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TWENTY LESSONS IN DEUTERONOMY

By William M. Smith

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INTRODUCTION TO THIS DIGITAL PUBLICATION

ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND LESSONS -- At the time these lessons were written, William M. Smith was serving as Superintendent of Union Bible Seminary, Westfield, Indiana. HDM now has in possession the following sets of 20 Lessons for Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Revelation. As we received them, these lessons were on loose-leaf sheets, printed on one side, and bound in folders. They could be used as either Sunday School or Bible Study lessons.

ABOUT THE DIVIDER BETWEEN THE CHAPTER NUMBER AND VERSE -- The divider between the chapter and verse is not consistent, sometimes being a period and at other times being a colon. I have left them as they were. Also, there was **NO PERIOD AFTER THE NUMBERED ASSIGNMENTS** at the end of the lessons, and I have also left that as it was. --
DVM

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01 -- INTRODUCTION

DEUTERONOMY is the name given in the Greek version of Testament to the fifth book of Moses. It means the second law. While much of the history of the three preceding books is repeated in Deuteronomy, it is much more than a repetition. That there is additional matter is suggested by chapter 29.1: "These are the words of the covenant, which the Lord commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, beside the covenant which He made with them in Horeb."

About two months is the period of time occupied in the book of Deuteronomy, as we can determine by comparing chapter 1.3 with Joshua 5.10, But in his discourses Moses recounts the history of the forty years since he led the Israelites out of Egypt. There are three main discourses of Moses, as follows.

I. A Review of the Past -- Chapters 1 to 4 inclusive. It is suggested that the key word of this section is **REMEMBER**.

II. Application to the Present -- chapters V to 26. The key word to this might be **HEARKEN**.

III. Application to the Future -- chapters 27 to 30. The key to this might be **OBEY**. It will be noted that the three words, **REMEMBER**, **HEARKEN** and **OBEY** run all through these discourses.

Besides these three large divisions there are four smaller ones, which follow the chapter divisions as follows.

The Charge of Moses -- chapter 31.

The Song of Moses -- chapter 32.

The Blessing of Moses -- chapter 33.

The Burial of Moses -- chapter 34.

The Circumstances under which Moses spoke the words of this book are impressive. The forty years of wandering are practically over. The leadership of the Israelites is passing into the hands of Joshua his successor, who has been his right hand man throughout the forty years, and one of the faithful spies who brought back a good report of the land when Israel was at the border of Canaan at Kadesh-barnea.

Moses' Farewell Message might be a title for the book of Deuteronomy. He has already been told that his leadership is about to end, and that he is soon to depart this life. See Numbers 27.12-23. Moses, like a father, speaks to the Israelites. Besides Caleb and Joshua there are none of the people present who were over twenty years old when they left Egypt. That would make the oldest persons, besides Caleb and Joshua, only sixty years of age. Moses was twice that old, now an hundred and twenty. The persons from forty years and under had been born in the wilderness. Many of them had no recollection of being at Mount Sinai when the law was given. This necessitates the repetition of the law for their instruction. And even those who were sixty years of age who had heard it as young people at Sinai needed it repeated again in their hearing, as the laws were for their governing in the land of Canaan which they were soon to enter.

Moses Speaks by Inspiration in these pages. While the discourses are reminiscent, and the personal element is prominent, yet the words are inspired of God. Critics have found more fault with this book than any other of the five books of Moses. But Jesus put His seal on its inspiration when He took from it the three passages with which He defeated Satan in His forty days temptation, as we will see when we get to them.

Not All Mere Repetition. Some one has observed that practically everything in the Bible is in twice, As in this book we have a resume of some things before recorded in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, so in Chronicles we have some repetition of what is in Samuel and Kings. The Gospel is given in a four-fold manner. But careful study reveals the fact that there is more than repetition. Each book of the Bible has a distinct purpose, and that purpose should be sought by the Bible student who desires a good grasp of Scripture.

The Word OBEDIENCE is the outstanding word and thought of the book of Deuteronomy. Obedience is to be what will cause the Israelites to prosper in the land they are about to enter. Disobedience will bring disaster to them and, finally, as stated further on, exiling from the land of promise. Moses prophetically sees the eventual failure of Israel and warns against it. This is why he so emphasizes obedience as the course that will postpone that disaster, and would save from it altogether if it were continued.

Remember, Hearken, Obey -- These are the words emphasized. Remember what disobedience has brought on them in the past. Hearken in order to grasp God's plan for success. Obey in order to retain the favor and protection of God. Again, remember all the way the Lord has led them. Hearken to His admonition now. Obey because of God's love for them.

Attitude toward God is especially emphasized. Though the Israelites were about to enter on a military campaign to conquer the land of Canaan, Moses' discourses are remarkably free from military tactics. That was left to the new leader to arrange under God's direction from time to time. Their obedience to God was the all important thing Moses emphasized. If they were right with God their military campaign would be successful. If disobedient to God, failure would result.

The Object of This Study is more than memorizing the contents of the book. If all we get from the study is its application to the Israelites we will miss the main purpose of Scripture. While primarily at the time the instruction was for the Israelites. that occasion has passed, The book has been preserved for our instruction and incorporated in the inspired Scriptures for our learning. Let us, therefore, in our study, ever bear in mind that through these pages God would instruct us who are living near the time when we will enter our inheritance. May the Lord bless each student who peruses these lessons.

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02 -- SINAI TO KADESH-BARNEA -- (Deuteronomy 1:1-46)

THE HISTORY In This Chapter, as stated in verse 2, begins at Horeb (or Sinai) and ends with Kadesh-barnea. It is to be observed that it does not begin with the experiences in Egypt during the plagues, nor the passage of the Red Sea, nor the occurrences along the march of some fifty days from the Red Sea to Sinai. Moses begins his review of the past history of Israel from Sinai where the law was given.

Possibilities and Performance are vividly contrasted in the statement, "There are eleven days journey from Horeb by the way of mount Seir unto Kadesh-Barnea. And it came to pass in the fortieth year -- " Thirty-eight of those forty years marked the period of the wandering of the Israelites in the wilderness, described by Moses in verse 19 as, "that great and terrible wilderness." But the march of the Israelites toward Canaan, and their slowness to enter in are typical of the progress, alas, of all too many Christians in their advancement spiritually. How often we see professing Christians at what seems to be a perpetual standstill in their experience!

Dwelling at Sinai was undoubtedly in the will of the Lord for Israel, for there the law was given and the tabernacle constructed, which was to be the center of their encampment wherever they stopped. But eventually the Lord said (vs. 6) "Ye have dwelt long enough in this mount." Then it was time to march as the cloud lifted and led toward Canaan. There is a period in the life of the Christian that he does well to wait. There must be indoctrination and instruction in the Scriptures and the doctrines of the Christian faith, But the hour for progress eventually comes, and the obedient child of God will not be negligent to quickly follow the Lord. It is interesting to note in this connection what is said in Numbers 10:13: "They first took their journey according to the

commandment of the Lord by the hand of Moses." Every Christian who starts to walk with the Lord, if he really walks at all, begins according to the direction of the Lord. Alas, how many soon are diverted to their own devices, or fall a prey to false doctrines so commonly paraded these days!

The Prospect before Israel was grand, as stated in verse 8: "Behold. I have set the land before you: go in and possess the land." How we would like to encourage every young Christian, especially, to realize what a prospect lies before him in the Christian life if he will order his life according to the instruction of God as revealed in the Bible, and interpreted by the Holy Spirit, Whom God gives to them that obey Him. But too many wander among the crags and thorns of the wilderness, out of Egypt, to be sure, but with Egypt still in their hearts. And how distressing to see the number who, apparently once saved, go back to Egypt and revel again in its leeks, onions, and garlic!

The Sending of the Spies, as shown in verse 22, was a plan of the people. But, God knowing they would rebel at the border of the land, consented to having them sent that they could satisfy themselves that it was indeed a land such as He described, flowing with milk and honey. Twelve spies, one from each tribe, went to search the land of Canaan and brought back a good report, as far as the fruits of the land was concerned. But, aside from Caleb and Joshua, all testified they were not able to conquer the inhabitants and dispossess them. What a sad picture to see these Israelites in this condition. The whole object of God in bringing them out of Egypt was to give them this land. They had believed God enough to leave Egypt under Moses' leadership, to tarry at Sinai, and march thus far, and then failed of the whole objective God set before them, But it is equally sad to see people believe God for salvation, as far as appearances go, walk with Him for a season, outwardly, and then fall in their life's work to which God is calling them. It must be inexpressibly sad for such a person to come to old age and realize they have missed the very thing for which God put them in the world.

The Hindering Thing was not the presence of the inhabitants of the land of Canaan, though that was made the excuse. Moses puts it kindly but firmly: "Yet in this thing ye did not believe the Lord your Cod." (vs. 32). Hebrews 3.19 gives the same verdict: "So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief." Reader, do not blame the fact that you have failed God on some point because of difficulties in the way. You may excuse yourself on that ground, But the real trouble is your unbelief. Moses humbly confesses his own failure by saying in verse 37, "Also the Lord was angry with me for your sakes, saying, Thou also shalt not go in thither." Reference to Numbers 20.12 reveals the fact that it was unbelief on the part of Moses and Aaron that kept them out of Canaan, And Moses' unbelief caused him to strike the rock with his own rod instead of speaking to it with the budded rod in his hand. By this disobedience he showed that he did not believe water would come as God said it would. Failure to believe what God says is at the root of our trouble most of the time.

Presumption instead of Faith. After the failure to enter the land, God instructed them to turn back into the wilderness. But again unbelief manifested itself in another way. Since they had failed to faithfully go into the land when commanded to go, now they refuse to obey God when He says to turn back into the wilderness. Unbelief and disobedience are near neighbors in conduct. Then comes in presumption, an imitation of faith. When God said to go in, they refused; when He said

not to go in, they undertook to go in any way. The Christian needs to be cautious that he does not fall a victim to this imitation of faith known as presumption. As these Israelites "went presumptuously up into the hill," (vs. 43), so many are deceived by the enemy into wild vagaries that lead to disappointment. The Amorites, who would have been easily conquered if they had gone in faith, "chased you, as bees do," when they went in presumption.

