sometimes don't recognize God's grace. God desires for us to remember His grace so that we may rejoice and be glad in Him.

What is the lesson for me?

Who do you celebrate with? Those who have been shown grace should seek out those needing grace and rejoice with them. How about making plans for celebrating with others and not just being happy for yourself?

Praying

I trust that You will continue to bless me as You have done up to now.

Let Justice Flow Like a River

Who can people that have been oppressed rely on? How great would it be if it was understood and expected that Christians would be fair and honest in everything?

Deuteronomy 16:18-17:13

The People's Court (18-17:7)

¹⁸"You shall appoint judges and officers in all your towns that the LORD your God is giving you, according to your tribes, and they shall judge the people with righteous judgment. ¹⁹You shall not pervert justice. You shall not show partiality, and you shall not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and subverts the cause of the righteous. ²⁰Justice, and only justice, you shall follow, that you may live and inherit the land that the LORD your God is giving you. ²¹"You shall not plant any tree as an Asherah beside the altar of the LORD your God that you shall make. ²²And you shall not set up a pillar, which the LORD your God hates. ¹⁴"You shall not sacrifice to the LORD your God an ox or a sheep in which is a blemish, any defect whatever, for that is an abomination to the LORD your God. ²⁴"If there is found among you, within any of your towns that the LORD your God is giving you, a man or woman who does what is evil in the sight of the LORD your God, in transgressing his covenant, ³and has gone and served other gods and worshiped them, or the sun or the moon or any of the host of heaven, which I have forbidden, ⁴and it is told you and you hear of it, then you shall inquire diligently, and if it is true and certain that such an abomination has been done in Israel, ⁵then you shall bring out to your gates that man or woman who has done this evil thing, and you shall stone that man or woman to death with stones. ⁶On the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses the one who is to die shall be put to death; a person shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness. ⁷The hand of the witnesses shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.

Appealing Judgement (17:8-13)

⁸"If any case arises requiring decision between one kind of homicide and another, one kind of legal right and another, or one kind of assault and another, any case within your towns that is too difficult for you, then you shall arise and go up to the place that the LORD your God will choose. ⁹And you shall come to the Levitical priests and to the judge who is in office in those days, and you shall consult them, and they shall declare to you the decision. ¹⁰Then you shall do according to what they declare to you from that place that the LORD will choose. And you shall be careful to do according to all that they direct you. ¹¹According to the instructions that they give you, and according to the decision which they pronounce to you, you shall do. You shall not turn aside from the verdict that they declare to you, either to the right hand or to the left. ¹²The man who acts presumptuously by not obeying the priest who stands to minister there before the LORD your God, or the judge, that man shall die. So you shall purge the evil from Israel. ¹³And all the people shall hear and fear and not act presumptuously again.

Understanding

God commanded each city to appoint leaders and judges to make fair judgments. Those chosen had to use God's word as the foundation for decisions and were commanded to not take any bribes. They also had to remove all idols in the land so that the people could worship God without the temptation to worship idol gods. These leaders and judges were also responsible for offering untainted sacrifices to God. When a person breaks God's covenant or worships idols, it is up to the judges and leaders to investigate and make firm, and prompt decisions (vv. 16:18 – 17:7). If a case is too difficult for a local judge, he was instructed to bring the case to the priests and to another judge that God chose. The decision made there would be the final decision. Because the decree made would be with the authority of God's Word, anyone who did not obey the decision would be put to death. God created Israel's laws based upon His Word (vv. 8-13).

Applying

Who is God?

God is just. If we are children of God, we should love honesty and reject injustice. We also need to make every effort to make this world a just place. Pray that God's justice would be fulfilled through you.

What is the lesson for me?

We follow the laws of the country we live in, but we must also follow the laws of God's Kingdom. The law of God's Kingdom is the law of the Word. Are you obeying the laws of the Word? Is the Word your motivation when making important choices or decisions? Receive the teachings of the Law and follow the direction of the Word.

Praying

Lord, let the foundation of my choices and decisions be Your thoughts and not my own.

Obedient King

Kings want their subjects to be obedient. However, God says that it is the king that should be able to obey well. First, by listening to the Words of God who appointed him as king, and second, to hear the words of the people God has given him to rule.

Deuteronomy 17:14-20

Conditions for a King (14-15)

¹⁴“When you come to the land that the LORD your God is giving you, and you possess it and dwell in it and then say, ‘I will set a king over me, like all the nations that are around me,’ ¹⁵you may indeed set a king over you whom the LORD your God will choose. One from among your brothers you shall set as king over you. You may not put a foreigner over you, who is not your brother.

Qualifications of a King (16-20)

¹⁶Only he must not acquire many horses for himself or cause the people to return to Egypt in order to acquire many horses, since the LORD has said to you, ‘You shall never return that way again.’ ¹⁷And he shall not acquire many wives for himself, lest his heart turn away, nor shall he acquire for himself excessive silver and gold. ¹⁸“And when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself in a book a copy of this law, approved by the Levitical priests. ¹⁹And it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes, and doing them, ²⁰that his heart may not be lifted up above his brothers, and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, either to the right hand or to the left, so that he may continue long in his kingdom, he and his children, in Israel.

Understanding

Israel was a nation that recognized God as “king” though they had a high priest as their leader. Israel was a nation commanded to represent God to the nations. Even so, Israel desired a king like the nations around them. In response, God sets forth conditions to prevent the abuse of power. A king must come from one of the tribes of Israel and would be chosen by God. No one can become king without God’s approval (vv. 14-15). To prevent the king from becoming a tyrant, God also provided qualifications for the king. God did not allow for kings to gain a multitude of horses (military strength) or wives (for political, economic, or strategic gain), or to accumulate excessive amounts of gold and silver (material wealth). The appointed king had to write for themselves a copy of the law. It would be approved by the high priest and the king was expected to read it for the rest of his life in hopes to continually fear and obey the Lord. If a king or leader falls, the people would have been directly affected by the failures of their leader (vv. 16-2).

Applying

Who is God?

God is our true King and Savior. This is why we are not the king of our own lives. We must receive God’s rule in our lives as our King. The Bible, which is full of the King’s commands, should be set as the foundation of your life.

What is the lesson for me?

Israel’s king must lay down their selfishness. There is no end to man’s selfishness. The more you have, the more you want. Also, we tend to not rely on God when we have all the things we think we need. It’s when we have little that we tend to pray and look to God. What is something you need to lay down?

Praying

Guide show me what I need to ‘lay down’ in my life so that I can grow closer to You.



A Life Set Apart

Why is it that during exams, we must head to church rather than a library? And we respond graciously when others insult us or we yield to others try to take advantage of us? The reason why we respond differently than the world is because we have, with us, someone that they don't have.

Deuteronomy 18:1-14

The Life of Priests and Levites (1-8)

¹“The Levitical priests, all the tribe of Levi, shall have no portion or inheritance with Israel. They shall eat the LORD’s food offerings as their inheritance. ²They shall have no inheritance among their brothers; the LORD is their inheritance, as he promised them. ³And this shall be the priests’ due from the people, from those offering a sacrifice, whether an ox or a sheep: they shall give to the priest the shoulder and the two cheeks and the stomach. ⁴The firstfruits of your grain, of your wine and of your oil, and the first fleece of your sheep, you shall give him. ⁵For the LORD your God has chosen him out of all your tribes to stand and minister in the name of the LORD, him and his sons for all time. ⁶“And if a Levite comes from any of your towns out of all Israel, where he lives—and he may come when he desires—to the place that the LORD will choose, ⁷and ministers in the name of the LORD his God, like all his fellow Levites who stand to minister there before the LORD, ⁸then he may have equal portions to eat, besides what he receives from the sale of his patrimony.

The Life of Regular People (9-14)

⁹“When you come into the land that the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominable practices of those nations. ¹⁰There shall not be found among you anyone who burns his son or his daughter as an offering, anyone who practices divination or tells fortunes or interprets omens, or a sorcerer ¹¹or a charmer or a medium or a necromancer or one who inquires of the dead, ¹²for whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD. And because of these abominations the LORD your God is driving them out before you. ¹³You shall be blameless before the LORD your God, ¹⁴for these nations, which you are about to dispossess, listen to fortune-tellers and to diviners. But as for you, the LORD your God has not allowed you to do this.

Understanding

Israel was taught beforehand how they should live when they enter Canaan. First, the priests and the Levites were chosen by God so they were not given land like the rest of the tribes. For them, their inheritance was the Lord Himself and thus were not given any land but were called to live their lives serving Him. Instead of land to work, the Levites were to live off parts of the sacrifices offered to God (vv. 1-8). After entering Canaan, Israel needed to establish a lifestyle different from the previous inhabitants. They were commanded to not follow the bad practices of the Canaanites in the land. They should not offer their children as sacrifices, practice fortune telling or interpret signs, or follow a magician or a medium. Israel must follow God’s laws, not doing what was forbidden. They were called to live a life set apart from the other people in the land (vv. 9-14).

Applying

Who is God?

God wants us to take on the role of high priest in this generation. In the Old Testament, only the descendants of Aaron could become the high priest, but through Jesus Christ, all Christians now can become high priests. So, we should be like the Levites, leaving all that we need in God’s hands and doing His will.

What is the lesson for me?

There are many fortune tellers, card readers, sorcerers, charmers, and lewd practices in our culture. Satan uses these schemes to slowly impact our hearts and enslave us. Do not even dip your toes a little bit unto these temptations. These are things God hates.

Praying

Help me live a life set apart to please You, Lord.

A True Prophet

A true prophet is not one who predicts the future, but someone who delivers God's Words. A true prophet is, first of all, someone who listens to God's Words.

Deuteronomy 18:15-22

Laws for a Prophet (15-22)

¹⁵“The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen—¹⁶just as you desired of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God or see this great fire any more, lest I die.’ ¹⁷And the LORD said to me, ‘They are right in what they have spoken. ¹⁸I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. ¹⁹And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him. ²⁰But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name that I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die.’ ²¹And if you say in your heart, ‘How may we know the word that the LORD has not spoken?’—²²when a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the word does not come to pass or come true, that is a word that the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously. You need not be afraid of him.

Understanding

The people of Canaan used magic, fortune telling, and sorcery to listen to Satan's voice. However, Israel was instructed to listen only to God's voice through His prophets. A prophet is a messenger of God's Word. This is why the words of a prophet have the power of God's Word. The people must listen to the Words of God delivered by the prophets and obey, or be punished for their disobedience (vv. 15-20). In addition, a prophet must not speak their own words as if they are God's. That would be mocking God's Word and their abusing their authority. To do so would be a sin punishable by death. To see if a prophet's words are actually from God, check if their words are in line with the Bible and if their prophecies comes to fruition. If it does not meet this criteria, then there is no reason to fear the words of that false prophet (vv. 20-22).

Applying

Who is God?

God works through the words of the prophets He appoints. The true messenger of God is not a fortune teller but a servant who delivers the Word of God exactly as revealed to them. Are you praying for those appointed by God to preach His Word (pastors, teachers, and ministers)?

What is the lesson for me?

We hear God's voice today in the Bible. Since the Bible is a record of God's Word, it also has in it the power of His Word. This is why the Bible should not be something with a message we casually read over. For just a moment, get away from the noise and distractions in your world and focus on what God wants to tell you.

Praying

Help me to live a life of faith based on the Word, not one chasing new experiences.

Life is Precious

God created man in His own image. Everyone should treat one another with respect as reflections of God. We should also not be careless with our words and actions since we are God's workmanship.

Deuteronomy 19:1-21

Laws about Cities of Refuge (1-14)

¹"When the LORD your God cuts off the nations whose land the LORD your God is giving you, and you dispossess them and dwell in their cities and in their houses, ²you shall set apart three cities for yourselves in the land that the LORD your God is giving you to possess. ³You shall measure the distances and divide into three parts the area of the land that the LORD your God gives you as a possession, so that any manslayer can flee to them. ⁴"This is the provision for the manslayer, who by fleeing there may save his life. If anyone kills his neighbor unintentionally without having hated him in the past—⁵as when someone goes into the forest with his neighbor to cut wood, and his hand swings the axe to cut down a tree, and the head slips from the handle and strikes his neighbor so that he dies—he may flee to one of these cities and live, ⁶lest the avenger of blood in hot anger pursue the manslayer and overtake him, because the way is long, and strike him fatally, though the man did not deserve to die, since he had not hated his neighbor in the past. ⁷Therefore I command you, You shall set apart three cities. ⁸And if the LORD your God enlarges your territory, as he has sworn to your fathers, and gives you all the land that he promised to give to your fathers—⁹provided you are careful to keep all this commandment, which I command you today, by loving the LORD your God and by walking ever in his ways—then you shall add three other cities to these three, ¹⁰lest innocent blood be shed in your land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance, and so the guilt of bloodshed be upon you. ¹¹"But if anyone hates his neighbor and lies in wait for him and attacks him and strikes him fatally so that he dies, and he flees into one of these cities, ¹²then the elders of his city shall send and take him from there, and hand him over to the avenger of blood, so that he may die. ¹³Your eye shall not pity him, but you shall purge the guilt of innocent blood from Israel, so that it may be well with you. ¹⁴"You shall not move your neighbor's landmark, which the men of old have set, in the inheritance that you will hold in the land that the LORD your God is giving you to possess.

Laws about Witnesses (15-21)

¹⁵"A single witness shall not suffice against a person for any crime or for any wrong in connection with any offense that he has committed. Only on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established. ¹⁶If a malicious witness arises to accuse a person of wrongdoing, ¹⁷then both parties to the dispute shall appear before the LORD, before the priests and the judges who are in office in those days. ¹⁸The judges shall inquire diligently, and if the witness is a false witness and has accused his brother falsely, ¹⁹then you shall do to him as he had meant to do to his brother. So you shall purge the evil from your midst. ²⁰And the rest shall hear and fear, and shall never again commit any such evil among you. ²¹Your eye shall not pity. It shall be life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

Understanding

When someone is killed, even if it is unintentional, family members of the victim desire revenge. When people seek revenge, the outcome is disastrous. God, wanting to prevent this catastrophe and save innocent lives, established cities of refuge. There should not be innocent blood shed in the land that was given by God (vv. 1-14). To avoid people from being killed because of false accusations, evidence from two or three witnesses were required to decide guilt or innocence. If a judge finds that a witness gave false witness, then they will receive the appropriate punishment (vv. 15-21).

Applying

Who is God?

Vv. 6-10 God doesn't neglect a single life. He established a carefully designed system to ensure that no innocent blood was spilled in the promised land. How are we viewing the culture and laws of today, which so often do not respect life, before God, who considers every single life as precious?

What is the lesson for me?

Vv. 15-21 The process of judgement and final verdict must be fair. Therefore, God ensured that the Israelites' sins were judged fairly through careful inquiry and witness, and that punishment was justly given. Such fair trials eliminated evil in the communities and prevented sin. How are we and our communities dealing with the problem of sin?

Praying

Help me to value other people and become a refuge for those in need of help.

Principles of Spiritual Warfare

Bill Bright, the founder of Campus Crusade for Christ, famously said, "We are living in a war zone, not a playground." This is true. This world is a warzone with bombs falling.

Deuteronomy 20:1-20

Before Going into Battle (1-9)

¹"When you go out to war against your enemies, and see horses and chariots and an army larger than your own, you shall not be afraid of them, for the LORD your God is with you, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt. ²And when you draw near to the battle, the priest shall come forward and speak to the people ³and shall say to them, 'Hear, O Israel, today you are drawing near for battle against your enemies: let not your heart faint. Do not fear or panic or be in dread of them, ⁴for the LORD your God is he who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies, to give you the victory.' ⁵Then the officers shall speak to the people, saying, 'Is there any man who has built a new house and has not dedicated it? Let him go back to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man dedicate it. ⁶And is there any man who has planted a vineyard and has not enjoyed its fruit? Let him go back to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man enjoy its fruit. ⁷And is there any man who has betrothed a wife and has not taken her? Let him go back to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man take her.' ⁸And the officers shall speak further to the people, and say, 'Is there any man who is fearful and fainthearted? Let him go back to his house, lest he make the heart of his fellows melt like his own.' ⁹And when the officers have finished speaking to the people, then commanders shall be appointed at the head of the people.

When in Battle (10-20)

¹⁰"When you draw near to a city to fight against it, offer terms of peace to it. ¹¹And if it responds to you peaceably and it opens to you, then all the people who are found in it shall do forced labor for you and shall serve you. ¹²But if it makes no peace with you, but makes war against you, then you shall besiege it. ¹³And when the LORD your God gives it into your hand, you shall put all its males to the sword, ¹⁴but the women and the little ones, the livestock, and everything else in the city, all its spoil, you shall take as plunder for yourselves. And you shall enjoy the spoil of your enemies, which the LORD your God has given you. ¹⁵Thus you shall do to all the cities that are very far from you, which are not cities of the nations here. ¹⁶But in the cities of these peoples that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance, you shall save alive nothing that breathes, ¹⁷but you shall devote them to complete destruction, the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, as the LORD your God has commanded, ¹⁸that they may not teach you to do according to all their abominable practices that they have done for their gods, and so you sin against the LORD your God. ¹⁹"When you besiege a city for a long time, making war against it in order to take it, you shall not destroy its trees by wielding an axe against them. You may eat from them, but you shall not cut them down. Are the trees in the field human, that they should be besieged by you? ²⁰Only the trees that you know are not trees for food you may destroy and cut down, that you may build siegeworks against the city that makes war with you, until it falls.

Understanding

Although they did not have as many horses and chariots or an army as large as the countries around them, Israel had no reason to fear. This was because God, who brought them out of Egypt, the most powerful nation in the world, was with them and fighting on their behalf. War is under God's sovereignty, and God will lead the army of Israel to taste victory (vv. 1-9). There is a principle for Israel's warfare. They must first offer terms of peace and receive surrender. However, they were commanded that when they attack a city in Canaan, they must destroy every living thing in that place. This was to prevent the remnants of Canaan's sinful nature from influencing Israel and turning their hearts away from God (vv. 10-20).

Applying

Who is God?

God takes responsibility for those that rely on Him. Satan strives to shake our foundations, leading us to worry and anxiety. He longs to distract our gaze from looking to God. However, what we need more than ever is the boldness and confidence that we can overcome anything if God is with us. Are you ready to sing victory songs with God?

What is the lesson for me?

The most important thing to do in spiritual warfare is to know our enemies. Israel was called to completely destroy the people living in Canaan but to pursue peace with other nations. This is why Christians cannot be people that pursue conflict with everyone, like a junkyard dog. What you have to fight are not the people around you, but rather the sin inside your heart.

Praying

Help me to not live caught up in every situation or circumstance, but confidently in faith by clinging to Your Word.

Be Holy in This Land

Just as we take care of our bodies so that we will not get sick, we must make every effort to be pure and holy and rid ourselves of sin. What did the people of Israel do to keep themselves pure and holy in the land God gave them?

Deuteronomy 21:1-23

Principles for Unsolved Murders (1-9)

¹"If in the land that the LORD your God is giving you to possess someone is found slain, lying in the open country, and it is not known who killed him, ²then your elders and your judges shall come out, and they shall measure the distance to the surrounding cities. ³And the elders of the city that is nearest to the slain man shall take a heifer that has never been worked and that has not pulled in a yoke. ⁴And the elders of that city shall bring the heifer down to a valley with running water, which is neither plowed nor sown, and shall break the heifer's neck there in the valley. ⁵Then the priests, the sons of Levi, shall come forward, for the LORD your God has chosen them to minister to him and to bless in the name of the LORD, and by their word every dispute and every assault shall be settled. ⁶And all the elders of that city nearest to the slain man shall wash their hands over the heifer whose neck was broken in the valley, ⁷and they shall testify, 'Our hands did not shed this blood, nor did our eyes see it shed. ⁸Accept atonement, O LORD, for your people Israel, whom you have redeemed, and do not set the guilt of innocent blood in the midst of your people Israel, so that their blood guilt be atoned for.' ⁹So you shall purge the guilt of innocent blood from your midst, when you do what is right in the sight of the LORD.

Many other Principles (10-23)

¹⁰"When you go out to war against your enemies, and the LORD your God gives them into your hand and you take them captive, ¹¹and you see among the captives a beautiful woman, and you desire to take her to be your wife, ¹²and you bring her home to your house, she shall shave her head and pare her nails. ¹³And she shall take off the clothes in which she was captured and shall remain in your house and lament her father and her mother a full month. After that you may go in to her and be her husband, and she shall be your wife. ¹⁴But if you no longer delight in her, you shall let her go where she wants. But you shall not sell her for money, nor shall you treat her as a slave, since you have humiliated her. ¹⁵"If a man has two wives, the one loved and the other unloved, and both the loved and the unloved have borne him children, and if the firstborn son belongs to the unloved, ¹⁶then on the day when he assigns his possessions as an inheritance to his sons, he may not treat the son of the loved as the firstborn in preference to the son of the unloved, who is the firstborn, ¹⁷but he shall acknowledge the firstborn, the son of the unloved, by giving him a double portion of all that he has, for he is the firstfruits of his strength. The right of the firstborn is his. ¹⁸"If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and, though they discipline him, will not listen to them, ¹⁹then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his city at the gate of the place where he lives, ²⁰and they shall say to 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.' ²¹Then all the men of the city shall stone him to death with stones. So you shall purge the evil from your midst, and all Israel shall hear, and fear. ²²"And if a man has committed a crime punishable by death and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, ²³his body shall not remain all night on the tree, but you shall bury him the same day, for a hanged man is cursed by God. You shall not defile your land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance.

Understanding

The responsibility for an unsolved murder was placed on the elders of the city nearest to where the murder occurred. A ceremony of purification required the death of a heifer calf. Then the elders of the city had to wash their hands over the heifer, confess the sin of Israel as a community, and ask for forgiveness (vv. 1-9). If a soldier of Israel wanted to take a female prisoner as his wife, he had to give her a month to grieve her former life and prepare for a life as a member of the new community. Polygamy was permitted and Israel was commanded to acknowledge any firstborn son, even if they are born of a woman who was unloved. If there was a rebellious child who did not listen to their parents, then the community was responsible for restoring discipline. When a man was executed for a crime he committed, he would be hung on a tree, to serve as a deterrent for the community (vv. 10-23).

Applying

Who is God?

God commands us to take responsibility for the death of an innocent person. He commanded that the people take responsibility, as a community, for the unintentional death of a guiltless person. We should take responsibility for what happens in our own community. Pray that the society you are part of will be pure in God's eyes.

What is the lesson for me?

Respect the rights of the weak. We should not despise foreign prisoners or the children of unloved wives. We must respect and recognize individual rights. This is because everyone is created in God's image. What kind of attitude do you show the less fortunate?

Praying

Give me a heart that not only stays away from sin, but one that desires to be salt and light in this world. Give me a heart of responsibility for what others reject or opposed.

Offer a Helping Hand

The opposite of love is not only hate but also ignorance. Ignoring other people in need is the same as breaking the law. Being concerned about others is a catalyst that can change the world.

Deuteronomy 22:1-12

Loving Others (1-8)

¹"You shall not see your brother's ox or his sheep going astray and ignore them. You shall take them back to your brother. ²And if he does not live near you and you do not know who he is, you shall bring it home to your house, and it shall stay with you until your brother seeks it. Then you shall restore it to him. ³And you shall do the same with his donkey or with his garment, or with any lost thing of your brother's, which he loses and you find; you may not ignore it. ⁴You shall not see your brother's donkey or his ox fallen down by the way and ignore them. You shall help him to lift them up again. ⁵"A woman shall not wear a man's garment, nor shall a man put on a woman's cloak, for whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD your God. ⁶"If you come across a bird's nest in any tree or on the ground, with young ones or eggs and the mother sitting on the young or on the eggs, you shall not take the mother with the young. ⁷You shall let the mother go, but the young you may take for yourself, that it may go well with you, and that you may live long. ⁸"When you build a new house, you shall make a parapet for your roof, that you may not bring the guilt of blood upon your house, if anyone should fall from it.

A Pure Life (9-12)

⁹"You shall not sow your vineyard with two kinds of seed, lest the whole yield be forfeited, the crop that you have sown and the yield of the vineyard. ¹⁰You shall not plow with an ox and a donkey together. ¹¹You shall not wear cloth of wool and linen mixed together. ¹²"You shall make yourself tassels on the four corners of the garment with which you cover yourself.

Understanding

Loving others fulfills the law. In ancient Israel, this was seen in helping others find their lost cattle. Doing so was a practical way of protecting the livelihood of others. The Scripture reminds us that when men and women wear appropriate clothes, gender identity and roles will not be lost. We are also reminded that we have dominion over creation but must respect the boundaries that God has established for us. When building homes, extra expenses were to be used to build a small protective wall around the border of the roof called a 'parapet.' This was to help prevent people from falling off the roof accidentally (vv. 1-8). Israel was called into a life of purity in the Promised Land. They were commanded to not sow with two kinds of seed, plow with an ox and donkey on the same yoke, or wear cloth made of wool and linen mixed together. They were also called to make tassels on the four corners of the garment to cover themselves, as an act of obedience to God's commands (vv. 9-12).

Applying

Who is God?

God wants to protect life. He commands Israel to build a parapet on the roofs of homes to protect the life. God also commands Israel to not take the mother along with the young when hunting animals in order to protect the ecological system. What efforts are you making to protect and preserve life?

What is the lesson for me?

We must keep our identity of faith. The values and cultures of the world are heading towards destruction, like a car with broken brakes. Same-sex marriage legalization is rapidly increasing around the world. Look at the world with a Biblical perspective to keep and preserve Biblical culture and pure faith.

Praying

Help me to live a pure life of faith and to love other people.

My Body Is a Temple

When we watch historical movies or TV shows, many soldiers sacrifice their lives to protect something or someone they love. Today, one thing we need to be willing to die to protect is sexual purity.

Deuteronomy 22:13-30

Laws about Purity (13-30)

¹³"If any man takes a wife and goes in to her and then hates her ¹⁴and accuses her of misconduct and brings a bad name upon her, saying, 'I took this woman, and when I came near her, I did not find in her evidence of virginity,' ¹⁵then the father of the young woman and her mother shall take and bring out the evidence of her virginity to the elders of the city in the gate. ¹⁶And the father of the young woman shall say to the elders, 'I gave my daughter to this man to marry, and he hates her; ¹⁷and behold, he has accused her of misconduct, saying, "I did not find in your daughter evidence of virginity." And yet this is the evidence of my daughter's virginity.' And they shall spread the cloak before the elders of the city. ¹⁸Then the elders of that city shall take the man and whip him, ¹⁹and they shall fine him a hundred shekels of silver and give them to the father of the young woman, because he has brought a bad name upon a virgin of Israel. And she shall be his wife. He may not divorce her all his days. ²⁰But if the thing is true, that evidence of virginity was not found in the young woman, ²¹then they shall bring out the young woman to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her to death with stones, because she has done an outrageous thing in Israel by whoring in her father's house. So you shall purge the evil from your midst. ²²"If a man is found lying with the wife of another man, both of them shall die, the man who lay with the woman, and the woman. So you shall purge the evil from Israel. ²³"If there is a betrothed virgin, and a man meets her in the city and lies with her, ²⁴then you shall bring them both out to the gate of that city, and you shall stone them to death with stones, the young woman because she did not cry for help though she was in the city, and the man because he violated his neighbor's wife. So you shall purge the evil from your midst. ²⁵"But if in the open country a man meets a young woman who is betrothed, and the man seizes her and lies with her, then only the man who lay with her shall die. ²⁶But you shall do nothing to the young woman; she has committed no offense punishable by death. For this case is like that of a man attacking and murdering his neighbor, ²⁷because he met her in the open country, and though the betrothed young woman cried for help there was no one to rescue her. ²⁸"If a man meets a virgin who is not betrothed, and seizes her and lies with her, and they are found, ²⁹then the man who lay with her shall give to the father of the young woman fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife, because he has violated her. He may not divorce her all his days. ³⁰"A man shall not take his father's wife, so that he does not uncover his father's nakedness.