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03 -- CONQUEST EAST OF JORDAN -- (Deuteronomy 2:1-3:29)

CHAPTER Two begins with the statement, that, after refusing to go into Canaan at Kadesh-Barnea at God's command, the Israelites turned back into the wilderness, but here we are given no detailed account of the about thirty-eight years of wandering in the wilderness.

The Command to Go Forward -- Eventually, as told in verse 3, God said to Moses, "Ye have compassed this mountain long enough." While their compassing of the mount was according to God's orders, there came a time when they were to leave that region. Likewise many people know the monotony of the round of daily cares that seem never to end. But God may speak some day and say you have made these rounds long enough, and will give you marching orders of another character. It is well to submit to the daily grind when it is in God's will, and it is equally important to respond when He says it is enough.

National Borders to be Respected -- in their march toward Canaan the Israelites came in contact with three nations whose possessions they were not to disturb. They would pass by them, and perhaps through them, but they were not to plunder. Food, and even water, was to be paid for. All nations are under God's government, even though Israel is His peculiar treasure as a nation. These nations whose boundaries were to be respected were Edom, the descendants of Esau; and Moab and Ammon, the descendants of Lot. These nations were related to the Israelites, as we find from their previous history.

Ancient Nations of Giants -- Incidentally we are introduced in these chapters to some ancient nations who appear to have been giants, which nations were displaced by the Edomites, Moabites, and Ammonites. The Emims were overcome by the Moabites, the Horims were overcome by the Edomites, and Zamzummins by the Ammonites. There were also Avims, Hazerim, and Caphtorims. No extensive history is given of these nations, but it appears that they filled up the cup of their iniquity, and God used the later nations to destroy and displace them. They are compared to the Anakim whose height had dismayed the Israelites at the border of Canaan at Kadesh-Barnea. Moses mentions the conquest of these nations as encouragement to Israel that they may also overcome the Anakim and other nations of Canaan.

Nations to be Destroyed -- All nations were in the hands of God in Bible times, and, in spite of the fact that modern national heads ignore God, still He is ordering things according to His will. At the river Arnon, an eastern tributary of the Jordan, the border of the territory ruled by Sihon, a king of the Amorites (to be distinguished from the Ammonites), began and extended for some distance. In Abraham's day the Lord said that the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full (Gen. 15.16), but now it appears to be full, and the nation prepared for destruction. The

indiscriminate destruction of men, women, and children, seems cruel to us, but if God chose to thus destroy a nation by the hand of the Israelites. It is no more terrible than the destruction that God wrought in sending the flood. However this does not justify Christians in engaging in destruction of human life, for our warfare is "not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places -- or wicked spirits (Margin Ephesians 6.12).

Offer of Peace -- It is to be observed that Moses offered peace to Sihon and his people. This threw the blame on them for their own destruction, for their response to the offer of peace was that they came out in force to fight Israel. When the Israelites were obedient to God they were invulnerable, as God said, "This day will I begin to put the dread of thee and the fear of thee upon the nations that are under the whole heaven, who shall hear report of thee, and shall tremble, and be in anguish because of thee." (vs. 25). The people of Sihon were easily overcome. There was not one city too strong for the Israelites. Read in this connection how the news spread into Canaan, west of Jordan, as reported by Rahab (Josh. 2.9,10). The Gibeonites also refer to how they were made afraid by what they heard of what the Israelites did east of Jordan. (Josh. 9.9,10).

Conquest of Og -- Still further north on the east side of Jordan was a region called Bashan in Old Testament times. When Sihon and his people were conquered the Israelites were instructed to go on and destroy that nation. Og, their king, was one remaining giant, who from the size of his bedstead, was a very tall man. Their conquest of Og and his people was as complete as that of Sihon. This land was later given to the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh. It was especially a land adapted to the raising of cattle, and these tribes possessed many cattle.

Encouragement to Joshua -- Chapter 3, verse 21,22 records the encouragement Moses gave to his successor, Joshua. The complete conquest of these nations east of Jordan was calculated to encourage Joshua to believe the Lord would equally give them victory over the powerful nations that inhabited the country west of Jordan, For Moses must relinquish the leadership of the nation to Joshua. Joshua was the most likely man in all the nation to succeed Moses. He had been Moses' helper all through the wilderness, and had also been one of the faithful spies who brought back a good report of the land when Moses sent them from Kadesh-Barnea.

Moses' Unanswered Prayer -- Moses desired the Lord to let him go over and see Canaan, but Moses reported that God told him to say no more to Him about that matter. While Moses was forgiven any penal consequence of his sin of unbelief at Meribah when he struck the rock instead of speaking to it, God's government required that some penalty be inflicted. Grace and government of God need to be differentiated,

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04 -- AN EXHORTATION TO REMEMBER AND OBEY -- (Deuteronomy 4:1-49)

REMEMBER and Obey are the prominent words of this chapter. In order to remember one must first hearken to what is commanded. This Moses exhorts the Israelites to do at the opening of this chapter. They are to hearken and get clear in their minds what God requires of them, and then they are to do those things God commands.

Neither Add nor Subtract -- God says all that needs to be said, so there is no need of adding to the Scriptures. He has not said anything unnecessary, so there can be no subtraction. All that is commanded is to be observed, and they are not to add traditions to it. This was the fault of the Pharisees and scribes in New Testament times, As Christ said of them, "They bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers." (Matt. 23.4). While on one hand today we have the multitude of people taking from God's words, we find others burdening themselves with a mass of details in conduct that God never commanded, And they condemn others, and even come under condemnation themselves for not keeping them.

Obedience Brings Prosperity -- God's instructions give people wisdom. While Israel kept God's laws they were the most prosperous nation in the world. Even today those nations that most nearly order their national affairs in accordance with the Bible are the most wise and prosperous. This is also true of individuals. In the sight of other nations Israel was manifestly favored. Well could Moses ask the question, "what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in "all things that we call upon Him for?"

Caution against Forgetting -- While much is said about remembering what God has told them, they are cautioned against forgetting, which is the opposite of remembering. Note the phrases, "lest thou forget," "lest ye forget," and "consider it in thine heart." Forgetfulness of God's benefits is a common fault even among Christians today.

Impressive Scenes Recalled -- God used means to impress deeply on the minds of the Israelites the results of disobedience. In verse 3 Moses mentions the comparatively recent judgment God visited on those Israelites who were led into disobedience under the temptations presented by the Midianites at Baal-Peor, when thousands died as a result. See chapter 25 of Numbers and I Corinthians 10.8. Moses also reminds them of the scenes at Mount Sinai when the law was given amid manifestations of cloud, fire, and earthquake, when they heard the voice of God in thunder tones speak the ten commandments.

Caution against Idolatry -- In connection with the giving of the law, when the Israelites heard the voice of God, Moses reminds them that they saw no similitude, and therefore were cautioned against making any likeness of something to represent God. See verses 12, 15, 23, and 25. This became eventually one of Israel's most obnoxious sins against God, and Moses suggests in verse 25 that this may be what they will do, and that, if they do, it will provoke God to anger as a result of which calamity will come upon them.

Children to be Instructed -- Provision was made in the instruction of Moses for the training of the children in the right way. Children and grand-children were to be told the laws given at Sinai, and the history of their deliverance from Egypt was to be told to succeeding generations. "Teach thy sons, and thy son's sons." (vs. 9). This is good advice for today. The rising generation, even those who are children of professing Christian parents, seem to be ignorant of the things of God. The instruction of the children is left too much to the teachers in the public schools, and, sad to know, many of them are not believers in the Bible. As a result the nation is drifting into godlessness. Parents need to awake to the danger assailing their children and see that they are

instructed in the right way. The discontinuance of the family altar in the majority of homes leaves one helpful source of instruction for the young neglected.

God's Unusual Dealing with Israel is emphasized by Moses. He asks the question (vs. 32-34), whether any such thing ever happened to any other nation besides Israel. From one end of the earth to the other no such thing was known elsewhere. Their remarkable deliverance from Egyptian bondage is particularly mentioned. And may not the nation in which we live have great cause to thank God for the unusual privileges we have enjoyed, much of which has come to us because of the godly men and women who were the first settlers on these shores? But, like Israel, these things are all too lightly regarded today.

Covenant Benefits -- God premises His attitude toward Israel on the covenant made with their fathers, meaning Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. See verse 37: "Because He loved thy fathers, therefore He chose their seed after them." Many young people have God's favor on them because of relations their parents have had with God. How it behooves parents to have a relation with God so He can bless their descendants; and how it behooves children of godly parents to be thankful for such a heritage. While salvation cannot be passed hereditarily from parents to children, many benefits are so inherited, and godly parents can predispose their children to seek salvation.

The Latter Days -- Moses' prophetic vision looked even to the "latter days," as stated in verse 30. The tribulation is mentioned, a statement little understood until the New Testament was written. Israel is now approaching that dire time of their greatest calamity, but their turning to the Lord in this time is suggested in this same verse 30.

East of Jordan -- The chapter closes with an account of Moses appointing cities of refuge in the territory of the tribes who elected to remain on the east of Jordan. While these tribes appear not to have lived up to the best plan of God for them, God did not abandon them,

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05 -- THE LAW REPEATED -- (Deuteronomy 4:1-49)

MOSES' Second Discourse begins with chapter 5 and continues to the end of chapter 26. The key word appears to be "hearken," and hearken is in order to obey.

Four important Words stand out in the first verse of this section -- hear, learn, keep, do. Note the progression suggested by these words in the order in which they are given.

Hear is the first attitude of a person who gives attention to instruction. It here means the voluntary action of listening with a desire to understand.

Learn tells of assimilation of the truth that has been heard, the committing of it to memory with a view to retaining it in the mind for future use.

Keep conveys the thought of holding to what has been learned.

Do relates to putting in practice what has been heard, learned, and kept. One writer on psychology declares that we learn nothing that does not change our doings. Facts stored in the mind that have no effect on our conduct have not been learned he asserts. Note the logical order in which these words are used in this verse.

The Commandments Repeated -- Verses 6 to 21 give another record of the Ten Commandments. All the ten are here with some variations from the record in the 20th chapter of Exodus. The greatest difference is in the reason given for the observance of the Sabbath. In Exodus the reason given is that in six days God made heaven and earth; but here it is as a reminder of their servitude in Egypt, where they had no Sabbath, doubtless working seven days a week. They are therefore to appreciate the provision for a day of rest. The variation is not so much a difference as an additional reason for keeping and appreciating the Sabbath rest.

Results of Obedience -- Chapter V closes with an exhortation to obedience and promises of beneficial results for keeping the commandments. They are to observe, they are not to turn aside, they are to walk in the ways God has commanded. If they do these things they will live, it will be well with them, and they will prolong their lives. Similar benefits come to the Christian in this dispensation for observing what the Lord desires us to do.

Chapter 6 begins with three words defining God's legal instructions -- commandments, statutes, and Judgments. These are not mere synonyms as it might appear, but each word has a meaning of its own.

Commandments refer to the Ten Commandments.

Statutes refer to civil laws concerning man's conduct to his fellowmen -- the commandments interpreted in terms of everyday life.

Judgments refer to the civil law as distinguished from the ceremonial laws; decisions of judges based on the statutes. It will be observed that both in Exodus and in Deuteronomy, after the Ten Commandments are given, there are various instructions about details of human conduct as applied to every day affairs.

The First Commandment -- A Scribe once asked Jesus which was the first commandment (Mark 12.28) and Jesus answered (Mark 12.29,30) in the words of Deut. 6.4,5 -- "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." From this we find that the laws of God were not merely to be held in the intellect, but were to dominate the affections.

Trinity In Unity is indicated in verse 4. If we give the original of the nouns we have "Jehovah our Elohim is one Jehovah." Jehovah is a singular noun and Elohim is a plural form of a noun for God. (like cherub, plural cherubim, etc.). Rather strangely the modern Jew bases his opposition to Jesus being God on this verse, declaring that God is one and that there cannot be more than one Person in the Godhead, But the verse itself disputes that argument. The numeral adjective translated "one" is from the Hebrew "echad," which is never used for absolute

singularity, but to modify collective nouns like one cluster of grapes, one company of people, one family, etc. When absolute singularity is intended the adjective used is "yacheed."

Duties to Children -- Notice the instruction to parents regarding their responsibility in teaching their children. The laws of God given to the parents are to be taught diligently to their children. God's words are to be their chief topic of conversation, "when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way." First thing in the morning and last thing at night God's words are to be spoken of.

Regulation of Life -- The Jews at one time took literally the instructions to bind the words on hand and between their eyes. These words need to go deeper than surface applications. However, how would I Tim. 2.9 or I Peter 3.3 look on a bejeweled hand? God's words should be so before our eyes that they guide our ways, and so on our hand that they guide our doings.

Danger of Prosperity is mentioned in this chapter. When they came into possession of good things in the land of Canaan there would be a tendency to forget the Lord Who had delivered them out of Egyptian bondage, and then it would be easy to turn to the worship of other gods of the people of the land.

Jesus and Deuteronomy -- We have already mentioned one verse in this lesson that Jesus made use of, and in a previous lesson the fact that He defeated the devil with three passages from this book. Two of these passages seem to be from this chapter -- verses 13 and 16. Compare vs. 13 with Deut. 10.20.

Questions of Children were to be answered. Parents should be so conspicuous in their keeping of God's commandments that the curiosity of their children would be aroused to the extent they will ask why such and such things are done, They were to be given an intelligent answer and shown good reasons for keeping God's laws. They should be kept both in view of what God had done for them, and what He has promised to do as a result of their obedience.

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06 -- SEPARATION AND SERVICE -- (Deuteronomy 7:1-8:20)

Strict Instructions are given in these chapters concerning Israel's relation to the nations in the land to which God was leading them.

The Seven Nations are here named (vs. 1,2): Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Hivites, Perizzites, and Jebusites. God says of them that they are mightier than the Israelites. They had long been in the land and were well established. In like manner the Christian appears weak in comparison with the forces of evil that are in the world, and things that have long been undisturbed are not easily rooted up.

God Promises to Do His Part in dispossessing these nations. Though He has not yet told them what He will do, He is planning to regulate sun and moon to their convenience in their

warfare; He has his hailstones ready to pour upon their enemies; He is marshaling His hornets to drive the hidden Canaanite from his hiding place.

God Expects Them to Do their part, and He is quite explicit in telling them what their part is to be. They are to utterly destroy these wicked nations. God has told Abraham (Gen. 15.16) that the iniquity of the Amorites was not then full, but they are now fitted for destruction. As Christians we deplore the carnage necessary to the destruction of these nations; but we must remember that the inheritance of Israel was on the earth, and their enemies were of the earth, and, in order to come into possession of their inheritance they must dispossess these squatters according to God's instructions. As to ourselves, we fight not against flesh and blood, but against wicked spirits in the heavenly places, which are temporarily in possession of our inheritance. Therefore the weapons of our warfare, though we have a warfare, are not carnal (II Cor. 10.4).

Inter-marriage Forbidden. Though there might be beautiful women among the seven nations, and strong young men, the sons and daughters of the Israelites were not to marry them, and the reason is that those aliens will turn their companions away from the true God to the worship of their idols. Solomon found this out to his sorrow. Nehemiah says of him (Neh. 13.26) "even him did outlandish women cause to sin." A similar admonition is given in the New Testament applicable to Christians: "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (II Cor. 6.14).

Reminders Destroyed. Every thing that might suggest the worship of the gods of these nations was to be destroyed: their altars, their images, their groves, even the gold and silver that adorned their images were not to be kept lest it become a snare, They were not to keep any image as a relic lest it suggest idolatry. When a sinner becomes a Christian he is to discard everything that reminds of the old life in the world.

God's Blessings would be both positive and negative. He would bless them in all things, making themselves and their cattle productive. He would put none of the diseases of Egypt upon them if they were obedient. How long they would have lived had they been obedient we do not know for they did not fulfill the conditions God gave them in this regard. Even in this dispensation Christians live longer as a rule than sinners.

Remembering and Forgetting. In the beginning of the eighth chapter Moses exhorts the people to "remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness." There are things to forget as well as things to remember. When Israel fell to remembering how they ate bread to the full while in Egypt it was disastrous to them, and tended to make them want to go back. Paul speaks of "forgetting those things which are behind," (Phil. 3.13). If we look back to congratulate ourselves on what we have done we will find it unprofitable to our souls, but a review of our past to see what God has done for us is wholesome.

Hunger and Satisfaction. Moses reminds the people that at one time the Lord allowed them to hunger, but then fed them with manna. Had they not first hungered they would not so much have appreciated the manna when it was given. This is the first passage Jesus used in His victory over the devil. How calmly Jesus rested on that statement, "Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live." Man needs sustenance for

mere than his body. The nourishment and safety of his soul depends on his use of the words of God. In the Bible is direction for every problem of life, help in every time of need.

God's Chastening. God's discipline is referred to in the fifth verse of this chapter: "As a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee." So important is the chastening of the Lord that we read in Hebrews 12.8 that if we do not experience the chastening of the Lord it is proof that we are not sons of God. This chastening is for our correction, not for our discouragement. While we may be born of God, yet there linger in our conduct things displeasing to God, and He disciplines us to remove these faults. As we yield to these corrections we grow more like Jesus and are better fitted for His service.

The Good Land with its brooks of water, its golden grain fields, its luscious fruits, its plentiful bread, its stones of iron and mines of brass is typical of the good experience of salvation that the Christian enjoys when he enters into the sanctified experience.

Prosperity has its dangers as well as poverty. Therefore Moses cautions the people to beware lest, when they had enjoyed all the blessings of Canaan, they forget that it was the Lord that brought them out of the bondage of Egypt to the plenitude of Canaan, No experience enjoyed by Christians is of their own acquisition; it is rather the gift of God, and we need ever to be thankful to Him for all the blessings of the Christian life.

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07 -- ISRAEL'S REBELLION AND GOD'S MERCY -- (Deuteronomy 9:1-10:22)

THESE Two Chapters relate instances of rebellion on the part of the Israelites and God's mercy to them in response to the prayers of Moses.

Difficulties Stated -- In the first verses of this section Moses sets before the Israelites the formidable obstacles that they were sure to encounter in their conquest of Canaan, The nations there were mightier than the Israelites, They were a tall and strong people, their cities were well fortified, and their reputation was that no man could stand before them. it may be that sometimes in dealing with sinners, in order to persuade them to become Christians, we minimize the difficulties of the Christian life. Those lately converted sometimes are surprised at the difficulties they encounter soon after becoming Christians. They had been told the Christian life was delightful, a life of peace and joy (and so it is) but there are trials also, it is well to observe these things and be prepared for them.

God's Help Promised -- Over against the difficulties of conquering Canaan Moses sets the power of God that will go before them in their conquest of the land. He has not told of the difficulties in order to discourage them, but to cause them to rely on God and not on their own strength. If we undertake to fight the battles of the Christian life in our own strength we will fall and bring reproach on the cause. Consider well the trials that beset the way and then go forward in reliance on God Who has promised grace to help in every time of need.

After the Victory has been won over their enemies Moses cautions the Israelites against the temptation of pride over their victory and a sense of superiority over other people. They are reminded that it is not because of the righteousness of the Israelites that God is driving out these other nations, but for the wickedness of the nations they are displacing, The Christian needs to consider God's mercy in saving him, rather than feeling he was superior to other people as the reason God saved him from his sins.

Israel's Rebellions Recounted -- To prove the point he is making Moses recounts to the Israelites various occasions in their history since they left Egypt that show that they are a rebellious people. Outstanding is the case of their making a golden calf to worship while Moses was on Mount Sinai receiving the tables of the commandments and the detailed instructions about the building of the tabernacle. This was so grievous in the sight of God that only the intercession of Moses saved the nation from destruction.