Understanding

God gives multiple detailed commands to not commit adultery; the seventh commandment also emphasizes that physical sexual relations must be held within the sanctity of marriage. God gives the responsibility of keeping the commandment to both genders, so that neither would feel unfairly treated. God does not desire sexual relations outside of marriage for His people (vv. 13-30).

Applying

Who is God?

God gives us the beautiful gift of sex. He also demands we keep His' ethics and responsibilities of sex. We must keep sexual relations inside of marriage. As a soldier fights for what he loves, we need to earnestly protect sex as pure and holy.

What is the lesson for me?

Problems in sex is not just between a man and a woman, it is a problem for the family they will make, and the community that family will be a part of. There are many people in society struggling with sexual sins, and those who feel lonely in them as well. Pray that their broken hearts would recognize the healing touch of Jesus that will transform them into a pure bride.

Praying

Fill me with Your Words, oh Lord, that I may recognize the beautiful and pure gift of sex.



People Able to Approach God

Have you ever received a formal invitation to a party? The invitation distinguishes between people who are allowed admission to the party and those that are not. What kind of person can enter the assembly of the Lord?

Deuteronomy 23:1-18

Qualifications for Entering the Lord's Assembly (1-8)

¹"No one whose testicles are crushed or whose male organ is cut off shall enter the assembly of the LORD. ²"No one born of a forbidden union may enter the assembly of the LORD. Even to the tenth generation, none of his descendants may enter the assembly of the LORD. ³"No Ammonite or Moabite may enter the assembly of the LORD. Even to the tenth generation, none of them may enter the assembly of the LORD forever, ⁴because they did not meet you with bread and with water on the way, when you came out of Egypt, and because they hired against you Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse you. ⁵But the LORD your God would not listen to Balaam; instead the LORD your God turned the curse into a blessing for you, because the LORD your God loved you. ⁶You shall not seek their peace or their prosperity all your days forever. ⁷"You shall not abhor an Edomite, for he is your brother. You shall not abhor an Egyptian, because you were a sojourner in his land. ⁸Children born to them in the third generation may enter the assembly of the LORD.

Making the Camp Holy (9-18)

⁹"When you are encamped against your enemies, then you shall keep yourself from every evil thing. ¹⁰"If any man among you becomes unclean because of a nocturnal emission, then he shall go outside the camp. He shall not come inside the camp, ¹¹but when evening comes, he shall bathe himself in water, and as the sun sets, he may come inside the camp. ¹²"You shall have a place outside the camp, and you shall go out to it. ¹³And you shall have a trowel with your tools, and when you sit down outside, you shall dig a hole with it and turn back and cover up your excrement. ¹⁴Because the LORD your God walks in the midst of your camp, to deliver you and to give up your enemies before you, therefore your camp must be holy, so that he may not see anything indecent among you and turn away from you. ¹⁵"You shall not give up to his master a slave who has escaped from his master to you. ¹⁶He shall dwell with you, in your midst, in the place that he shall choose within one of your towns, wherever it suits him. You shall not wrong him. ¹⁷"None of the daughters of Israel shall be a cult prostitute, and none of the sons of Israel shall be a cult prostitute. ¹⁸You shall not bring the fee of a prostitute or the wages of a dog into the house of the LORD your God in payment for any vow, for both of these are an abomination to the LORD your God.

Understanding

God sets rules for those who are not able to enter into the meeting of worship (Assembly of the Lord). Those who followed the Canaanite custom of castration and those born from a forbidden union were not allowed into the meeting because they were considered unclean. Ammonites and Moabites, who cursed Israel through a false prophet, were also not allowed. These restrictions were to keep the worship of God at the meeting pure and holy. Now, these barriers and restrictions were broken down through Jesus Christ (vv. 1-14). God also instructed Israel on how to keep the camp holy during war. The reason for these rules was because God was in their midst at camp. The assurance of victory was only through God. Since God is holy, the people of Israel had to keep the camp clean. This is why the passage speaks not only of cleanliness at the camp, but also for individuals as well (vv. 9-18).

Applying

Who is God?

God commands holiness and cleanliness in the Israelite's camp. He gives little instruction on military strategies when facing the enemy, he focuses on the health and cleanliness of His people. Israel had to be holy because God is holy, and they needed Him to attain victory. Pray that we would keep the spiritual weapon of holiness so that God will not leave our side.

What is the lesson for me?

To be holy, we cannot ignore the smallest of details. A 'small' sin, or a minor bad habit can destroy leads to death. Confess all of your sins to God. Then cut off all the bad habits from your life.

Praying

Give me the strength to keep holiness as a mighty child of God.

Help Those in Need

"The Mother Teresa Effect" study showed that when seeing others helping the poor, immunoglobulin, the body's first defense against colds, is naturally produced. How can you experience "The Mother Teresa Effect" in your spiritual lives?

Deuteronomy 23:19-24:9

Other Laws (19-25)

¹⁹"You shall not charge interest on loans to your brother, interest on money, interest on food, interest on anything that is lent for interest. ²⁰You may charge a foreigner interest, but you may not charge your brother interest, that the LORD your God may bless you in all that you undertake in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. ²¹"If you make a vow to the LORD your God, you shall not delay fulfilling it, for the LORD your God will surely require it of you, and you will be guilty of sin. ²²But if you refrain from vowing, you will not be guilty of sin. ²³You shall be careful to do what has passed your lips, for you have voluntarily vowed to the LORD your God what you have promised with your mouth. ²⁴"If you go into your neighbor's vineyard, you may eat your fill of grapes, as many as you wish, but you shall not put any in your bag. ²⁵If you go into your neighbor's standing grain, you may pluck the ears with your hand, but you shall not put a sickle to your neighbor's standing grain.

Divorce and Remarriage (24:1-9)

¹"When a man takes a wife and marries her, if then she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, and she departs out of his house, ²and if she goes and becomes another man's wife, ³and the latter man hates her and writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, or if the latter man dies, who took her to be his wife, ⁴then her former husband, who sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after she has been defiled, for that is an abomination before the LORD. And you shall not bring sin upon the land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance. ⁵"When a man is newly married, he shall not go out with the army or be liable for any other public duty. He shall be free at home one year to be happy with his wife whom he has taken. ⁶"No one shall take a mill or an upper millstone in pledge, for that would be taking a life in pledge. ⁷"If a man is found stealing one of his brothers of the people of Israel, and if he treats him as a slave or sells him, then that thief shall die. So you shall purge the evil from your midst. ⁸"Take care, in a case of leprous disease, to be very careful to do according to all that the Levitical priests shall direct you. As I commanded them, so you shall be careful to do. ⁹Remember what the LORD your God did to Miriam on the way as you came out of Egypt.

Understanding

God desires to protect and watch over the weak people in a community. This is why He blesses those who show mercy to their brothers and sisters. Using another person's suffering for selfish gain or advantage is a misuse of God's blessing. Sharing what we have with the poor is the same as giving to God, and God will repay those good works (vv. 19-25). God knows our weaknesses. This is why He allows divorced people to marry again. However, this is permission to remarry, not a commandment to do so. Through this law, a divorced woman can build a new family and not become a social outcast. God demands that we remember to bless the weak and the poor and to be generous to them as well (vv. 1-9).

Applying

Who is God?

God did not allow interest to be charged when lending money or materials to a neighbor in need. He did allow those who are poor a handful of fruit or grain from the fields so they would be able to eat. God wants those in power to help and look after the weak. Who can you help with the time and things God has given you?

What is the lesson for me?

God's children must strive to make the world a hopeful one. God promises to provide a way of rescue from difficult circumstances. Pray that this world can become a place where people in difficult situations can rise up once again.

Praying

God of Love, help me to remember the grace, through which You saved me, and help me radiate Your mercy and goodness in this world.

How People of God Should Live

God's people should live differently than the rest of the world. If the world teaches us to hold on to our possessions, we need to let them go to help those who struggle get back on their feet. This is the way we follow Jesus' example of laying His life down.

Deuteronomy 24:10-22

Being Considerate Towards Others (10-22)

¹⁰"When you make your neighbor a loan of any sort, you shall not go into his house to collect his pledge. ¹¹You shall stand outside, and the man to whom you make the loan shall bring the pledge out to you. ¹²And if he is a poor man, you shall not sleep in his pledge. ¹³You shall restore to him the pledge as the sun sets, that he may sleep in his cloak and bless you. And it shall be righteousness for you before the LORD your God. ¹⁴"You shall not oppress a hired worker who is poor and needy, whether he is one of your brothers or one of the sojourners who are in your land within your towns. ¹⁵You shall give him his wages on the same day, before the sun sets (for he is poor and counts on it), lest he cry against you to the LORD, and you be guilty of sin. ¹⁶"Fathers shall not be put to death because of their children, nor shall children be put to death because of their fathers. Each one shall be put to death for his own sin. ¹⁷"You shall not pervert the justice due to the sojourner or to the fatherless, or take a widow's garment in pledge, ¹⁸but you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt and the LORD your God redeemed you from there; therefore I command you to do this. ¹⁹"When you reap your harvest in your field and forget a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it. It shall be for the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands. ²⁰When you beat your olive trees, you shall not go over them again. It shall be for the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow. ²¹When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, you shall not strip it afterward. It shall be for the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow. ²²You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I command you to do this.

Understanding

God has a special place in His heart for the poor. This is why God commanded the people to 'fill their [the poor's] needs, and to care for them in love.' This is God's desire for us too. This is how God's people are to live a different life from those of the world. God commands them to not collect money or materials they had lent out. Also, He commands employers to not delay paying their workers. Israel was commanded to remember they had once been slaves in Egypt; they must then protect and look after the poor. This pleases God and is the appropriate attitude to have as God's blessed people (vv. 10-22).

Applying

Who is God?

Responsibility for sin lies with the sinner, so revenge must not be taken against the parent or relative in place of the sinner. Do we not blame others instead of admitting our wrongdoings when we have done wrong? The proper way to solve the problem of sin is to acknowledge our sins and repent before God.

What is the lesson for me?

The Israelites must remember God's love for them and practice that same love. As they were once slaves in Egypt, they had to be especially merciful towards the weak. God's love and mercy is the source of the strength to be merciful. Are we justly giving of the grace we have received?

Praying

Dear Lord, You who protect the weak, help me to become a righteous person that is considerate of other people.

Foundations for a Good Life

The people of Israel had to keep many laws in their daily lives. These were not simply cultural but rather meaningful, protective laws.

Deuteronomy 25:1-19

Minimum Consideration (1-10)

¹"If there is a dispute between men and they come into court and the judges decide between them, acquitting the innocent and condemning the guilty, ²then if the guilty man deserves to be beaten, the judge shall cause him to lie down and be beaten in his presence with a number of stripes in proportion to his offense. ³Forty stripes may be given him, but not more, lest, if one should go on to beat him with more stripes than these, your brother be degraded in your sight. ⁴"You shall not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the grain. ⁵"If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the dead man shall not be married outside the family to a stranger. Her husband's brother shall go in to her and take her as his wife and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. ⁶And the first son whom she bears shall succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel. ⁷And if the man does not wish to take his brother's wife, then his brother's wife shall go up to the gate to the elders and say, 'My husband's brother refuses to perpetuate his brother's name in Israel; he will not perform the duty of a husband's brother to me.' ⁸Then the elders of his city shall call him and speak to him, and if he persists, saying, 'I do not wish to take her,' ⁹then his brother's wife shall go up to him in the presence of the elders and pull his sandal off his foot and spit in his face. And she shall answer and say, 'So shall it be done to the man who does not build up his brother's house.' ¹⁰And the name of his house shall be called in Israel, 'The house of him who had his sandal pulled off.'

Bearing False Testimony to the Lord (11-19)

¹¹"When men fight with one another and the wife of the one draws near to rescue her husband from the hand of him who is beating him and puts out her hand and seizes him by the private parts, ¹²then you shall cut off her hand. Your eye shall have no pity. ¹³"You shall not have in your bag two kinds of weights, a large and a small. ¹⁴You shall not have in your house two kinds of measures, a large and a small. ¹⁵A full and fair weight you shall have, a full and fair measure you shall have, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you. ¹⁶For all who do such things, all who act dishonestly, are an abomination to the LORD your God. ¹⁷"Remember what Amalek did to you on the way as you came out of Egypt, ¹⁸how he attacked you on the way when you were faint and weary, and cut off your tail, those who were lagging behind you, and he did not fear God. ¹⁹Therefore when the LORD your God has given you rest from all your enemies around you, in the land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance to possess, you shall blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven; you shall not forget.

Understanding

Sin must be accounted for. In ancient Israel, a person guilty of sin was condemned to be punished, but the punishment was to be fair and decided by a judge. Also, a guilty person was not to be given more than forty strikes so that they would not be degraded in front of the community. This was because the guilty man is also a child of God, and deserving of love. God also commanded that the cattle be well fed and taken care of (vv. 1-10). Though it sounds odd, God commanded that a woman who put her hands on the private parts of a man attacking her husband should also be punished. No matter what the circumstance may be, there are certain standards a child of God is expected to uphold. Defrauding a fellow brother in the marketplace is misrepresenting the Lord. This deceptive action is evidence that they do not have the fear of God in their heart (vv. 11-19).

Applying

Who is God?

God wants to steer Israel on the right path through His laws and expectations. They must find the deeper meaning behind the laws and seek the heart of God. If not, the laws will only feel like they are stifling their breath. Rather than complaining about all the dos and don'ts you are commanded to obey, search for the hidden secrets in their purpose.

What is the lesson for me?