The Ground of God's Mercy is not their goodness, but His promises to the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It was in order to perform His promises to them that He is dealing in mercy with their descendants. In like manner we as Christians need to remember that we have not been saved because of some goodness the Lord saw in us as compared with other people, but because of His covenant with His Son Jesus Christ Who by His sacrifice on Calvary provided an atonement for our sins.

The Tables of Stone -- God had spoken the Ten Commandments in the hearing of all Israel as related in Exodus 20, where it says "God spake all these words," and then announces the commandments. But, in order to preserve them in permanent form God had engraved them on two tables of stone. Moses had these in his hands as he came down from Mount Sinai. But when he saw the golden calf and the people worshipping it, thus breaking the first two of the commandments, he cast them out of his hands and broke them in their sight, an appropriate symbolical act, for which God never chided Moses.

God's Offer to Moses -- Moses relates to the people how on this occasion God asked him to let Him alone, that He might destroy the people and make of him a great nation, and how, in response to his pleading God forgave them. Moses stands out in this respect as a character of self-renunciation, willing to have his own name blotted out rather than see Israel destroyed. Jesus went a step further than Moses, and suffered the punishment of the sins of the people He came to redeem. It was "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy he saved us."

The Second Tables -- After the destruction of the first tables containing the commandments and the grinding to pieces of the golden calf, God told Moses, as related in the first verse of chapter ten, to hew out two tables of stone like the first, and come up into the mount again, and He would write the Ten Commandments on them. These tables, it is to be noted, were not exhibited to the people, but put in an ark, and later were put in the ark of the covenant in the most holy place in the Tabernacle. Here they were perfectly kept, even as they were perfectly kept by Jesus Christ when as a Man he lived here on earth. It is His keeping of the commandments that is the ground of God's merciful dealings with us when we confess that we have broken the commandments and take Jesus as our Saviour.

The Tribe of Levi were set apart as the priestly tribe at the time of the destruction of the golden calf, for when Moses called for those who were on the Lord's side to come to him, the tribe of Levi responded.

God's Requirements -- After recounting this unpleasant part of their history. Moses sets forth the duty of them as a nation: "What doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul." This, Moses goes on to say, is for their good. This is still God's requirement of His people, and we as Christians do well to take heed to these words. Only as a result of the new birth and the indwelling of the Spirit can we behave in a manner acceptable to God.

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08 -- PAST HISTORY AND FUTURE PROSPECTS -- (Deuteronomy 11:1-12:32)

THESE Two Chapters contain a review of some of God's dealings with the Israelites in the past, the prospects that lay before them in the land of Canaan, and some instructions and admonitions about their behavior when they are brought into the land. The purpose is to show the people that obedience to the commandments of God and their prosperity are closely linked together. We do well to heed this principle ourselves for obedience and success in God's work are as closely linked in our service for the Lord as was that of the ancient people of God.

The Past of God's Dealings -- Moses in the book of Deuteronomy spends much time in refreshing the memory of the people regarding God's dealings in their behalf and in their midst. In like manner our memories need refreshing from time to time by a recounting of God's wonderful dealings in our behalf and in us.

God's dealings with the Egyptians as enemies of the Israelites is one line of Moses' exhortation, and His dealings with disobedience in the ranks of the Israelites themselves the other line of his discourse. Opposition to God's purposes whether in the world or among God's people, is an insult to God, and dire consequences result in persisting in plans contrary to His will. The Egyptians, who opposed God's plan to rescue the Israelites, and Dathan and Abiram who opposed God's appointed leadership were summarily dealt with; the sea swallowed one group, and the earth swallowed up the other group.

Egypt and Canaan Contrasted -- Moses relates conditions in Egypt and contrasts them with conditions in Canaan. In Egypt the land had to be irrigated by devices of men; but in Canaan God managed the supply of water by timely showers. He tells them, however, that the continuance of the rain is dependent on their obedience to the commands of God. Their later history shows how this principle worked, dearth coming on the land when they turned to the worship of idols in the days of the Judges and Kings. This is a principle we may also heed, for, while no one can by good works save his soul and please God; yet, when God saves any one He does it in order to raise up a people who will obey Him.

A Choice of Ways- -- Two ways are set before the people; obedience and disobedience; and two results are set forth as the consequence: a blessing and a curse. Obedience brings blessing, disobedience brings a curse. When one considers how simple this is, we wonder why Israel ever turned from God to idols. But the human heart by nature is set on its own stubborn way, and though God's commands are not grievous, yet even the people who now claim to be Christian are often seen walking contrary to God's plain instructions in the Bible. The consequence is disastrous both to the individual and to the church. Why should Israel have gone after "other gods" which they had not known; and why will Christians take up with doctrines and practices contrary to God's laws and instructions?

Chapter Twelve contains instructions as to what the Israelites shall do when they enter the land of Promise. There is some destructive work for them to do. The former inhabitants of the land were gross idolaters. Their places of worship, their altars, their idols, were in many places, 'upon the high mountains and upon the hills, and under every green tree.' Their destruction was to be complete, "Ye shall overthrow their altars, and break their pillars, and burn their groves with fire; and ye shall hew down the graven images of their gods, and destroy the names of them out of that place." It is well for Christians who have been delivered from sinful practices to destroy the instruments of their former sinful lives. There are books in the library that should be burned, pictures on the wall that should be destroyed. As an old song says they should clean out "the shelf behind the door."

The Israelites' Worship was to be very different from that of the idolaters whom they displaced. God would appoint one place where they should bring their sacrifices and offerings. That one place was done away when Christ died on Calvary, and the one Person is now substituted for the one place. As the Israelites were to bring all their sacrifices to the Temple, so Christians are to offer their worship in the name of Jesus Christ, and through Him, for "No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me," said Jesus.

A Joyful Service was to be theirs, "ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto." To the new-born Christian the service of the Lord is a pleasure: he can rejoice in it. We may question the correctness of a leading, regardless of the toll connected with it, that does not bring a sense of inward joy. Even as Jesus walked up Mount Calvary to be crucified He could say to God, "I delight to do Thy will." Stephen, while being stoned to death, saw heaven opened. Paul emphasizes the importance of joy. Read his Epistle to the Philippians and note the frequency of the words "joy" and "rejoice," remembering that was the place where he and Silas were severely beaten and put in jail. When the apostles were put in prison and later beaten by the temple authorities, we read in Acts 5.41 that they rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name. In the Sermon on the Mount we are admonished to rejoice when persecuted for righteousness' sake.

The Enlarged Land -- Mention is made in vs. 20 of what to do when the Lord enlarges their border. Reference to Genesis 15.18 shows that in God's covenant to Abraham the border of the land was to go as far as the Euphrates river. This was never occupied because the condition in chapter 11 vs. 24 was not fulfilled by them; "Every place where the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours."

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09 -- FALSE PROPHETS, MEATS AND TITHES -- (Deuteronomy 13:1-14:29)

WARNING against False Prophets was very necessary in the case of the Israelites, and we do well to take heed and beware of them also. Many people pretending to be Christ or some great prophet have arisen even in our days and have led people astray. It is admitted in the opening verses of this chapter that even false prophets can do supernatural things, and the natural man is disposed to think everything supernatural must be of God. From these verses we can see that God warns against such evidence. The test is not whether or not the sign will come to pass, but whether or not the teaching of the prophets accord with the Scriptures. Read II Thessalonians. 2.8-12. Matt. 24.28-26, and Rev. 13.13-16.

Guarding against False Relatives is related in the next section of this chapter. Human relationships can be a great snare to the Christian. In more than one way a man's foes are they of his own household. Love of relatives may keep one from obeying God. Opinions of loved ones may influence us away from God's direction for us. It is difficult to oppose the opinions of people we dearly love, especially one so near as a beloved wife. The test of whether we shall yield to their entreaties is whether or not the doctrine they try to get us to accept is according to the Bible: "gods which thou hast not known" is the test. Entirely new doctrines are to be held under suspicion.

Caution against Mass Movements is referred to in the last section of this chapter. It is easy to follow the crowd. Crowds are attractive. The slogan "They all do it" leads multitudes astray. The case referred to here is of a whole city being led to worship false gods.

The Penalty Inflicted on the false prophet, the seductive relative, and the rebellious city was very drastic and wholly at variance with our ideas of dealing with such offenders; but we need to consider the difference between the age of law and the age of grace. The penalty to be inflicted as related in this chapter is according to law when grace does not obtain. Eventually all wrong doers who do not in this age of grace accept salvation through Christ will be dealt with according to law.

A Grand Principle is stated in the first two verses of the fourteenth chapter: "Ye are the children of the Lord your God." For that reason the Israelites were to be different from the nations around, and we as Christians are to be different from other people. God took interest in what an Israelite ate, what he wore, and all the detail of his life.

Clean and Unclean Meats were very strictly differentiated. While it is doubtless true that the meats designated as clean under the Jewish dispensation are the most healthful, there is now no law to make it wrong to eat those meats not classed as clean in this catalogue. You will notice in Gen. 9.3 that, after the flood God told Noah "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you. Peter's housetop vision, while primarily for another purpose, doubtless includes instruction as to meats in this dispensation, for it prepared him to eat with the Gentiles, to whom God was about to send him. Read Acts 10.9-17 and 11.3.

The Tithing System that God gave the Israelites is worthy of much study. The general opinion is that they paid one tithe of their possessions year by year, but when all the passages relating to the subject are brought together it will be seen that the system was not so simple. there were really three tithes arranged in such a way that two tithes were taken each year except the seventh year. The Israelitish years were divided into cycles of seven. The first six years of the cycle the land was cultivated, and in those years God asked for tithes; but the seventh year of the cycle the land was not cultivated and so no tithe was demanded.

These Tithes are described in the following passages. What was called

The First Tithe was that which was given for the support of the Levites. This is described in Numbers 18.21 and 28. Notice the Israelites in general gave this tithe to the Levites, and then the Levites in turn tithed what they received and gave it to the high priest. This seems to answer the question sometimes asked, "Shall a preacher tithe what the people give him"?

The Second Tithe is mentioned in Deut. 14.22-26, the chapter we are now studying. This appears to have been to provide for the annual feasts, of which there were three that required every male to go to the central place of worship.