God hates it when we trick or defraud others. This is making a personal gain through deception. Is there something you gained from fooling another person? Though it may bring immediate gain at the time, it will lead down to a path of destruction in the end. Confess your dishonest ways to God.

Praying

Help me to keep Your Word and to proclaim Your goodness to the World.

Gratitude, the Secret to an Abundant Life

Being true to principles that we've set is important because it is the path we will walk when pursuing our goals. What is the spiritual principle for an abundant life?

Deuteronomy 26:1-19

Offering the Firstfruits (1-11)

¹"When you come into the land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance and have taken possession of it and live in it, ²you shall take some of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which you harvest from your land that the LORD your God is giving you, and you shall put it in a basket, and you shall go to the place that the LORD your God will choose, to make his name to dwell there. ³And you shall go to the priest who is in office at that time and say to him, 'I declare today to the LORD your God that I have come into the land that the LORD swore to our fathers to give us.' ⁴Then the priest shall take the basket from your hand and set it down before the altar of the LORD your God. ⁵"And you shall make response before the LORD your God, 'A wandering Aramean was my father. And he went down into Egypt and sojourned there, few in number, and there he became a nation, great, mighty, and populous. ⁶And the Egyptians treated us harshly and humiliated us and laid on us hard labor. ⁷Then we cried to the LORD, the God of our fathers, and the LORD heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. ⁸And the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with great deeds of terror, with signs and wonders. ⁹And he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. ¹⁰And behold, now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground, which you, O LORD, have given me.' And you shall set it down before the LORD your God and worship before the LORD your God. ¹¹And you shall rejoice in all the good that the LORD your God has given to you and to your house, you, and the Levite, and the sojourner who is among you.

Tithing Every Three Years (12-19)

¹²"When you have finished paying all the tithe of your produce in the third year, which is the year of tithing, giving it to the Levite, the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, so that they may eat within your towns and be filled, ¹³then you shall say before the LORD your God, 'I have removed the sacred portion out of my house, and moreover, I have given it to the Levite, the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, according to all your commandment that you have commanded me. I have not transgressed any of your commandments, nor have I forgotten them. ¹⁴I have not eaten of the tithe while I was mourning, or removed any of it while I was unclean, or offered any of it to the dead. I have obeyed the voice of the LORD my God. I have done according to all that you have commanded me. ¹⁵Look down from your holy habitation, from heaven, and bless your people Israel and the ground that you have given us, as you swore to our fathers, a land flowing with milk and honey.' ¹⁶"This day the LORD your God commands you to do these statutes and rules. You shall therefore be careful to do them with all your heart and with all your soul. ¹⁷You have declared today that the LORD is your God, and that you will walk in his ways, and keep his statutes and his commandments and his rules, and will obey his voice. ¹⁸And the LORD has declared today that you are a people for his treasured possession, as he has promised you, and that you are to keep all his commandments, ¹⁹and that he will set you in praise and in fame and in honor high above all nations that he has made, and that you shall be a people holy to the LORD your God, as he promised."

Understanding

The people of Israel were to keep two principles as they started farming crops in the Promised Land given to them by God. The first principle was to offer God the first fruits of their crops. This was to be an acknowledgement that God is the Savior of Israel. An abundant life begins with a definite confession of faith (vv. 1-11). The second principle was a 'tithe every three years' to help the Levites and the poor. Two principles reflect God's greatest commands: to love God and one another. Keeping these principles in gratitude and obedience was a privilege given to them by God (vv. 12-19).

Applying

Who is God?

God is the One who allows fruit to grow in your life. You must not mistake God's love and mercy in your life as if you accomplished things in your own strength. Are you doing well in expressing your gratitude for the fruit in your life?

What is the lesson for me?

The people of Israel gave a tithe every three years that was used to aid others. Helping others in need is a way of showing gratitude to God for all He has granted us. Who are you helping regularly with the fruit God has given you? If none, start looking for a place to express your gratitude to God.

Praying

Help me to live an abundant life of loving You and others.

Bind It

To bind something means to securely tie together. What is something you need to bind to your heart?

Deuteronomy 27:1-26

Writing the Law on Stones (1-10)

¹Now Moses and the elders of Israel commanded the people, saying, “Keep the whole commandment that I command you today. ²And on the day you cross over the Jordan to the land that the LORD your God is giving you, you shall set up large stones and plaster them with plaster. ³And you shall write on them all the words of this law, when you cross over to enter the land that the LORD your God is giving you, a land flowing with milk and honey, as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has promised you. ⁴And when you have crossed over the Jordan, you shall set up these stones, concerning which I command you today, on Mount Ebal, and you shall plaster them with plaster. ⁵And there you shall build an altar to the LORD your God, an altar of stones. You shall wield no iron tool on them; ⁶you shall build an altar to the LORD your God of uncut stones. And you shall offer burnt offerings on it to the LORD your God, ⁷and you shall sacrifice peace offerings and shall eat there, and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God. ⁸And you shall write on the stones all the words of this law very plainly.” ⁹Then Moses and the Levitical priests said to all Israel, “Keep silence and hear, O Israel: this day you have become the people of the LORD your God. ¹⁰You shall therefore obey the voice of the LORD your God, keeping his commandments and his statutes, which I command you today.”

Curses from Mount Ebal

¹¹That day Moses charged the people, saying, ¹²“When you have crossed over the Jordan, these shall stand on Mount Gerizim to bless the people: Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin. ¹³And these shall stand on Mount Ebal for the curse: Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali. ¹⁴And the Levites shall declare to all the men of Israel in a loud voice: ¹⁵“Cursed be the man who makes a carved or cast metal image, an abomination to the LORD, a thing made by the hands of a craftsman, and sets it up in secret.’ And all the people shall answer and say, ‘Amen.’ ¹⁶“Cursed be anyone who dishonors his father or his mother.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’ ¹⁷“Cursed be anyone who moves his neighbor’s landmark.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’ ¹⁸“Cursed be anyone who misleads a blind man on the road.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’ ¹⁹“Cursed be anyone who perverts the justice due to the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’ ²⁰“Cursed be anyone who lies with his father’s wife, because he has uncovered his father’s nakedness.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’ ²¹“Cursed be anyone who lies with any kind of animal.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’ ²²“Cursed be anyone who lies with his sister, whether the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’ ²³“Cursed be anyone who lies with his mother-in-law.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’ ²⁴“Cursed be anyone who strikes down his neighbor in secret.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’ ²⁵“Cursed be anyone who takes a bribe to shed innocent blood.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’ ²⁶“Cursed be anyone who does not confirm the words of this law by doing them.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’

Understanding

Israel became God’s people through the covenant they made with Him (Deut. 26: 16-19); they were expected to obey the laws and commands given by serving God. This is why Moses commanded them to write the laws on the stones of Mount Ebal when they entered Canaan. They were also commanded to make an altar to God with uncut stones. This was done in hopes to make the Word and worship central to life in Canaan (vv. 1-10). Moses ordered the Israelites to, after entering Canaan, split into six tribes. Each tribe would stand at Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal, facing one another, while the Levites in the middle declared blessings and curses over the nation. The 12 curses proclaimed were warnings about disobeying half of the Ten Commandments. Once declared, the people shouted, ‘Amen’ to the proclamations (vv. 11-26).

Applying

Who is God?

God wants the Word to be the center of our lives. This is why He had the Word written on stones. Is God’s Word bound and written on your heart? If it is not, begin walking in the way of obedience today. God has already started working to fulfill His Word.

What is the lesson for me?

All of Israel responded to Moses’ preaching by proclaiming, ‘Amen.’ When the Israelites said ‘amen’ (and when believers say it today) it meant, ‘yes’ or, ‘of course.’ It is an agreement to the message or commands of someone else’s words. Are you responding with, ‘amen’ to God’s Word?

Praying

Help me to respond to Your Word with, ‘amen’ everyday and live a life of obedience by binding Your Word to my heart.

Together with the Obedient

Most people want to be with those who listen, not those who like to show off. It is unavoidable that someone who is full of themselves and doesn't heed god's instruction would be far away from Him.

Deuteronomy 28:1-14

Blessings for Obedience (1-14)

¹"And if you faithfully obey the voice of the LORD your God, being careful to do all his commandments that I command you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. ²And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you obey the voice of the LORD your God. ³Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the field. ⁴Blessed shall be the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground and the fruit of your cattle, the increase of your herds and the young of your flock. ⁵Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. ⁶Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out. ⁷"The LORD will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before you. They shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways. ⁸The LORD will command the blessing on you in your barns and in all that you undertake. And he will bless you in the land that the LORD your God is giving you. ⁹The LORD will establish you as a people holy to himself, as he has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in his ways. ¹⁰And all the peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they shall be afraid of you. ¹¹And the LORD will make you abound in prosperity, in the fruit of your womb and in the fruit of your livestock and in the fruit of your ground, within the land that the LORD swore to your fathers to give you. ¹²The LORD will open to you his good treasury, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season and to bless all the work of your hands. And you shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow. ¹³And the LORD will make you the head and not the tail, and you shall only go up and not down, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you today, being careful to do them, ¹⁴and if you do not turn aside from any of the words that I command you today, to the right hand or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.

Understanding

Moses explained to the people of Israel the blessings they would receive if they obeyed God's commands and the consequences if they disobeyed. God promised them that if they are careful to do all the commands that God gave them, they would become the greatest among all the people. Those who were obedient to God would be blessed wherever they were and in whatever they did. God's blessings transcend space and time, coming upon all to live according to His Word. Also, if they obeyed God, they would be victorious in battle, have plenty of food, and become a people feared by the rest of the world. Their children and cattle would prosper and the land would become fruitful. Not only that, they would economically thrive and have amazing leaders (vv. 1-14).

Applying

Who is God?

God blesses those who are obedient. This is why we don't have to bow down to idols or use deceitful methods, struggling to earn a living. All we need to do is listen to God's Word and follow His instructions. Entrust your choices to the Word of God.

What is the lesson for me?

We need to think about how we are being obedient. We must not confuse attending church and going through the motions of faith as obedience to God. The obedience God desires from us is to make Him the center of our lives. Is God truly the center of your life?

Praying

Help me not to think that church attendance is obedience, and to have You as the center of my life.



Disobedience Leads to Curses

Even if you are a professional race car driver, ignoring traffic laws and driving however you want will lead to a devastating accident. God's Word is like a fence that guards your safety and joy.

Deuteronomy 1:1-18

Curses for Disobedience (15-35)

¹⁵“But if you will not obey the voice of the LORD your God or be careful to do all his commandments and his statutes that I command you today, then all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you. ¹⁶Cursed shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the field. ¹⁷Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. ¹⁸Cursed shall be the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground, the increase of your herds and the young of your flock. ¹⁹Cursed shall you be when you come in, and cursed shall you be when you go out. ²⁰“The LORD will send on you curses, confusion, and frustration in all that you undertake to do, until you are destroyed and perish quickly on account of the evil of your deeds, because you have forsaken me. ²¹The LORD will make the pestilence stick to you until he has consumed you off the land that you are entering to take possession of it. ²²The LORD will strike you with wasting disease and with fever, inflammation and fiery heat, and with drought and with blight and with mildew. They shall pursue you until you perish. ²³And the heavens over your head shall be bronze, and the earth under you shall be iron. ²⁴The LORD will make the rain of your land powder. From heaven dust shall come down on you until you are destroyed. ²⁵“The LORD will cause you to be defeated before your enemies. You shall go out one way against them and flee seven ways before them. And you shall be a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth. ²⁶And your dead body shall be food for all birds of the air and for the beasts of the earth, and there shall be no one to frighten them away. ²⁷The LORD will strike you with the boils of Egypt, and with tumors and scabs and itch, of which you cannot be healed. ²⁸The LORD will strike you with madness and blindness and confusion of mind, ²⁹and you shall grope at noonday, as the blind grope in darkness, and you shall not prosper in your ways. And you shall be only oppressed and robbed continually, and there shall be no one to help you. ³⁰You shall betroth a wife, but another man shall ravish her. You shall build a house, but you shall not dwell in it. You shall plant a vineyard, but you shall not enjoy its fruit. ³¹Your ox shall be slaughtered before your eyes, but you shall not eat any of it. Your donkey shall be seized before your face, but shall not be restored to you. Your sheep shall be given to your enemies, but there shall be no one to help you. ³²Your sons and your daughters shall be given to another people, while your eyes look on and fail with longing for them all day long, but you shall be helpless. ³³A nation that you have not known shall eat up the fruit of your ground and of all your labors, and you shall be only oppressed and crushed continually, ³⁴so that you are driven mad by the sights that your eyes see. ³⁵The LORD will strike you on the knees and on the legs with grievous boils of which you cannot be healed, from the sole of your foot to the crown of your head.

Understanding

The list of curses for disobeying God's commands is about four times longer (vv. 15-68) compared to the list of blessings for obeying God's commands (vv. 1-14). This was to emphasize that Israel would be blessed with many blessings when they obeyed, but would experience an abundance of curses when they disobeyed God's commands. It's not just a single individual that received the curses, but every part of life. Families, land, animals, every aspect of life was affected by the curse of disobedience. Moses emphasized the importance for Israel to be wholly obedient to God as His chosen people (vv. 15-35).

Applying

Who is God?

God gives blessings but also curses. This is punishment for those who are disobedient to God. There is no curse for obeying the Word and there is no blessing for disobedience. Will you still choose to be disobedient?

What is the lesson for me?

There are many people around us who are under a curse for their disobedience. Their only hope is accepting Jesus Christ, becoming a child of God, and walking in faith with Him. Who is a friend in need of rescue by the gospel?

Praying

Help me to live a life of obedience to Your Word.

The Pain of Disciplining Children

Our ancestors hit their children on the calves with a stick when they made mistakes. Even though they knew it hurt, the motivation was to direct their children towards the right path.

Deuteronomy 28:36-57

The Reason for Curses [36-57]

³⁶“The LORD will bring you and your king whom you set over you to a nation that neither you nor your fathers have known. And there you shall serve other gods of wood and stone. ³⁷And you shall become a horror, a proverb, and a byword among all the peoples where the LORD will lead you away. ³⁸You shall carry much seed into the field and shall gather in little, for the locust shall consume it. ³⁹You shall plant vineyards and dress them, but you shall neither drink of the wine nor gather the grapes, for the worm shall eat them. ⁴⁰You shall have olive trees throughout all your territory, but you shall not anoint yourself with the oil, for your olives shall drop off. ⁴¹You shall father sons and daughters, but they shall not be yours, for they shall go into captivity. ⁴²The cricket shall possess all your trees and the fruit of your ground. ⁴³The sojourner who is among you shall rise higher and higher above you, and you shall come down lower and lower. ⁴⁴He shall lend to you, and you shall not lend to him. He shall be the head, and you shall be the tail. ⁴⁵“All these curses shall come upon you and pursue you and overtake you till you are destroyed, because you did not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to keep his commandments and his statutes that he commanded you. ⁴⁶They shall be a sign and a wonder against you and your offspring forever. ⁴⁷Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joyfulness and gladness of heart, because of the abundance of all things, ⁴⁸therefore you shall serve your enemies whom the LORD will send against you, in hunger and thirst, in nakedness, and lacking everything. And he will put a yoke of iron on your neck until he has destroyed you. ⁴⁹The LORD will bring a nation against you from far away, from the end of the earth, swooping down like the eagle, a nation whose language you do not understand, ⁵⁰a hard-faced nation who shall not respect the old or show mercy to the young. ⁵¹It shall eat the offspring of your cattle and the fruit of your ground, until you are destroyed; it also shall not leave you grain, wine, or oil, the increase of your herds or the young of your flock, until they have caused you to perish. ⁵²“They shall besiege you in all your towns, until your high and fortified walls, in which you trusted, come down throughout all your land. And they shall besiege you in all your towns throughout all your land, which the LORD your God has given you. ⁵³And you shall eat the fruit of your womb, the flesh of your sons and daughters, whom the LORD your God has given you, in the siege and in the distress with which your enemies shall distress you. ⁵⁴The man who is the most tender and refined among you will begrudge food to his brother, to the wife he embraces, and to the last of the children whom he has left, ⁵⁵so that he will not give to any of them any of the flesh of his children whom he is eating, because he has nothing else left, in the siege and in the distress with which your enemy shall distress you in all your towns. ⁵⁶The most tender and refined woman among you, who would not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground because she is so delicate and tender, will begrudge to the husband she embraces, to her son and to her daughter, ⁵⁷her afterbirth that comes out from between her feet and her children whom she bears, because lacking everything she will eat them secretly, in the siege and in the distress with which your enemy shall distress you in your towns.

Understanding

Moses warned that God’s curse would come upon the land the planters and their children work and turn it into something they never have imagined. Though Israel would bear sons and daughters, they would be captives of other nations, becoming slaves and experiencing suffering under the rule of outsiders. They would also plant vineyards and dress them, but the grapes would not grow to maturity, and the harvest they reaped would be taken by other nations. In the end, Israel would starve and eat their own children, and the most tender person will turn violent. Moses was speaking of these sickening curses to always be a sign and omen that educates people who believe in God (vv. 36-57).

Applying

Who is God?

God held up a staff of curses while desiring that Israel turn towards the right path. Though it may be hard to see God’s love in the midst of immense suffering, we must understand that all these curses were to show Israel that God was not giving up on them and longed for their return to Him. Have you discovered the love behind His discipline?

What is the lesson for me?

Even the most tender and kind people lose their humanity when suffering with the curse of their disobedience. God’s curse is not something we can endure. Repent of sin and become a purified child of God, lest you become a person under the curse of God.

Praying

Help me to always hear Your Word, and help me to understand Your will.

When You are Far from God

Just as it gets colder when you get further from a fire, it is natural to feel anxious, afraid, and fearful when we move further away by disobeying God, the source of joy.

Deuteronomy 28:58-68

The Curse of Disobedience (58-68)

⁵⁸“If you are not careful to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and awesome name, the LORD your God, ⁵⁹then the LORD will bring on you and your offspring extraordinary afflictions, afflictions severe and lasting, and sicknesses grievous and lasting. ⁶⁰And he will bring upon you again all the diseases of Egypt, of which you were afraid, and they shall cling to you. ⁶¹Every sickness also and every affliction that is not recorded in the book of this law, the LORD will bring upon you, until you are destroyed. ⁶²Whereas you were as numerous as the stars of heaven, you shall be left few in number, because you did not obey the voice of the LORD your God. ⁶³And as the LORD took delight in doing you good and multiplying you, so the LORD will take delight in bringing ruin upon you and destroying you. And you shall be plucked off the land that you are entering to take possession of it. ⁶⁴“And the LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other, and there you shall serve other gods of wood and stone, which neither you nor your fathers have known. ⁶⁵And among these nations you shall find no respite, and there shall be no resting place for the sole of your foot, but the LORD will give you there a trembling heart and failing eyes and a languishing soul. ⁶⁶Your life shall hang in doubt before you. Night and day you shall be in dread and have no assurance of your life. ⁶⁷In the morning you shall say, ‘If only it were evening!’ and at evening you shall say, ‘If only it were morning!’ because of the dread that your heart shall feel, and the sights that your eyes shall see. ⁶⁸And the LORD will bring you back in ships to Egypt, a journey that I promised that you should never make again; and there you shall offer yourselves for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but there will be no buyer.”

Understanding

God nullified the blessings given to the ones who are disobedient in Israel. Israel was protected from the diseases and disasters that others were plagued with when not in rebellion against God. However, when they were disobedient, those diseases and disasters also destroyed them. God chased them out of safety and the land that He had given them only to become slaves of other nations. Their lives were full of fear and instability, leading to despair (vv. 58-68).

Applying

Who is God?

God warned that terrifying disasters would befall those who treated his word carelessly, and the wounds inflicted on them would endure and not heal easily. The disasters would be so fierce that they would leave everything in ruins. Let us therefore think seriously how we are responding to God's word.

What is the lesson for me?

God would not even let the Israelites be sold back to Egypt as slaves. If a heavenly citizen turns their back on God, their life will be no better than the beasts of the field. They will be unprotected, and they will even hope to never wake again. Let's not forget that if we lose God we will also lose all of our hope and strength to live.

Praying

Help my heart not be far away from You.

Looking Back on God's Grace

As you grow older, there will be many times you look back at your life with regret. However, the Scripture passage for today shows how Israel's time in the desert was not one for regret, but for gratitude. They reflect gratefully because their time in the desert was about to end.

Deuteronomy 29:1-13

Moses Proclaiming God's Guidance (1-8)

¹ These are the words of the covenant that the LORD commanded Moses to make with the people of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the covenant that he had made with them at Horeb. ² And Moses summoned all Israel and said to them: "You have seen all that the LORD did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land, ³the great trials that your eyes saw, the signs, and those great wonders. ⁴But to this day the LORD has not given you a heart to understand or eyes to see or ears to hear. ⁵I have led you forty years in the wilderness. Your clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandals have not worn off your feet. ⁶You have not eaten bread, and you have not drunk wine or strong drink, that you may know that I am the LORD your God. ⁷And when you came to this place, Sihon the king of Heshbon and Og the king of Bashan came out against us to battle, but we defeated them. ⁸We took their land and gave it for an inheritance to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of the Manassites.

Making a New Covenant with God (9-13)

⁹Therefore keep the words of this covenant and do them, that you may prosper in all that you do. ¹⁰"You are standing today, all of you, before the LORD your God: the heads of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, all the men of Israel, ¹¹your little ones, your wives, and the sojourner who is in your camp, from the one who chops your wood to the one who draws your water, ¹²so that you may enter into the sworn covenant of the LORD your God, which the LORD your God is making with you today, ¹³that he may establish you today as his people, and that he may be your God, as he promised you, and as he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

Understanding

Israel was witness to many miraculous works of God after leaving Egypt then wandering through desert. They witnessed miracles and did not have to worry about life's essentials. They gained land east of the Jordan through battle before entering Canaan. However, despite all these amazing experiences, they did not fully understand God's salvation and walk in disobedience (vv. 1-9). God called many people to the desert in Moab to make another covenant with them. The members of the covenant community were not only prominent leaders, elders, chiefs, and men. Those that were often considered 'insignificant', like women, children, foreigners, and slaves, were also including. God considers everyone in the covenant community who are obedient as His children. God is faithful to keep the promises that He made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (vv. 10-13).

Applying

Who is God?

God continually guides us. Even when Israel habitually made mistakes, He never let go of them and faithfully guiding them. Do you feel God's hand guiding you?

What is the lesson for me?

Israel made a new covenant with God. They had a new opportunity to live as God's people. What past mistakes are keeping you from living a new life of faith? The opportunity to rise into a new life with God is His gift to you. Do not waste this opportunity.

Praying

Thank You for guiding a weak, lacking individual as myself. I pray that I would be a child who makes You happy.

It Is Never Alright

The voice that tell us it's ok to do whatever feels right is not God's but rather Satan's. Because of His love for us, when we do things that are harmful for us, He will warn us to stay away from such things.

Deuteronomy 29:14-29

Those Who Do Not Keep the Covenant (14-21)

¹⁴It is not with you alone that I am making this sworn covenant, ¹⁵but with whoever is standing here with us today before the LORD our God, and with whoever is not here with us today. ¹⁶“You know how we lived in the land of Egypt, and how we came through the midst of the nations through which you passed. ¹⁷And you have seen their detestable things, their idols of wood and stone, of silver and gold, which were among them. ¹⁸Beware lest there be among you a man or woman or clan or tribe whose heart is turning away today from the LORD our God to go and serve the gods of those nations. Beware lest there be among you a root bearing poisonous and bitter fruit, ¹⁹one who, when he hears the words of this sworn covenant, blesses himself in his heart, saying, ‘I shall be safe, though I walk in the stubbornness of my heart.’ This will lead to the sweeping away of moist and dry alike. ²⁰The LORD will not be willing to forgive him, but rather the anger of the LORD and his jealousy will smoke against that man, and the curses written in this book will settle upon him, and the LORD will blot out his name from under heaven. ²¹And the LORD will single him out from all the tribes of Israel for calamity, in accordance with all the curses of the covenant written in this Book of the Law.

The Reason for Curses (22-29)

²²And the next generation, your children who rise up after you, and the foreigner who comes from a far land, will say, when they see the afflictions of that land and the sicknesses with which the LORD has made it sick—²³the whole land burned out with brimstone and salt, nothing sown and nothing growing, where no plant can sprout, an overthrow like that of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, which the LORD overthrew in his anger and wrath—²⁴all the nations will say, ‘Why has the LORD done thus to this land? What caused the heat of this great anger?’ ²⁵Then people will say, ‘It is because they abandoned the covenant of the LORD, the God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them out of the land of Egypt, ²⁶and went and served other gods and worshiped them, gods whom they had not known and whom he had not allotted to them. ²⁷Therefore the anger of the LORD was kindled against this land, bringing upon it all the curses written in this book, ²⁸and the LORD uprooted them from their land in anger and fury and great wrath, and cast them into another land, as they are this day.’ ²⁹“The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.

Understanding

Moses tells the people of Israel that it is not just with those who are present that God is making this new covenant with. God is making a covenant with those who are not there yet: the descendants. God commissioned Israel make sure they understood and kept this covenant. The core of the covenant is to have no other gods other than God. They are warned that if they do worship idols, then curses will come down upon them (vv. 14-21). Children and foreigners will see God's curses that come as a result from disobeying Him. Israel will serve as a witness to them as to what happens when they break a covenant made with God. There are things God has not spoken to us about, but He made it clear that He will bless us when we keep the covenant and bring curses for disobedience (vv. 22-29).

Applying

Who is God?

God made a covenant with all of Israel, and will keep His promises to all the descendants. Begin walking in the ways of obedience today so that you will not become a model of disobedience and be cursed in the light of God's redemptive history.

What is the lesson for me?

Our hearts are sinful, so to live a life in pursuit of what our hearts desire is to live sinfully. That is why we need to live according to God's ways. Do not fall for Satan's lie that you can live however you want. Are there things in your life that make God annoyed? Then do not do it.

Praying

Help me not to take Your warnings lightly and to not live life the way I want.

Two Types of Ways

If there were two roads in front of you, a road of life and a road of death, which one would you choose? Any reasonable person would definitely choose the road of life. The problem is that people don't choose that road many times.

Deuteronomy 30:1-20

God Provides the Path to Repentance (1-10)

¹"And when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the LORD your God has driven you, ²and return to the LORD your God, you and your children, and obey his voice in all that I command you today, with all your heart and with all your soul, ³then the LORD your God will restore your fortunes and have mercy on you, and he will gather you again from all the peoples where the LORD your God has scattered you. ⁴If your outcasts are in the uttermost parts of heaven, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there he will take you. ⁵And the LORD your God will bring you into the land that your fathers possessed, that you may possess it. And he will make you more prosperous and numerous than your fathers. ⁶And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live. ⁷And the LORD your God will put all these curses on your foes and enemies who persecuted you. ⁸And you shall again obey the voice of the LORD and keep all his commandments that I command you today. ⁹The LORD your God will make you abundantly prosperous in all the work of your hand, in the fruit of your womb and in the fruit of your cattle and in the fruit of your ground. For the LORD will again take delight in prospering you, as he took delight in your fathers, ¹⁰when you obey the voice of the LORD your God, to keep his commandments and his statutes that are written in this Book of the Law, when you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

God Demands a Choice (11-20)

¹¹"For this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. ¹²It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' ¹³Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' ¹⁴But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it. ¹⁵"See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil. ¹⁶If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I command you today, by loving the LORD your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his rules, then you shall live and multiply, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. ¹⁷But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, ¹⁸I declare to you today, that you shall surely perish. You shall not live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess. ¹⁹I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live, ²⁰loving the LORD your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for he is your life and length of days, that you may dwell in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them."