The Third Tithe is mentioned in this same chapter, verse 28. This appears to have been put in a storehouse where the poor, the stranger, and the Levite, when necessary could go and find provision in time of need.

The Arranging of these Tithes as to years when they were taken seems not to be very clearly set forth in the text of the Bible, except that the third tithe was taken every three years.

I am indebted to the Editor of the periodical "The Chosen People," whom I believe to be a converted Jew, for the detail of the arrangement of the tithes. He says that what are designated as the First and Second tithes were taken in the first, second, fourth, and fifth years of the seven-year cycle, and the First and Third tithes in the third and sixth years.

From this it will be seen that the First tithe, the one for the support of the Levites, was taken every year, and tithes Two and Three fitted in so that two tithes were taken every year. This applied to the first six years of every seven-year cycle of years, Besides this we must remember that God often instructed about the giving of offerings in addition to these tithes.

Tithing as Applied to the Christian is not a legal requirement as it was to the Israelite. Malachi says they were disposed to rob God in not bringing in the tithes and offerings. Shall we do less under grace than Israel did under law? "As God has prospered" is the New Testament rule. To do this takes calculation, and the tithe method is the easiest plan of calculation.

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Chapter Fifteen we are introduced into one of the sevens of the Scriptures. Just as the days were divided into sevens with a Sabbath day at the end, so the years were divided into sevens with a Sabbath year at the end. The seventh year is called a year of release.

Release as Regards Debts is first dealt with. When a rich man loaned money to a poor man, if he were not able to pay it back before the seventh year, the creditor was to release the debt the seventh year. This may have looked rather hard for the lender, and God cautions the lender against withholding help from the would-be borrower on that account. "Beware," says the instructions, "that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou give him nought: and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin unto thee" Over against this temptation God puts His gracious promise, "Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto."

Release as Regards Servants is dealt with in the next few verses. In case a Hebrew became the servant of another Hebrew, the servant was to go free the seventh year. In view of the fact that this kind of a servant would have served without wages, aside from his living he would be worth a great deal more than a hired servant. Therefore, when he was released, his master was instructed to be liberal with him. He was to see that he started out in a way to be able to take care of himself thereafter. In this connection the Lord makes this promise to the liberal master, "The Lord thy God shall bless thee in all that thou doest."

Chapter Sixteen gives special instruction regarding three of the seven feasts of the year. We find the seven feasts in the 23rd chapter of Leviticus, and if the reader desires the detail of all the feasts we refer him to our lessons in Leviticus. But here emphasis is placed on only three of the feasts. We find from verse 16 that all the males were to appear before the Lord on these three occasions.

The First Feast Is the Passover, described in verses 1 to 8. The seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Feast of the Firstfruits are included in these seven days. The Passover celebrated the deliverance of the Israelites from their Egyptian bondage, and was ordained to year by year bring to their remembrance how the Lord delivered them. To the Christian the Passover reminds of the crucifixion of Christ, as the Apostle says, "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." (I Cor. 5.7). Notice that three times mention is made of the place where the Passover is to be celebrated: "in the place where the Lord shall choose." See vs. 2, 6, and 7. While place was important to the Jew, it is the Person that is important to the Christian. Just as the sacrifices of the Jew must be offered in the place which God appointed, the Christian's worship must be offered in the name of Jesus Christ to be acceptable to God. This is a very important principle in dealing with God. As Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me." (John 14.6).

The Second Feast is that of Weeks. This was so named because it came seven weeks after the feast of the Firstfruits, which was the day after the Sabbath after the Passover. Jesus was crucified as our Passover, and His resurrection came on the day of the feast of Firstfruits, which is illustrated by the Apostle's statement, "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the

firstfruits of them that slept." (I Cor. 15.20). It was on the day of the feast of weeks that the Holy Spirit came on the waiting group in the upper room, and since then it is called the Feast of Pentecost, taken from a word meaning fifty, being fifty days after the resurrection. if we look again at the feast of the Passover we will note that they were to eat what is called "the bread of affliction." And when first instituted in Egypt mention is made of "bitter herbs" in connection with the feast. (Exodus 12.8), But in the celebration of the feast of Weeks, or Pentecost, they are instructed to "rejoice before the Lord thy God." In the Passover we are to consider the bitterness and affliction of Christ in making atonement for our sins; but in the feast of Pentecost we are to rejoice that the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, has come.

The Third Feast is that of Tabernacles, This was the last feast of the Jewish year as instituted in the Old Testament. Its typical significance, unlike the two previous feasts, has not yet become history. It looks forward to Millennial conditions. Notice it is after they had gathered in their corn and wine, therefore after harvest and vintage. May not the harvest symbolize the rapture of the church, and the vintage the tribulation? Mention is made in the 14th chapter of Revelation of the thrusting in of the sickle to reap a harvest, and another sickle that gathered the clusters of the vine of the earth which were put in the winepress of the wrath of God. It was after gathering the harvest and the vintage that the Israelites celebrated this feast of Tabernacles, And it is after the rapture and the tribulation that the Millennium will come with its joy and peace.

These Three Feasts typically set forth three cardinal things that the Christian does well to consider. The Passover typifies the crucifixion of Christ who delivered us from our sins; the feast of Pentecost typifies the coming of the Holy Spirit to empower us to live the victorious Christian life; and the feast of Tabernacles typifies the Christian's hope of the coming of the Lord. It is such considerations that make it clear that the entire Bible has but one Author, though that Author used several amanuenses.

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11 -- DUTIES OF JUDGES, PRIESTS, KINGS, PROPHETS -- (Deuteronomy 17:1-18:22)

THESE Two Chapters deal largely with the subject of government and discipline among the Israelites. After admonishing them in the first verse to bring only perfect offerings to the Lord, direction is given concerning the judging and execution of any person who worships any object other than God. While the death penalty in the Christian dispensation is not to be inflicted for wrong religious behavior, the principle of condemning wrong worship remains. Very likely the churches generally are too lax in the matter of putting out of their ranks persons who violate the discipline. however, note the extreme care to be exercised: "thou hast heard," "enquired diligently," round to be 'true,' "certain" before doing anything.

Duties of Judges. In verses 8 to 13 instruction is given about the settlement of hard cases. it The local authorities cannot settle the matter it is to be taken to a higher court, While the duties of individuals are here given concerning attitude toward judges and their decision, instruction to the judges themselves is given in the last few verses of the previous chapter, which we did not consider in our previous lesson because those verses had no direct relation to the general subject of that chapter. Look at these verses (18-20): these judges are cautioned not to wrest judgment; not

to respect one person above another; not to take a bribe or anything that is calculated to affect their judgment of a case.

Duties of Kings. The remaining verses of this chapter give instructions as to the conduct of the kings that the Israelites would some time have. Comparison of the deeds of some of the kings, as recorded in the books of Kings and Chronicles, show how far many of their kings disobeyed these precepts.

Things not to do are mentioned first: their kings were to be of their own people, they were not to multiply horses which might be a temptation to war, they were not to multiply wives, nor greatly multiply silver and gold. Even Solomon, wise as he was, failed on these lines. I Kings 10.26 says he had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horsemen, and I Kings 11.3, 700 wives and 300 concubines. Nehemiah 13.26 sums up his case: "Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? yet among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel; nevertheless even he did outlandish women cause to sin."

After telling what a king should not do, Moses goes on to set forth the positive duties of a king. The outstanding thing was that he should write for his own use a copy of the law in a book. He was to take the authentic copy of the law that was in the hands of the Levites, make a copy of it, and "read therein all the days of his life." This shows that their king should be a literate individual. It also indicates that reading and writing were well-known arts in the days of Moses, the Judges and the Kings.

There is evidence that even king David failed in this respect at one time. When he went to bring up the ark of the Lord from the house of Abinadab, where it had been deposited when returned from the Philistines, we read that he placed it on a "new cart," after the manner in which the Philistines had returned it. Read II Samuel, chapter six. Disaster marked the attempt to bring it in that heathenish way, and one man died. Three months later David again went to bring up the ark. He says in I Chronicles 15.2, the parallel account, "None ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites." It is evident that in that three months he either made himself a copy of the law, or secured a copy and found out the fact that he here mentions. Note also how good king Josiah was at first ignorant of the law until, in cleansing the temple, the book of the law was found and read to him. See I Chronicles 34.14-19 and following.

The Priestly Tribe, Levites, were to have no portion in the land when the Israelites went into Canaan. Theirs was a richer heritage -- "the Lord is their heritage." But the other tribes had a responsibility toward them, which they did not always fulfill.

Warning against False Prophets, and unlawful ways of trying to pry into mysteries is given in this chapter. There were many ways in which the people of the land they were to inherit had of undertaking to find out about the future and other hidden things. The Israelites were not to use any of these means. We do well to take heed to these instructions. There is a great business being carried on in our own times by people who work on the superstitions of people. More people than the average person thinks are using these means to help them in their business, and in deciding problems. We should want to know only what God is pleased to reveal to us. It is better for our peace of mind that we do not know too much about the future of the things of this life.

A Notable Messianic Prophecy Is given in this chapter. The Prophet of verses 15 and 18 is undoubtedly Jesus Christ, and is so interpreted by the inspired speakers and writers of the New Testament. Peter, speaking to the multitude in the temple court, soon after Pentecost, said, "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever He shall say unto you." (Acts 3:22). And again, Stephen, in his address to the Sanhedrin, says, "This is that Moses which said unto the children of Israel, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; Him shall ye hear." (Acts 7:37).

In this connection it is interesting and instructive to observe that prophecies of coming events have both a near and far application. The immediate fulfillment of this prophecy was the raising up of Joshua to take Moses' place as leader and prophet. Twice in the New Testament in the Authorized Version Joshua is called Jesus. See Stephen's reference to him in Acts 7:45, and Hebrews 4:8 where it is very evident Joshua is intended instead of Jesus Christ, But the near fulfillment does not do away with the eventual and complete fulfillment.