Understanding

Through Moses, God taught the people of Israel, who were already nervous about God's curses, how He could resolve all of their mistakes at once. They needed to return to God, serve Him with all of the heart and strength, and to obey God's Words and Commands. Only when that happened, God would restore the people of Israel, broken down by curses, and bless them abundantly (vv. 1-10). God told Israel that there were two roads, one leading to life and blessings, and another leading to death and destruction. God asks them to choose the first. If Israel chose to obey God's Word with all their heart, and not forsake Him, they would walk on the road towards life and blessings (vv. 11-20).

Applying

Who is God?

God graciously forgives those who have made mistakes. Then, through the Holy Spirit, He provides the power to not sin again. If there is a sin that you need forgiveness for, offer a prayer of repentance on your knees.

What is the lesson for me?

To love God with all your heart means that your heart is not divided. You cannot have a heart that is on the road of life and also on the one to death. Are your daily actions two-faced? If they are, then you are on the road to death. Turn your face away from.

Praying

Help me to love and follow You, the Restorer of our faith and Giver of grace. the road to death.

Be Strong and Courageous

It is easy to be unsettled when there is a change in leadership. However, Israel did not have to worry when their leaders changed. This is because God is with the leaders He appoints.

Deuteronomy 31:1-13

Joshua Succeeds Moses (1-13)

¹So Moses continued to speak these words to all Israel. ²And he said to them, "I am ¹²⁰ years old today. I am no longer able to go out and come in. The LORD has said to me, 'You shall not go over this Jordan.' ³The LORD your God himself will go over before you. He will destroy these nations before you, so that you shall dispossess them, and Joshua will go over at your head, as the LORD has spoken. ⁴And the LORD will do to them as he did to Sihon and Og, the kings of the Amorites, and to their land, when he destroyed them. ⁵And the LORD will give them over to you, and you shall do to them according to the whole commandment that I have commanded you. ⁶Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the LORD your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you." ⁷Then Moses summoned Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, "Be strong and courageous, for you shall go with this people into the land that the LORD has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall put them in possession of it. ⁸It is the LORD who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed." ⁹Then Moses wrote this law and gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi, who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and to all the elders of Israel. ¹⁰And Moses commanded them, "At the end of every seven years, at the set time in the year of release, at the Feast of Booths, ¹¹when all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God at the place that he will choose, you shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing. ¹²Assemble the people, men, women, and little ones, and the sojourner within your towns, that they may hear and learn to fear the LORD your God, and be careful to do all the words of this law, ¹³and that their children, who have not known it, may hear and learn to fear the LORD your God, as long as you live in the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess."

Understanding

Although Moses was a great leader, he could not lead Israel forever. Moses announces that Joshua will succeed him as Israel's leader. Now, Joshua was going to lead Israel into Canaan and taking it. Moses encouraged Joshua to 'be strong and courageous' in heart and to not fear or worried. God would continue to help Joshua as He had done with Moses. God would lead; Israel would follow (vv. 1-8). Moses wrote down God's commands, then had the priests and elders read them aloud and instructed them to teach the commands to the people. Moses would be gone, but the Word of God would remain and guide them (vv. 9-13).

Applying

Who is God?

God appoints great leaders to train us. He called the well-trained Moses to lead Israel. Through him, God worked many miracles and delivered the Law. Are you grateful to God for sending you great teachers? Are you listening to them?

What is the lesson for me?

Moses said that since God will continue to be with you as you go to Canaan, that you be strong and courageous and not to fear. With God, you can do anything that you are unable to do in your own strength. Follow God and don't worry.

Praying

Help me to trust You and not be afraid of anything or any situation.



A Beautiful Succession

How will you want to stand on your final days? Even at the end of life, we need to be obedient people who follow God's will and not our own selfishness.

Deuteronomy 31:14-29

Learn a Song (14-22)

¹⁴And the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, the days approach when you must die. Call Joshua and present yourselves in the tent of meeting, that I may commission him." And Moses and Joshua went and presented themselves in the tent of meeting. ¹⁵And the LORD appeared in the tent in a pillar of cloud. And the pillar of cloud stood over the entrance of the tent. ¹⁶And the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, you are about to lie down with your fathers. Then this people will rise and whore after the foreign gods among them in the land that they are entering, and they will forsake me and break my covenant that I have made with them. ¹⁷Then my anger will be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them and hide my face from them, and they will be devoured. And many evils and troubles will come upon them, so that they will say in that day, 'Have not these evils come upon us because our God is not among us?' ¹⁸And I will surely hide my face in that day because of all the evil that they have done, because they have turned to other gods. ¹⁹"Now therefore write this song and teach it to the people of Israel. Put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me against the people of Israel. ²⁰For when I have brought them into the land flowing with milk and honey, which I swore to give to their fathers, and they have eaten and are full and grown fat, they will turn to other gods and serve them, and despise me and break my covenant. ²¹And when many evils and troubles have come upon them, this song shall confront them as a witness (for it will live unforgotten in the mouths of their offspring). For I know what they are inclined to do even today, before I have brought them into the land that I swore to give." ²²So Moses wrote this song the same day and taught it to the people of Israel.

God's Next Anointed One (23-29)

²³And the LORD commissioned Joshua the son of Nun and said, "Be strong and courageous, for you shall bring the people of Israel into the land that I swore to give them. I will be with you." ²⁴When Moses had finished writing the words of this law in a book to the very end, ²⁵Moses commanded the Levites who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, ²⁶"Take this Book of the Law and put it by the side of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there for a witness against you. ²⁷For I know how rebellious and stubborn you are. Behold, even today while I am yet alive with you, you have been rebellious against the LORD. How much more after my death! ²⁸Assemble to 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. ²⁹For I know that after my death you will surely act corruptly and turn aside from the way that I have commanded you. And in the days to come evil will befall you, because you will do what is evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking him to anger through the work of your hands."

Understanding

Moses' final days were approaching. God told Moses to be prepared for his last days. God taught Israel a song to sing in remembrance of the importance of the covenant after Moses was gone. A song is something most people can easily remember so this was a way to never forget what God had promised. The song would recall God's faithfulness during the 40 years in the desert (vv. 14-22). The next leader after Moses was Joshua. While preparing for Moses' retirement, God calls Joshua. Moses writes everything God had told him in a book. Then, He called the people and prepared them to hear the Words. Up to the end, Moses was placed as a messenger of God's Word (vv. 23-29).

Applying

Who is God?

God is prepared. He creates a song for Israel to not fall back into sin after Moses passes away. God already knows what will happen tomorrow; we can only guess. Do you feel God's providence?

What is the lesson for me?

We must faithfully love God who is faithful. God would guide Israel into the land of Canaan as he had promised, but the stubborn Israelites would abandon God and follow foreign idols. Do we not forget God's grace too easily when our situation improves even just a little?

Praying

Allow Your words to be a song that never leaves my lips.

An Immortal Song

There are songs that stand the test of time in our hearts. The song Moses sang for Israel is that kind of song. In this song, we can feel God's love and Israel's cold betrayal.

Deuteronomy 31:30-32:14

Praise God's Glory (30-32:6)

³⁰Then Moses spoke the words of this song until they were finished, in the ears of all the assembly of Israel: ¹"Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak, and let the earth hear the words of my mouth. ²May my teaching drop as the rain, my speech distill as the dew, like gentle rain upon the tender grass, and like showers upon the herb. ³For I will proclaim the name of the LORD; ascribe greatness to our God! ⁴"The Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he. ⁵They have dealt corruptly with him; they are no longer his children because they are blemished; they are a crooked and twisted generation. ⁶Do you thus repay the LORD, you foolish and senseless people? Is not he your father, who created you, who made you and established you?

Praise God's Faithfulness (7-14)

⁷Remember the days of old; consider the years of many generations; ask your father, and he will show you, your elders, and they will tell you. ⁸When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God. ⁹But the LORD's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage. ¹⁰"He found him in a desert land, and in the howling waste of the wilderness; he encircled him, he cared for him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. ¹¹Like an eagle that stirs up its nest, that flutters over its young, spreading out its wings, catching them, bearing them on its pinions, ¹²the LORD alone guided him, no foreign god was with him. ¹³He made him ride on the high places of the land, and he ate the produce of the field, and he suckled him with honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock. ¹⁴Curds from the herd, and milk from the flock, with fat of lambs, rams of Bashan and goats, with the very finest of the wheat—and you drank foaming wine made from the blood of the grape.

Understanding

Moses sang a song for Israel. He desired for Israel to know forever they had a responsibility for obeying God and that they would be punished for disobedience. Moses praised God by using the heavens and earth as witnesses. As the rain gave life to the grass, God's Word is the source of true life. Moses also proclaims God is faithful as a rock. But the people of Israel were foolish and corrupt, leaving God, the source of life (vv. 1-6). Moses called on Israel to look upon their past. God, the Creator of heaven and earth, chose them as His people among all the nations, and protected them as their Father. He also kept them safe and gave them finest food and clothing (vv. 7-14).

Applying

Who is God?

God's Word is like rain that gives life to our dry, weary souls. However, even as they are singing a song about it, they don't want to place it in their hearts. Are you also unwilling to place God's Word in your heart?

What is the lesson for me?

Israel forgot about God's grace, rejected and betrayed Him. Have you also forgotten about the grace God has poured out on you in love, and now easily complain or resent God? Repent of your past behavior and give God praise and thanksgiving.

Praying

Help me to sing of Your love today.

Do Not Be Corrupted by Prosperity

God looked after and fed the Israelites, but once their stomachs were filled they forgot God's grace, and abandoned the Rock of their salvation.

Deuteronomy 32:15-33

The People Who Abandoned God (15-33)

¹⁵“But Jeshurun grew fat, and kicked; you grew fat, stout, and sleek; then he forsook God who made him and scoffed at the Rock of his salvation. ¹⁶They stirred him to jealousy with strange gods; with abominations they provoked him to anger. ¹⁷They sacrificed to demons that were no gods, to gods they had never known, to new gods that had come recently, whom your fathers had never dreaded. ¹⁸You were unmindful of the Rock that bore you, and you forgot the God who gave you birth. ¹⁹“The LORD saw it and spurned them, because of the provocation of his sons and his daughters. ²⁰And he said, ‘I will hide my face from them; I will see what their end will be, for they are a perverse generation, children in whom is no faithfulness. ²¹They have made me jealous with what is no god; they have provoked me to anger with their idols. So I will make them jealous with those who are no people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation. ²²For a fire is kindled by my anger, and it burns to the depths of Sheol, devours the earth and its increase, and sets on fire the foundations of the mountains. ²³“And I will heap disasters upon them; I will spend my arrows on them; ²⁴they shall be wasted with hunger, and devoured by plague and poisonous pestilence; I will send the teeth of beasts against them, with the venom of things that crawl in the dust. ²⁵Outdoors the sword shall bereave, and indoors terror, for young man and woman alike, the nursing child with the man of gray hairs. ²⁶I would have said, ‘I will cut them to pieces; I will wipe them from human memory,’ ²⁷had I not feared provocation by the enemy, lest their adversaries should misunderstand, lest they should say, ‘Our hand is triumphant, it was not the LORD who did all this.’” ²⁸“For they are a nation void of counsel, and there is no understanding in them. ²⁹If they were wise, they would understand this; they would discern their latter end! ³⁰How could one have chased a thousand, and two have put ten thousand to flight, unless their Rock had sold them, and the LORD had given them up? ³¹For their rock is not as our Rock; our enemies are by themselves. ³²For their vine comes from the vine of Sodom and from the fields of Gomorrah; their grapes are grapes of poison; their clusters are bitter; ³³their wine is the poison of serpents and the cruel venom of asps.

Understanding

God gave Israel the best food to eat and an abundant life in Canaan. However, Israel, in the midst of prosperity that God had given, betrayed God. God is like the parent that gave birth to and raised Israel; He is the rock that kept them safe. However, Israel betrayed God, and began to worship disgusting idols. This was an abominable act of betrayal that made God angry. Because Israel abandoned God, He will abandon them. Israel's abundance was God's gift to them. Under God's protection, everything was abundant. Abandoning God, the Rock, lead to starvation, disease, war, and destruction (vv. 15-33).

Applying

Who is God?

Vv. 19-21 God accused the Israelites of their sin. The people unilaterally abandoned God, who enjoyed a relationship with them as a parent, husband and lover. Enraged, God exposed the truth about them and made them shudder at the thought of the emptiness of a life without God. The only way to life is to read and take heed of God's just accusation, and take steps to prevent it being brought against us in advance.

What is the lesson for me?

Vv. 15-18 We must be careful not to stop being grateful when we are doing well and our stomachs are full. The Israelites clung to God when things were hard, but when life improved they abandoned God, as if forgetting they had ever relied on him. Are we following only God, our saviour and the Lord of our lives, even though times may be difficult?

Praying

I love You, my Rock and my Fortress. Help me build my life on the foundation of Your Word.

Know that I am He

This is the summary of Moses' song in one sentence: "There is only God!" Only the Lord God can raise up Israel once again.

Deuteronomy 32:34-52

Judgement and Salvation (34-43)

³⁴"Is not this laid up in store with me, sealed up in my treasures? ³⁵Vengeance is mine, and recompense, for the time when their foot shall slip; for the day of their calamity is at hand, and their doom comes swiftly.' ³⁶For the LORD will vindicate his people and have compassion on his servants, when he sees that their power is gone and there is none remaining, bond or free. ³⁷Then he will say, 'Where are their gods, the rock in which they took refuge, ³⁸who ate 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! ³⁹"See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god beside me; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand. ⁴⁰For I lift up my hand to heaven and swear, As I live forever, ⁴¹if I sharpen my flashing sword and my hand takes hold on judgment, I will take vengeance on my adversaries and will repay those who hate me. ⁴²I will make my arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh— with the blood of the slain and the captives, from the long-haired heads of the enemy.' ⁴³"Rejoice with him, O heavens; bow down to him, all gods, for he avenges the blood of his children and takes vengeance on his adversaries. He repays those who hate him and cleanses his people's land."

Final Days of Moses (44-52)

⁴⁴Moses came and recited all the words of this song in the hearing of the people, he and Joshua the son of Nun. ⁴⁵And when Moses had finished speaking all these words to all Israel, ⁴⁶he said to them, "Take to heart all the words by which I am warning you today, that you may command them to your children, that they may be careful to do all the words of this law. ⁴⁷For it is no empty word for you, but your very life, and by this word you shall live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess." ⁴⁸That very day the LORD spoke to Moses, ⁴⁹"Go up this mountain of the Abarim, Mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, opposite Jericho, and view the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the people of Israel for a possession. ⁵⁰And die on the mountain which you go up, and be gathered to your people, as Aaron your brother died in Mount Hor and was gathered to his people, ⁵¹because you broke faith with me in the midst of the people of Israel at the waters of Meribah-kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin, and because you did not treat me as holy in the midst of the people of Israel. ⁵²For you shall see the land before you, but you shall not go there, into the land that I am giving to the people of Israel."

Understanding

God used enemies punish Israel for their sins. He also punished their enemies, who thought they were victorious because of their own strength. The reason God used their enemies to punish Israel was to not bring destruction upon them, but to motivate them to trust Him properly (vv. 34-43). Moses told the people to think deeply about the song that he had sung. If they heard and understood the meaning of the song correctly, they would no longer disobey God. Since Moses could not enter Canaan before he died, he went up to Mount Nebo. The fact that even a great leader such as Moses could not enter the Promised Land because of disobedience was a stern warning for Israel (vv. 44-52).

Applying

Who is God?

God used the enemies of Israel to punish them for their sins as a way to turn their hearts back to Him. God punishes us not because He enjoys it, but because He wants us to be changed. If you are being punished for a sin, take it and use it to get your heart right with God.

What is the lesson for me?

Israel needed to know that their God was incomparable to any other god in the world. All other gods are fake. Only God is real. Do you hear the Spirit's voice to recognize the true God and not be confused about what's real or not?

Praying

I want to know You. I want to see only You.

Moses' Blessing

After warning the Israelites against their stubbornness, Moses blessed each of the tribes of Israel. Through his blessings, Moses confessed that the happiness of the community depended on God.

Deuteronomy 33:1-17

Moses Asks for Israel to be Blessed (1-17)

¹This is the blessing with which Moses the man of God blessed the people of Israel before his death. ²He said, "The LORD came from Sinai and dawned from Seir upon us; he shone forth from Mount Paran; he came from the ten thousands of holy ones, with flaming fire at his right hand. ³Yes, he loved his people, all his holy ones were in his hand; so they followed in your steps, receiving direction from you, ⁴when Moses commanded us a law, as a possession for the assembly of Jacob. ⁵Thus the LORD became king in Jeshurun, when the heads of the people were gathered, all the tribes of Israel together. ⁶"Let Reuben live, and not die, but let his men be few." ⁷And this he said of Judah: "Hear, O LORD, the voice of Judah, and bring him in to his people. With your hands contend for him, and be a help against his adversaries." ⁸And of Levi he said, "Give to Levi your Thummim, and your Urim to your godly one, whom you tested at Massah, with whom you quarreled at the waters of Meribah; ⁹who said of his father and mother, 'I regard them not'; he disowned his brothers and ignored his children. For they observed your word and kept your covenant. ¹⁰They will teach Jacob your rules and Israel your law; they shall put incense before you and whole burnt offerings on your altar. ¹¹Bless, O LORD, his substance, and accept the work of his hands; crush the loins of his adversaries, of those who hate him, that they rise not again." ¹²Of Benjamin he said, "The beloved of the LORD dwells in safety. The High God surrounds him all day long, and dwells between his shoulders." ¹³And of Joseph he said, "Blessed by the LORD be his land, with the choicest gifts of heaven above, and of the deep that crouches beneath, ¹⁴with the choicest fruits of the sun and the rich yield of the months, ¹⁵with the finest produce of the ancient mountains and the abundance of the everlasting hills, ¹⁶with the best gifts of the earth and its fullness and the favor of him who dwells in the bush. May these rest on the head of Joseph, on the pate of him who is prince among his brothers. ¹⁷A firstborn bull—he has majesty, and his horns are the horns of a wild ox; with them he shall gore the peoples, all of them, to the ends of the earth; they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh."

Understanding

Moses did not let go of blessings until the end. He sang a song of blessing to Israel, even though they were the source of frustration for forty years in the desert. He blessed the tribe of Reuben that they would not decrease in number. He blessed the tribe of Judah that God will hear and answer their prayers. Moses blessed the tribe of Levi that God's Word and Covenant would be with them forever (vv. 1-11). Moses' blessings then focused on the tribe of Benjamin and the two tribes of Joseph: Ephraim and Manasseh. God blessed the tribe of Benjamin that they would receive God's love. God blessed the two tribes of Joseph that they would be blessed by the earth and be fruitful (vv. 12-17).

Applying

Who is God?

God desires to bless us. God gives us specific blessings. God's blessings reveal themselves in love, grace, Scripture, and prayer. What is God's blessing for you? Instead of complaining, figure out what blessing God has given to you.

What is the lesson for me?

What does the language of your life say the most? Moses never forgot the words of blessing up to the end. What kind of words do you most often speak to your friends and family? Our lips should be speaking words of blessing. Bless those you meet today.

Praying

Lord, help me to speak words of blessing to people I meet today

God is Blessing

Money, fame, health, wisdom...among all these blessings, isn't the greatest one having the Giver of all these, God, by our side?

Deuteronomy 33:18-29

Moses Asks for Blessings (18-25)

¹⁸And of Zebulun he said, "Rejoice, Zebulun, in your going out, and Issachar, in your tents. ¹⁹They shall call peoples to their mountain; there they offer right sacrifices; for they draw from the abundance of the seas and the hidden treasures of the sand." ²⁰And of Gad he said, "Blessed be he who enlarges Gad! Gad crouches like a lion; he tears off arm and scalp. ²¹He chose the best of the land for himself, for there a commander's portion was reserved; and he came with the heads of the people, with Israel he executed the justice of the LORD, and his judgments for Israel." ²²And of Dan he said, "Dan is a lion's cub that leaps from Bashan." ²³And of Naphtali he said, "O Naphtali, sated with favor, and full of the blessing of the LORD, possess the lake and the south." ²⁴And of Asher he said, "Most blessed of sons be Asher; let him be the favorite of his brothers, and let him dip his foot in oil. ²⁵Your bars shall be iron and bronze, and as your days, so shall your strength be.

God, the Source of All Blessings

²⁶"There is none like God, O Jeshurun, who rides through the heavens to your help, through the skies in his majesty. ²⁷The eternal God is your dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms. And he thrust out the enemy before you and said, 'Destroy.' ²⁸So Israel lived in safety, Jacob lived alone, in a land of grain and wine, whose heavens drop down dew. ²⁹Happy are you, O Israel! Who is like you, a people saved by the LORD, the shield of your help, and the sword of your triumph! Your enemies shall come fawning to you, and you shall tread upon their backs."

Understanding

Although the details of each blessing for each tribe were different, Moses encouraged the whole community of Israel that God would provide all that they needed to live in Canaan. Moses blessed the tribe of Zebulun that they would rejoice in God and become abundant sea traders. Moses blessed the tribe of Gad that their land would be blessed and that they would execute justice. Moses blessed the tribe of Asher that their land would be fertile and they would love their brothers (vv. 18-25). Moses professed that all these blessings were only made possible through God. Moses confessed that the blessing of survival, safety, abundance, worship, education, and happiness were all because of God. God, the source of every blessing, is our God (vv. 26-29).

Applying

Who is God?

There is no one like God. He is our shelter and our Savior. We cannot forget that since He is the source of our joy, everything begins with Him being with us. Are you with God?

What is the lesson for me?

Though Moses was a great leader, he knew his limitations. That is why he prayed for God to help and bless the people of Israel. God blesses us when we know our limitations and ask for His help. Confess to God, "Lord, I am lacking. Take hold of my life."

Praying

Lord, I confess that You provide everything I need, and I pray for my friends and family to know the joy that comes from finding You.

A Great Legacy

There is a saying that "when tigers die, they leave their leather, and when people die, they leave their name." What is the great legacy that Moses, the great leader of Israel, left behind?

Deuteronomy 34:1-12

The Death of Moses (1-8)

¹Then Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is opposite Jericho. And the LORD showed him all the land, Gilead as far as Dan, ²all Naphtali, the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the western sea, ³the Negeb, and the Plain, that is, the Valley of Jericho the city of palm trees, as far as Zoar. ⁴And the LORD said to him, "This is the land of which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, 'I will give it to your offspring.' I have let you see it with your eyes, but you shall not go over there." ⁵So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD, ⁶and he buried him in the valley in the land of Moab opposite Beth-peor; but no one knows the place of his burial to this day. ⁷Moses was ¹²⁰ years old when he died. His eye was undimmed, and his vigor unabated. ⁸And the people of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days. Then the days of weeping and mourning for Moses were ended.

Moses the Leader (9-12)

⁹And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him. So the people of Israel obeyed him and did as the LORD had commanded Moses. ¹⁰And there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, ¹¹none like him for all the signs and the wonders that the LORD sent him to do in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land, ¹²and for all the mighty power and all the great deeds of terror that Moses did in the sight of all Israel.

Understanding

Moses died while seeing the Promised Land right in front of him. It was most likely because Moses disobeyed God in Meribah (Deut. 20: 1-13), that he was not able to enter the Promised Land. However, God allowed Moses' eyes to be perfectly healthy until the end so that he could clearly see the Promised Land (vv. 1-8). There is no greater leader in Israel's history than Moses. He was a man of great skill who was able to fulfill God's call (to bringing Israel out of Egypt). He was also a man who shared in a uniquely intimate relationship with God. Though Joshua became the new leader of Israel after Moses, the truth is Israel had one great leader (vv. 9-12).

Applying

Who is God?



Don't you want to live a life God recognizes. The best model for a life recognized by God is Moses. Moses is the only prophet who knew the Lord face to face. We can become like Moses. We can come face to face with God in Jesus Christ. Follow Jesus Christ in your heart and become a person recognized by God.

What is the lesson for me?

Moses' legacy is not Canaan, but the Lord God who led him to Canaan. If there is a precious legacy for us to keep and proclaim, it is the gospel that we have become children of God through Jesus Christ. Do you consider the gospel as your precious legacy?


Praying

Help me to live my life loving You and to receive guidance from the Word and the Spirit.



O God above me,
God who dwellest in light unapproachable,
teach me, I beseech Thee,
that even my highest thoughts of Thee are
but dim and distant shadowings of Thy transcendent glory.

Teach me that if Thou art in nature,
still more art Thou greater than nature.
Teach me that if Thou art in my heart,
still more art Thou greater than my heart.
Let my soul rejoice in Thy mysterious greatness.



Let me take refuge in the thought that
Thou art utterly beyond me,
beyond the sweep of my imagination,
beyond the comprehension of my mind,
Thy judgements being unsearchable and
Thy ways past finding out.

_ John Baillie, <A Diary of Private Prayer>



GQS

Group QT Sharing

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May _ Joyful QT

- ▶ GQS is the weekly Bible Study material aligned with the QTs for a week.
- ▶ GQS is consistent with the core verses from the scripture passage.
- ▶ GQS is designed to facilitate conversation within small group settings and relates to the scripture passages from the weekday QT.

 Reading : The selected scripture reading is easy to manage and to be read aloud.


 Observation : Probing, reflective questions allow for simple interpretation of the text.

 Understanding : The provided questions regarding comprehension and application have a varying degree of depth and simplicity.

 Applying : Strategies for practical application to life are provided.

● Scripture quotations and footnotes are taken from the ESV® Study Bible
(The Holy Bible, English Standard Version©)

01 Despite the Bitter Words

Bible  Deuteronomy 1: 40-44



Bible

⁴⁰But as for you, turn, and journey into the wilderness in the direction of the Red Sea.' ⁴¹"Then you answered me, 'We have sinned against the LORD. We ourselves will go up and fight, just as the LORD our God commanded us.' And every one of you fastened on his weapons of war and thought it easy to go up into the hill country. ⁴²And the LORD said to me, 'Say to them, Do not go up or fight, for I am not in your midst, lest you be defeated before your enemies.' ⁴³So I spoke to you, and you would not listen; but you rebelled against the command of the LORD and presumptuously went up into the hill country. ⁴⁴Then the Amorites who lived in that hill country came out against you and chased you as bees do and beat you down in Seir as far as Hormah.



Observation

1. Put the observations Moses made of the people of Israel in the order they happened. (vv.40-44)

	Israel rejects God's commands and heads for the mountains
	God tells Israel to go up and to not fight
	Israel says they must go up and fight
	Israel is defeated soundly by the Amorites
	God tells Israel to change course and go back to the desert

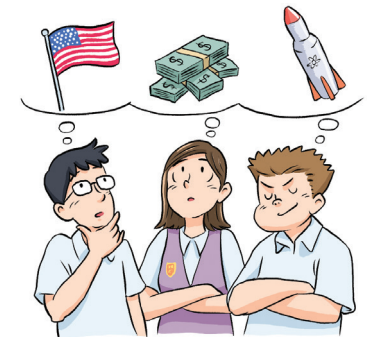


Understanding


1. God commanded Israel to return to the desert instead of entering Canaan because of their disobedience to His Word. However, Israel again disobeyed God by fighting against the Amorites. Why were they disobedient once again?

2. What did Israel believe was the most important thing for them in battle?

- ① Being allies with strong nations
- ② Having nuclear weapons
- ③ Increasing soldier's salaries
- ④ Confidence that they would always be victorious
- ⑤ God with them



02 Influence of the Word

Bible  Deuteronomy 4: 5-8



Application

3. What kind of attitude does God desire of Israel?

1. Have you been disobedient though you knew God's will?

2. What are some things that distract us from being obedient to God's Word? What are some ways to remove those distractions?