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12 -- ISRAEL'S PROGRAM OF CONQUEST -- (Deuteronomy 19:1-20:20)

THE Cities of Refuge are described in the first part of chapter 19. Observe how these cities were located so they might be reached from any part of the land. Also roads were made so that the fleeing manslayer could know the way and be unimpeded in his flight. The description of a manslayer is explicit, and he is differentiated from the deliberate murderer. A man could know he was eligible to refuge in one of these cities, and once there, was perfectly safe. It took determination to get to one of the cities of refuge, and one during his flight might be exceedingly anxious; but once there anxiety was ended and peace ensued. Compare the determination of one of these fleeing manslayers with the easy-going way some sinners seek salvation. Imagine one fleeing for his life with the sound of the avenger's footsteps behind him stopping to pick some flowers! God has prepared the Way in Jesus Christ, and made the way so plain a child can understand how to reach the city of refuge from the penalty of sin.

Importance of Landmarks -- Provision was made that every family in Israel knew his land and was secure in it.

Landmarks were placed to mark off every family's inheritance, and succeeding generations were not to remove the landmarks that were anciently placed. Certain landmarks were placed by the Lord Jesus Christ and the Apostles under inspiration of the Holy Ghost for this age of the Church, and woe to the modernist or other innovator who would remove these.

Administration of Justice -- The Bible deals with the human race as it is, and recognizes the fact that crime will need to be dealt with. In the trial of a law-breaker, witnesses are very important, but the word of one witness, however trustworthy, was not to be sufficient for the conviction of a suspected criminal. Two or three witnesses must agree in order for conviction. If a man brought false witness against another, when the matter was searched out he was made to suffer

what he had attempted to have done to his opponent. The last verse of this chapter has not been annulled by what Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount. He corrected a wrong application of the principle. This was not what the individual should do to his opponent, but what the judges. In administering the law did. Unless a person avails himself of salvation through Christ, he will suffer the full penalty of the law without mercy.

Encouragement in Battle -- Chapter 20 is an important chapter. It starts with "When thou goest out to battle." Israel had battles to fight in dispossessing the seven nations of Canaan, and provision was made for the conquest of other nations in due time. The Christian also has battles, though we fight not against flesh and blood, and may take courage from the instruction of verses 1 to 4. When Israel went to battle odds seemed to be against them. They met armies with "horses, and chariots, and a people more than thou," but they were to be "not afraid of them." The Christian is in the minority in this world, but he need not be dismayed because of that, for like the Israelite, "the Lord thy God is with thee." Their deliverance from Egypt was cited as a reason why they need not be afraid. In like manner our courage is based on our deliverance from sin. If they were not out of Egypt they might well be afraid; and if we have not been delivered from sin we may well be afraid of our enemies in this world.

The Priest's Part -- When a battle was about to take place the priest was the first one to deal with the soldiers, as a kind of chaplain. His part was to encourage the soldiers. What encouraging words he spoke: "Let not your hearts faint, fear not, and do not tremble, neither be terrified because of them; for the Lord your God is He that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you."

The Officers' Part -- After the priest had given encouragement the officers sifted out the ranks. The man who had recently built a house, the one engaged to be married, and the fearful were ruled out as unacceptable soldiers. Any one who had something on his mind he deemed more important than the battle was allowed to go and attend to that thing. In like manner the soldier of Jesus Christ should have nothing on hand more important than the battle for souls. He will be a weakling. And alas, how many are of that sort.

Cities In Canaan and Out -- It is to be noticed that God gave different instructions about warring against the cities outside of Canaan from what He told them to do in Canaan. Failure to notice this difference will obscure God's program for Israel. Verses 16-18 instruct them to utterly destroy all the cities in Canaan. No offer of surrender was to be given them. God had appointed them to utter destruction. But cities "far off" were to be offered peace, But if they resisted they were to be besieged until they were conquered. No other result than victory is suggested: "until it be subdued." See verse 20.

Israel's Program of Conquest -- The last part of this chapter, verses 10-20, set forth God's plan for Israel to bring the world under their jurisdiction. You will note that the first thing they were to do was to utterly destroy the seven wicked nations in Canaan. After establishing themselves there they were to undertake the conquest of cities and nations outside. It is evident no limit was placed on this extension of their possessions. If carried out according to instructions Israel would have conquered the world and conditions approaching what we read of the Millennium would have resulted.

Israel's Failure -- But Israel failed to carry out even the initial part of their program: they never destroyed the seven wicked nations of Canaan, but eventually mingled with them, and took on their ways, until God carried them away to Babylon and turned the rule of the world over to the Gentile nations. To this day we live in the "Times of the Gentiles."

Israel's Eventual Victory -- But God will yet make the children of Abraham rulers of the world when Jesus returns as their King.

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13 -- INCIDENTS OF JUDGMENT AND MERCY -- (Deuteronomy 21:1-22:30)

A Mysterious Murder is dealt with in the first nine verses of chapter 21. A slain man is discovered in a field. Some one has evidently murdered him. Whether it was an accidental killing or a deliberate one no one knows. But God's law must be vindicated in some way.

Elders and Judges, those who administer the law, first take the matter in hand. They decide by measurements the nearest city. Then the elders of that city, not being able to locate the murderer, slay a heifer as a substitute for slaying the murderer. Thus the law is vindicated, and the matter set right legally.

Priests and Levites, those who administer mercy, now come on the scene. Under their administration the elders of the city made responsible wash their hands over the slain heifer, and God forgives the murder. Notice there was no mercy until the law was vindicated. In like manner the sin of men is not forgiven until the requirements of the law have been met in the sacrifice of Jesus. The elders could not go just anywhere and wash their hands and make their confession: it must be over the dead heifer. In like manner sins cannot be forgiven by mere repentance, but there must be confession of Christ just as truly as there is confession of sins. Salvation is only on the merits of the One slain.

Concerning verses 10 to 17 we may say that, while God's plan is for one man and one woman to be united for life, yet, knowing what man would do, God provides regulations as to what to do when questions arise in tangled domestic affairs.

The Stubborn Son (vs. 19-21) and how he shall be dealt with shows the drastic effect of law without mercy. If no plan of mercy had been provided this is what would be due every stubborn son. This son evidently made no confession or restitution to his parents. Notice the contrast of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15, but notice also that he received what he did because he confessed his wrong doing.

The Accursed Criminal is dealt with in only two verses, (22, 23) but the Apostle Paul bases a doctrine on 'these verses. Read What he says in Galatians 3.13: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."

God's Care for Details and some various ordinances make up the contents of chapter 22. We will consider some of these.

Responsibility for another's possessions is referred to in verses 1 to 3. A temptation to shirk responsibility and make out that the straying animal was not seen is to be resisted. Brotherhood is indicated in mention of the finder not knowing the loser and yet he is called "thy brother." The maxim that "the finder is the keeper", in the sense of ownership, is denied in this passage. The busy man, in a hurry to get his own errand finished, may be tempted to look the other way and pretend he does not see the other man's fallen ox, but the Lord cautions against that attitude.

Clothing of men and women is not beneath God's notice and instruction. Verse 5 should be read by women who are taking on men's attire. The tendency is augmented by the fact that so many women are taking on men's jobs; but after familiarizing themselves with pants in the shop, it is an easy step to slip into the habit in the home and on the street. Christian women should surely regard God's statement in this regard when He says, "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God." If we do not care for what God thinks about this matter it indicates the attitude, "I don't care what God thinks about what I wear." Do we care about what He thinks and says about anything?

Verses 6 and 7 indicate that the God of the Old Testament is the same as the God of the New Testament, Who notes the sparrow's fall. If He is so careful of the birds and their nests, will He not be careful for us also?

Responsibility for accidents is indicated in verse 8. House owners should see that no death-traps are left about their premises. May we not see in this also admonition to see that we do not put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in a brother's way, by some careless act or unwholesome habit? See that the battlements of your spiritual life are well looked after lest some one fail because of slackness regarding them.

Mixtures of various seeds, animals, fabrics, etc. are warned against in verses 9 to 11. May we not see here warning against mingled and confused doctrines in the seed sown in the field. Note the parables of the Wheat and tares in Matthew 13. Plowing with an ox (a clean animal) and an ass (an unclean animal) would seem to indicate it is not well to try and carry on religious work by mixing saints and sinners in the membership of the church. While a Jew, a Catholic, and a Protestant may legitimately unite in undertaking to put out a fire in a neighbor's house, we do not think a religious meeting in which these various religions unite is wholesome nor pleasing to God. Then, too, the plan that is gaining ground to unite all so-called Protestant denominations is likely to result in sowing mingled seed in the garden of religion. We may look for hybrids of a disastrous character as a result.

The Garment of woolen and linen suggests mingled habits. Priests were not to wear woolen in their ministrations. See Ezekiel 44.17.

The remainder of chapter 22, verses 13 to 30, may be better read in private than in public, But it Is well to read and consider how wicked sexual sins are in the sight of God. In this and some following chapters more is made of this sin than any other. Many otherwise good men have fallen over this sin. Some ministers of the Gospel have lost their usefulness by a single error on this line, and who knows but that they may lose their souls and be the cause of others being lost.

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14 -- VARIOUS LAWS AND ORDINANCES -- (Deuteronomy 23:1-25:19)

WHY All These Restrictions? is a natural question as one reads these chapters. Perhaps some readers will say that they were never tempted to do the vile things prohibited in these chapters, But God says (Jer. 17.9) "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." And the Lord goes on in the next verse to say, "I the Lord search the heart.' So He knows that these things that He prohibits are things of which the unregenerate human heart is capable. Jesus further emphasizes this fact when He says (Matt. 15.19) "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies."

God Gives These Cautions because all persons, not vile criminals only, are capable of committing these wicked deeds. Bound up in the natural human heart are the seeds of all these things. Because some reader has never been tempted to do some of these things is no cause for self-congratulation. God has placed you in an environment where you have been protected from conditions that would, so to say, incubate these eggs of evil condition into wicked actions. Every unregenerate person has these tendencies in his heart, and as long as carnality remains in the heart, the unsanctified may be suddenly rushed into some of these things by an unforeseen and unusual temptation. To further emphasize this fact the Bible records how some of its great characters fell into these very sins, and we do well to take heed lest we fall after the same evil example. The same temptations still assail men, and God in mercy has given us these restrictions to help us in the evil day of temptation.