3. What are some areas in which the community we are part of (family, church, school) lacking obedience?? What can we do about this?



Bible

⁵See, I have taught you statutes and rules, as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should do them in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. ⁶Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.' ⁷For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as the LORD our God is to us, whenever we call upon him? ⁸And what great nation is there, that has statutes and rules so righteous as all this law that I set before you today?



Observation

1. Why did Moses teach God's Word to the people of Israel? (v. 5)



2. How can the people of Israel can be commended for being a people of wisdom and knowledge, compared to other nations? (v. 6)

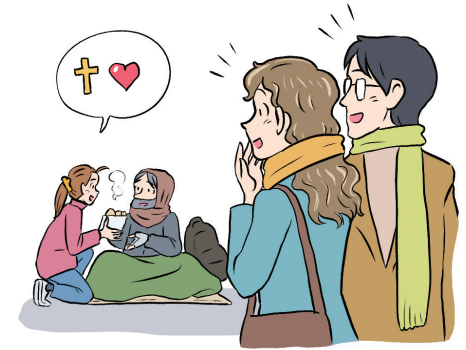
3. How did God respond to the prayers of the people of Israel? (v. 7)



Understanding

1. What might Moses say to people who think that it's enough to simply read the Bible and memorize select verses? (v. 6) Why do you think so?
2. Was there ever a time in history when a Gentile country complemented the people of Israel as wise and full of knowledge? If so, when?

3. What would God's commands look like to a Gentile people? (v. 8)



Application

1. When have you obeyed God's Word? What observations did you make after being obedient to the Word?
2. How should we carry ourselves so that friends who are not believers would come closer to God?

03 Focusing in Comfortable Times

Bible  Deuteronomy 8: 11-17



Bible

¹¹“Take care lest you forget the LORD your God by not keeping his commandments and his rules and his statutes, which I command you today, ¹²lest, when you have eaten and are full and have built good houses and live in them, ¹³and when your herds and flocks multiply and your silver and gold is multiplied and all that you have is multiplied, ¹⁴then your heart be lifted up, and you forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, ¹⁵who led you through the great and terrifying wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water, who brought you water out of the flinty rock, ¹⁶who fed you in the wilderness with manna that your fathers did not know, that he might humble you and test you, to do you good in the end. ¹⁷Beware lest you say in your heart, ‘My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.’”



Observation

1. God did many things for the people of Israel while they were in the desert. From below, choose one act that God did not do.

- ① Led the people of Israel in slavery out of Egypt.
- ② Allowed Israel to pass through a desert full of snakes and scorpions

- ③ Provided water from out of a rock, and fed the people of Israel with manna.
- ④ Raised up the people of Israel and did not test them.



2. What did Moses command the people of Israel to do? (v. 11)

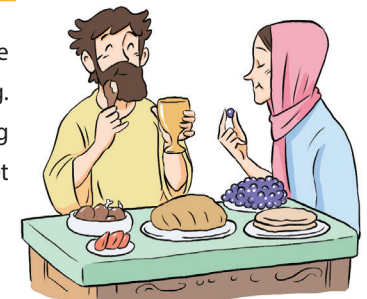
3. Mark all the 'my's in verse 17. Who is 'my' referring to here?

4. What worried Moses about the people of Israel (v. 14)



Thinking and Understanding

1. Moses emphasized on the people of Israel not to forget God's blessing. What did Moses think was something that would make it easy to forget God?



Express the circumstances above with this graph



2. What would Moses say to warn this generation, which emphasizes material wealth as the ultimate value?
3. There is nothing that man can accomplish on their own without God's help. Why are people not being able to understand that it is not by their own knowledge and power?

Application

1. Play a game of 'God did ____'. Take turns speaking about what God has done for you. If anyone hesitates or repeats a similar incident, then they are out of the game. Who was left when it ended?
2. Create a slogan that will help you remember God's blessings.

04 Stay Close Wherever You Are

Bible Deuteronomy 11: 18-21

Bible

¹⁸"You shall therefore lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ¹⁹You shall teach them to your children, talking of them when you are sitting in your house, and when you are walking by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. ²⁰You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, ²¹that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers to give them, as long as the heavens are above the earth.

Observation

1. How does God want us to treat the Word?
 - 1) As individuals (v. 18)
 - 2) As a family (v. 19)
 - 3) Inside their Home (v. 20)



2.What happens to those who are obedient to God's Word? (v. 21)

Thinking and Understanding

1. Read Deuteronomy 11: 1-17, and explore how it relates to verses 18-21.

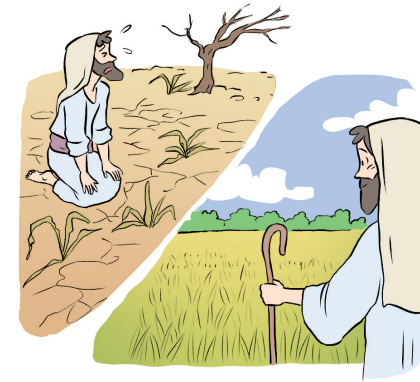
2. God told the people of Israel that they would be safe if they taught God's Word and obeyed it. Fill in the parentheses after reading verses 18-20 and think about what each verse means.

1) V. 18 – God's Word should really be recorded in () . Also, God's Word should be () in our life.

2) V. 19 – God's Word must be taught () to () . Our teenagers should give all their effort to () the Word.

3) V. 20 – We must () the Word outside of the home always. Other people must know that our family is () family.

3. God told the people of Israel that the land of Canaan would flourish if they were obedient and lived according to His Word (v. 21). However, what did He say would happen if they were disobedient? (v. 17, 28)




Application

1. God wants us to learn the Word and to be obedient. How have you intentionally pursued learning God's Word? If you haven't, what is preventing you from learning the Word?

2. God desires our faith to show itself in our families and schools, not just at church. How can you show your faith as Christians in our families and schools?

05 The Word is Open, Also Must Be Our Hands

Bible  Deuteronomy 15: 7-11



Bible

⁷“If among you, one of your brothers should become poor, in any of your towns within your land that the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart or shut your hand against your poor brother, ⁸but you shall open your hand to him and lend him sufficient for his need, whatever it may be. ⁹Take care lest there be an unworthy thought in your heart and you say, ‘The seventh year, the year of release is near,’ and your eye look grudgingly on your poor brother, and you give him nothing, and he cry to the LORD against you, and you be guilty of sin. ¹⁰You shall give to him freely, and your heart shall not be grudging when you give to him, because for this the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake. ¹¹For there will never cease to be poor in the land. Therefore I command you, ‘You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land.’”



Observation

- Explain how God wants us to treat the poor:

1) When you meet the poor in town (vv. 7-8)

2) When the year of release is near (vv. 9-10)

※ Year of Release (Sabbatical Year) – According to Deut. 31:10, every seven years debtors should be a release from the debt they accumulated.



- What does God promise if we give generously to those who are less fortunate? (v. 10)



Thinking and Understanding

- Since there will always be poor people, what is God's plan for them? (v. 11)

• Considering the three distractions listed, how do they affect helping the poor? (vv. 7-9)

1) Heart and Mind

2) Evil Eyes

3) Clenched Hands

• Sometimes it is not easy to share with those who are poor. However, why are Christians able to do this? (v. 10)



Application

1. Have you ever helped a friend or neighbor in need? Share about what you felt then.

2. We need to believe in God's promise that when we help those who are in need without hesitation, we will be filled with all that we need. Do you believe in this Word of Promise? Share some experiences where you were provided what you needed when you helped someone else in need.



06 For Others, Not Myself

Bible  Deuteronomy 22: 1-4



Bible

¹"You shall not see your brother's ox or his sheep going astray and ignore them. You shall take them back to your brother. ²And if he does not live near you and you do not know who he is, you shall bring it home to your house, and it shall stay with you until your brother seeks it. Then you shall restore it to him. ³And you shall do the same with his donkey or with his garment, or with any lost thing of your brother's, which he loses and you find; you may not ignore it. ⁴You shall not see your brother's donkey or his ox fallen down by the way and ignore them. You shall help him to lift them up again.



Observation

• Summarize God's commands for lost cattle or materials.

1) When you know the owner (v. 1)

2) When the owner is far away or unknown (v. 2)

- How could verse four be applied to your life today?



Thinking and Understanding

- Read the following instructions regarding livestock and other materials then talk about how people would feel if they lost them.

※ Cattle -valuable livestock; Not only did they supply meat, milk, and butter, but also were used for farming, and only eaten during special occasions. They were also used as an offering during ceremonies. Because of its value, it was used to measure one's wealth and prosperity.

※ Donkey - were used for farming and as a means of transportation; useful for carrying loads at a time. Were used to measure one's wealth.

※ Garments - it was used for daily living and useful for keeping one's health. It was also a sign of the owner's influence.



- God said to help those in need even in the midst of the business of daily life. Helping someone else is rarely easy or convenient. But, why is it important? Find the explanations in verse 1-4 and seek ways to apply it to your daily life.



Application

1. Have you ever received help during troubling times or when you lost something? Describe how you felt at the time. Also, describe a time you helped someone else.
2. In order to empathize with someone who is suffering a loss, we should consider them brothers, not strangers. Think of those in need as your parents, siblings, or friends. Search for someone whom you could help.

07 Clear Records, Strick Obedience

Bible  Deuteronomy 27: 1-18



Bible

¹Now Moses and the elders of Israel commanded the people, saying, “Keep the whole commandment that I command you today. ²And on the day you cross over the Jordan to the land that the LORD your God is giving you, you shall set up large stones and plaster them with plaster. ³And you shall write on them all the words of this law, when you cross over to enter the land that the LORD your God is giving you, a land flowing with milk and honey, as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has promised you. ⁴And when you have crossed over the Jordan, you shall set up these stones, concerning which I command you today, on Mount Ebal, and you shall plaster them with plaster. ⁵And there you shall build an altar to the LORD your God, an altar of stones. You shall wield no iron tool on them; ⁶you shall build an altar to the LORD your God of uncut stones. And you shall offer burnt offerings on it to the LORD your God, ⁷and you shall sacrifice peace offerings and shall eat there, and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God. ⁸And you shall write on the stones all the words of this law very plainly.” ⁹Then Moses and the Levitical priests said to all Israel, “Keep silence and hear, O Israel: this day you have become the people of the LORD your God. ¹⁰You shall therefore obey the voice of the LORD your God, keeping his commandments and his statutes, which I command you today.” ¹¹That day Moses charged the people, saying, ¹²“When you have crossed over the Jordan, these shall stand on Mount Gerizim to bless the people: Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin. ¹³And these shall stand on Mount Ebal for the curse: Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali. ¹⁴And the Levites shall declare to all the men of Israel in a loud voice: ¹⁵“Cursed be the man who makes a carved or cast metal image, an abomination to the LORD, a thing made by the hands of a craftsman, and sets it up in secret.” And all the people shall answer and say, ‘Amen.’ ¹⁶“Cursed be anyone who dishonors his father or his mother.” And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’ ¹⁷“Cursed be anyone who moves his neighbor’s landmark.” And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’ ¹⁸“Cursed be anyone who misleads a blind man on the road.” And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’



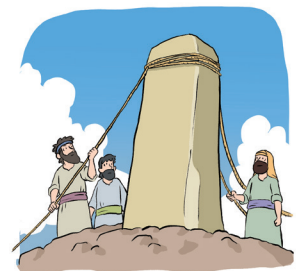
Observation

1. Summarize and arrange (in most important) the commands given to Israel in the first ten verses of chapter 27.

	Command
V. 2	Set Up _ Plaster!
V. 3	Write!
V. 4	Set Up _ Plaster!
V. 5	Build _ Do Not!
V. 6	Build _ Offer!
V. 7	Eat _ Rejoice!
V. 8	Write!
V. 9	Hear!

2. In verses 15-18, Israel is told they will receive curses if they do what?

	Curse
V. 15	Those who _____ will be cursed
V. 16	Those who _____ will be cursed
V. 17	Those who _____ will be cursed
V. 18	Those who _____ will be cursed





Thinking and Understanding

1. Considering the commands in verses 1-10, what do you think God wants from the people of Israel?

2. Looking at verse 15-18, what does God worry most about for the people of Israel?



Application

1. What are the Words that are deeply rooted in my heart?



2. What is something I should always be careful of?

08 No Excuses

Bible  Deuteronomy 30: 11-14



Bible

¹¹“For this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. ¹²It is not in heaven, that you should say, ‘Who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’ ¹³Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, ‘Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’ ¹⁴But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it.”



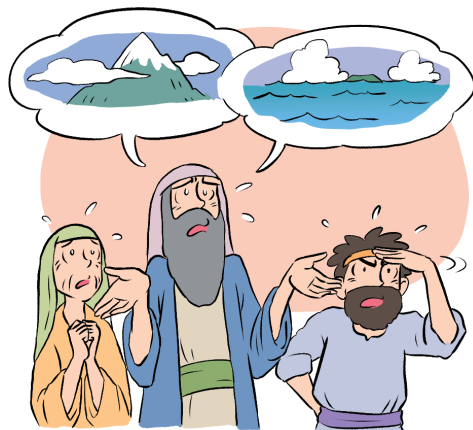
Observation

1. Summarize God's commands with “it is not _____.”

	It is not _____
V. 11	It is not _____ Neither _____
V. 12	It is Not _____ Neither _____
V. 13	It is Not _____ Neither _____

2. Summarize God's commands for us with "it is _____."

	It is _____
V. 14	It is _____ and In _____



Thinking and Understanding

1. What are common excuses for disobeying the Word of God? (vv. 11-13)

2. Why there can be no excuse for disobeying God's Word? (v. 14)



Application

1. What are the common excuses I give for disobeying the Word?



2. What efforts do we need to make to be obedient to the Word?