God's Care is Manifest In these restrictions. They are not only for the condemnation of the law-breaker, but for the protection of His people. C. H. M, in his valuable notes on this book appropriately says, "No mother could be more careful of the habits and manners of her little child than the almighty Creator and moral Governor of the universe was of the most minute details connected with the daily history of His people. By day and night, waking and sleeping, at home and abroad, He looked after them. Their clothing, their food, their manners and ways toward one another, how they were to build their houses, how they were to plow and sow their ground, how they were to carry themselves in the deepest privacy of their personal life, -- all was attended to and provided for in a manner that fills us with wonder, love, and praise."

The Presence of God is emphasized in these restrictions. He "walketh in the midst of thy camp," and observes all that is done or undone. He wants to find things clean in all respects. His presence there also protects from the enemy. The fact that God is present with us should on the one hand make us fearful of displeasing Him, and on the other hand give us comfort that He is protecting us.

The Restrictions against certain persons being excluded from the congregation, as set forth in the first part of chapter 23 seem rigid and unkind, and yet we find Ruth, who was of one of these restricted races, coming into the fellowship of Israel, and even into the ancestry of the Lord Jesus Christ. The faith of Ruth and the grace of God are set over against the rigidity of the law, and faith and grace abounded more than the law and sin. In view of these facts surely no one need despair of being welcomed to the congregation of the Lord.

Generosity is emphasized and a promise is given in connection with it. In instructions about not lending to one's brother on usury. Blessing in all one sets his hand to is promised to such. Vows once made must be kept, but no law requires one to vow. The provision for the newly-married man to remain at home and comfort his wife the first year is another of God's manifestations of thoughtfulness concerning domestic happiness.

Respect for the Priests is enjoined especially in regard to the plague of leprosy. The detailed instructions of Leviticus chapters 13 and 14 were given them that they might detect leprosy in garments, houses, and persons. They are reminded of the case of Miriam, as recorded in Numbers chapter 12.

Masters and Servants were to live happily together. Emphasis is put on the master's part. The servant is not to be oppressed, and the hired servant is to have his remuneration promptly. They were to remember how they suffered as bondmen in Egypt, and treat others as they had wished to have been treated there.

Regard for the Poor Is emphasized. Evidently there were no "No Trespassing" signs placed about the premises. After the field was reaped the poor could go in and get the overlooked sheaf and the scattered grain, as Ruth gleaned in the field of Boaz. After the olive tree was shaken, the remaining olives could be picked by the poor. This did not sanction stealing on the part of the poor. It is evident no one was allowed to starve, even if very poor. Notice. In Jesus' day how the "woman of Canaan" (Matt. 15.21-28), denied the bread, begged for the crumbs, and was satisfied. In a sense we Gentiles are gleaners in the Jewish field, but, like Ruth, we have a prospect of a close relationship with the owner of the field, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Strict Honesty Is enjoined in the admonition not to have different weights and measures in the house. The presence of such in the house would be a temptation to use, and might be an evidence that they were there by choice and for use. A man would lay himself open to suspicion who had short weights and short measures in his store, even if no one saw him using them. Attached to this admonition about honesty in weights and measures is the promise, "that thy days may be lengthened in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." There is evidently a connection between dishonesty and ill health, and also a connection between honesty and good health.

The Private Study of these chapters should be very beneficial. Search your heart with the candle of God's truth as set forth in these restrictions, and pray for the removal of inbred sin that contains the seed of all these evil things.

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15 -- PROFESSION AND POSSESSION -- (Deuteronomy 26:1-19)

THE Instruction of This Chapter, though given before Israel entered the land of Canaan, was to be carried out after getting into the land. The land was given to them by the Lord, but they were to enter it, possess it, and dwell therein. It is plain that one must dwell in the land before he can bring the fruit of the land. As a demonstration of their thankfulness to the Lord for giving them the land they were to bring to the priest, God's representative, "the first of all the fruit of the earth." After putting the fruit in a basket they were to go and take it "unto the place which the Lord thy God shall choose," not to a place of their own choosing. From this we may gather the spiritual lesson that we must possess salvation before we can present the fruits of salvation; and, furthermore, we must present the fruit if we have salvation. Fruits without salvation are impossible, and salvation without fruits is withholding from God His due.

A Testimony was to accompany the bringing of the firstfruits. The Israelite was to openly profess to the priest and to any others who might hear him that he had actually come into the land God had promised, and toward which they had labored for forty years. He was not hoping to come, nor was he striving to come, nor praying that he might come, but he was to declare that he had actually come, and, in proof thereof, he presented the firstfruits of the land. In like manner, while a person may be a long time seeking salvation, praying and hoping for it, there must come a time when he can confidently say, "I have salvation, and this is the fruit of it." The Israelite did not offer the fruit in order to get into the land, but because he was in. In like manner good works are not the means of getting salvation, but the result of having salvation. The fruit was not the purchase price of the land, but the fruit of it. How many there are who bring the wormy fruit of their own good works and hope to obtain salvation by means of it!

A review of the Past was to accompany the Israelite's testimony. The contrast of the past poverty with the present prosperity was in order. Jacob, the Syrian referred to, was once in the land, but was obliged to leave it because of famine. Likewise Adam, our ancestor, was once in right relations with God, but lost his inheritance. The Israelite did not get hope from the past, neither can we find any hope of salvation in Adam. We were ready to perish when the Lord took us into Canaan, The bondage of sin is illustrated by the bondage of the Israelites to the Egyptians. But the Israelites were delivered from their bondage when they "cried unto the Lord," as we are when we cry unto God in the name of Jesus. All credit was to be given the Lord for their deliverance from Egypt and their being brought into the land.

The Israelite was to Rejoice because of being in the land. It appears to be a command to rejoice. It reminds us of Paul's exhortation to the Philippians: "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice." (Phil. 4.4). This exhortation we may well heed also. The rejoicing was to be contagious, being shared by all the Israelite's house, the Levite, and the sojourning stranger.

A Further Testimony was to be given by the Israelite when he brought in his tithe for the poor, which, in addition to his other tithes, as described in a previous lesson, he was to bring every third year. In this case he was to say what he had done, having told in the previous part of the chapter what the Lord had done for him. He was to profess that he had taken the tithe as the Lord commanded; that the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow had been fed

therefrom. He had not forgotten the commandment of the Lord in this regard, neither had he taken anything out for his own private use. Note the frequency of the statement "I have."

Receiving and Giving, The first part of this chapter tells of receiving; the last part tells of giving. This is God's order: we are to receive before we can give. If the Israelite was not in Canaan he could not give to the poor the fruits of Canaan. If we are not partakers of the grace of God in salvation, we cannot dispense the benefits of our religion to others. The unworthy sinner who has been saved from sin and its penalty by the grace of God, may well give of his means to the unworthy poor as well as those whom he deems worthy.

A New Testament Parallel. The two Testaments are corroborative: they speak the same language, and set forth the same precepts. Read these words in Hebrews 13.15,16: "By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name." Here is the counterpart of the Israelite bringing his basket of fruit and professing he is in the land and enjoying the benefits of what God has given him, And the next verse says: "But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." Here we have the counterpart of the Israelite taking his tithes and giving them to the poor, the Levite, widow, a t r a n g e r, and the like. These two sides of religion are inseparable as set forth in the Bible.

The Double Testimony. But the testimony is not all to be on one side. The Israelite is to testify: but the Lord is to testify also. See verses 17 and 18 of our chapter in Deuteronomy. Verse 17 says, "Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God." This is the Israelite's testimony. In verse 18 we read, "And the Lord has avouched thee this day to be His peculiar people." Here is the Lord's responding testimony. The genuine testimony of a truly saved soul brings back the testimony of God that the one testifying is indeed His child. There is truly a witness of the Spirit with our spirit that we are the children of God.

A Holy People, The chapter ends with the statement that they were to be a holy people. Just as truly as God designed that the Israelites should be a holy people, so truly He plans that His people of this dispensation should also be a holy people.

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16 -- BLESSINGS FOR OBEDIENCE -- (Deuteronomy 27:1-28:14)

The Third Section of the book begins with the 27th chapter, in which the leading thought is contained in the word "obey." As stated in the previous lesson the instruction here given pertains to matters to be attended to after the Israelites entered the land of Canaan. This is plain from the words, "when ye shall pass over Jordan unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

The Law Written. One of the first duties assigned them after they entered the land was to set up those large stones, plaster them and write on them the words of the law. Opinions as to how much was written on these stones vary all the way from the Ten Commandments as a minimum to the whole book of Deuteronomy as a maximum. Probably there were the Ten Commandments and quite likely some additional statutes, but not likely all of Deuteronomy. These laws were the basis

of their government which was to be very different from the government of the nations in Canaan they were to succeed.

An Altar Erected. The tabernacle was not immediately set up on entering Canaan, so a temporary altar was to be erected on which to offer suitable sacrifices. This was to be of whole stones and they were not to be marred by tools of iron, suggesting God does not accept human goodness on His altars. It is noticeable that no sin or trespass offerings were mentioned as offered at that time: only peace and burnt offerings. This would indicate that Israel was on right terms with God on entering Canaan.

The Law Emphasized. After Moses had given these instructions as to what to do on entering Canaan, he and the priests and Levites admonished the people that since they were the people of the Lord they should give good heed to the laws of God.

The Tribes Divided, On the other side of Jordan, which they were soon to cross, were two mountains adjacent to each other, Gerizim and Ebal. When the Israelites went over Jordan Moses instructs that the tribes shall be assembled on the sides of these mountains. The stones that contained the law that was to be written were to be on the Mount Ebal side of the valley. (vs. 4). Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin were the tribes to assemble on Mount Gerizim, the mount of blessing; and Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali were to be assembled on Mount Ebal, the mount of cursing. It is noticeable in passing that the tribes on the blessing mountain were all of the free women, wives of Jacob, while the ones on the mount of cursing with the exception of Reuben, were the tribes from the servant wives of Jacob.

Cursing and Not Blessing. While it is stated that those tribes on Mount Gerizim were to bless the people, there is no mention of blessing in the remainder of the chapter -- only curses. Perhaps this is because no man in his natural strength is able to meet the conditions for blessing under the law. Notice how the chapter concludes: "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them." It is evident Paul has this passage in mind when he writes, "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." (Gal. 3.10).

The Nature of the Curses. It is noticeable that the curses are for the most part against disobedience to the Ten Commandments. The making of a graven image, the disregard of parents, the sin of adultery, false witness, murder are all included, with a comprehensive statement at the end covering all the law.

Blessings Announced. We have entitled this lesson "Blessings for Obedience." The latter part of the 27th chapter does not fit the title very well, and yet it is assumed that those who did not come under the curses there announced were entitled to blessings. In coming to the 28th chapter it is to be observed that, while the cursings of the previous chapter are individual and personal, as indicated by the singular pronouns employed, the blessings and cursings of the chapter on which we now enter are national and have to do with the conduct of the nation of Israel as they will behave in the years and centuries that, as the time when these words are spoken, were yet future.

Israel's National Position. The chapter starts with a statement of Israel's ideal position as above all the other nations of the earth. This purpose of God will eventually be realized by Israel, in spite of their disobedience; not as a result of their meriting the position through any good deeds of their own, but through the work of Jesus Christ, whom they will eventually accept as their Redeemer. Christ's sacrifice has a national scope as well as an individual scope. The sins of the individual are canceled when he accepts Christ as his Saviour. In like manner the national sins of Israel will be canceled when they nationally accept Christ as their Messiah. Their position as head of the nations under the law depended on their keeping the laws of God; their position under grace will be as a result of their accepting Jesus Christ as Messiah.

The One Condition of Blessing was hearkening to the word of the Lord and obeying it. The blessings were not dependent on living in the city or living in the country: they would be blessed in either place if obedient. In journeying they would be blessed going out and coming back. Their children would be blessed and their herds and flocks increased under the blessing of God. They would have military success, their enemies fleeing before them in confusion. Their blessing would not result from the choice of a certain kind of business, for they would prosper "in all that thou settest thine hand unto, assuming, of course, that it was a business in which they did not disobey the commandments of God.

The Blessing a Consequence of obedience rather than as a result of seeking to be blessed. The blessings need not be sought; they would "overtake" them. They need only seek to hearken to the Lord and obey Him.

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17 -- CURSES FOR DISOBEDIENCE -- (Deuteronomy 28:15-68)

CURSES in Detail -- While the blessings are told in fourteen verses of this chapter, the description of the curses occupy fifty-four verses. The curses of this chapter should not be confused with the curses of the previous chapter. It is to be observed that those curses are personal, which is plain from the words "Cursed be the man," and "Cursed be he." While the singular pronoun is used in the verses of this lesson, this is often done when the Bible speaks of Israel nationally and collectively.

The Curses Reverse the Blessings. The same setting is given for the curses as for the blessings, in the city, in the field, basket and store, going out and coming in. Therefore the blessings and curses were not dependent on occupation, place of residence, or other physical circumstance. The blessings were conditions on "if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God," and the curses come as a result of "if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all His commandments." The curses fall upon them from different angles and affect them in various ways.

Occupational Curses. Verses 15 to 20 tell of curses to come upon them in regard to outward economic conditions -- "in all that thou settest thy hand unto" (vs. 20). Notice the word "because" and its frequency in this section of the chapter. God tells exactly why these curses come

upon them. There is a cause for every one of them. In this section it is "because of the wickedness of thy doings, whereby thou hast forsaken Me."

Physical Curses. Another effect of their disobedience will be diseases. Mention of curses of this kind are noted all through this part of the chapter. Pestilences, epidemics, plagues, fevers, etc. Another physical curse will fall on their land making it unfruitful. Trees will cast their fruit, vineyards will be worm-eaten, crops will be less than the seed sown.

Military Curses. When God blessed them their enemies would flee from them seven ways, but as a result of their disobedience they will flee seven ways from their enemies. They will be carried captive by strong nations to distant regions, even scattered among all the nations of the earth. Instead of worshipping God joyfully in His temple, they will be compelled to worship images of wood and stone, the gods of heathen nations.

Social Curses. The curses will invade the sacred precincts of the family. The betrothed wife will be taken by another, children will be taken away and never return, families will be broken up and never reunited.

Financial Curses. Under the blessings of God they would loan to many nations, but under His curse they would be reduced to the position of borrowers from others. Under blessing they would be above other nations, but under the curse the stranger would be very high above them, and they very low. Under the blessing they would be the head and other nations the tail; but under the curse the other nations would be the head and they the tail.

Cause and Effect. Four times in this chapter the word "because" is used to give a reason why God sends curses on the nation of Israel. "Because of the wickedness of thy doings" (vs. 20); "Because thou hearkenedst not unto the voice of the Lord thy God" (vs. 45); "Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things" (vs. 47); "Because thou wouldst not obey the voice of the Lord thy God" (vs. 62). Cause and effect are weighty principles in God's dealings with the human race, whether as nations or individuals.

The Lesson to Ourselves. Israel is not the only nation that is going to be called to account by the Lord. The time is coming when all nations will be called to account and judged for their misdoings. These nations that have and are now oppressing the Jews will be punished for their attitude of oppression and ostracism of them. The Jews have been in a sense the favored nation of the Lord. If He punishes them for their misdeeds will He not also punish other nations for their misdeeds?

The Lesson to the Church. The church should especially take to heart the things that have been written in this chapter, While the church has not taken the place of the Jews, as some erroneously think, the church has been God's favored instrument in the spread of the Gospel and the blessing of the world in this dispensation, They have been a blessing when obedient to the Lord, but have also been the cause of much woe when disobedient. The present state of a considerable portion of the nominal church today in its rejection of the Scriptures as the inspired words of God is calculated to bring God's wrath upon them. Israel is to be restored to God's favor when they turn

to Christ and acknowledge Him as their Messiah. Read Romans 11.16.25 and get the lesson. Some of the branches of the good olive tree, a symbol of Israel, were broken off because of unbelief, and some branches of the wild olive tree, a symbol of the Gentiles, were grafted in. But the Apostle says that they were broken off because of unbelief, and we as the church from among the Gentiles hold our position by faith, and that we should not boast against these broken branches, for God may cut off these grafted branches and graft the other branches in again, which He is able to do.

Individual Blessings. It is worthy of note that the curses that fell upon the nation of Israel because of their sins did not necessarily bring every individual Jew under the curse, While they suffered with the remainder of their nationals there are remarkable cases of blessing on individual Jews. Though Daniel was carried to Babylon with the first deportation of Jews to that country, he became a great saint and was mightily used there, both in the days of the Babylonian and the Persian administration. Without temple, priest, altar, or sacrifice, this man kept his fellowship with God and has blessed the world. Then later there was Mordecai who through his faith. fulness to God rose to a high position.

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18 -- THE COVENANT OF MOSES -- (Deuteronomy 29:1-30:20)

THE Covenant of These Chapters is called "The Covenant of Moses", because it was given from God through him. Observe that it is stated as distinct from the covenant given at Mount Sinai. It should be observed that the covenant of Sinai was pure law. Their continuance under God's favor and ability to enter the land of Canaan depended entirely on their keeping the Ten Commandments. But this they had not done; they had made and worshipped the golden calf, and would have been destroyed as the penalty of that broken law had not Moses interceded and saved them from destruction. There was, therefore, need of another covenant under which they could have God's favor and enter the Promised Land.

Review of the Past. Moses reminds the Israelites of what they have seen of God's dealings with them in the past. There were still living many who could remember the plagues in Egypt, for those under twenty years of age when leaving Kadesh-barnea (Numbers 14.29) were old enough to remember the departure from Egypt and the events at Sinai. He recalls to their minds the journey through the wilderness with its daily miracle of the manna, the presence of the pillar of cloud by day and pillar of fire by night indicating the constant presence and care of God.

Their Dullness of Heart. In spite of all these manifestations of God's presence and care, Moses tells them that their hearts do not perceive God's goodness. Miracles may startle and astonish, but miracles of themselves do not change the heart and reach the conscience, which must be stirred before one is regenerated. How indifferent the average Christian is to the great miracle of salvation! Otherwise how could so many lapse back into sin and give up their faith?

Marvelous Provision. It is a literal fact that the clothes and shoes of the Israelites lasted throughout their wilderness journey. There was in the wilderness neither food nor material of which to make clothes or shoes. God furnished the food in the manna, miraculously given every day: but instead of sending clothes and shoes from heaven, He made the ones they had not wear

out. God still has ways of supplying the needs of His children. When satisfied without bread of the usual kind and without wine or flesh the Israelites prospered in their wilderness journey; but when they lusted for things the Lord did not supply they had disaster and hindrance in their journey.

Preliminary Victories. In the destruction of Sihon and Og and their nations God has already given to the Israelites a foretaste of what He is about to do for them in Canaan. In order to prosper in the conquest of the land their continuance in it, they are to keep the covenant God is now making with them. 'Simple obedience now, as then, is the secret of prosperity; for them it was material prosperity, but for us it is spiritual prosperity, with such material things as we need. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matt. 6.33).

No One Overlooked. Notice in verses 10 and 11 how God takes notice of all the members of the congregation. Not only does He mention the captains, elders, officers, but also the little ones, the wives, and even the stranger, hewer of wood and drawer of water. The covenant with its obligations and privileges is for every one. Likewise the Gospel is for all from the greatest to the least.

Idolatry Forbidden. God calls attention to the idols they have seen other nations worshipping, and cautions them against following their example. He sets before them the example of Sodom and warns a sad fate for them if they depart from this covenant. Alas, just as they failed under the covenant of Sinai, so have they failed under the covenant of Moses given in this chapter.

The Future Unveiled. In chapter 30 Moses tells of what will eventually come as a result of their not keeping this covenant. For a time there will be the blessings mentioned in a previous chapter, followed by the curses as a result of disobedience. They will be scattered among all nations, but will eventually return to the Lord and obey His voice. Then the Lord will turn their captivity and gather them back into the land from which they have so long been exiled because of their disobedience. No matter how far they may have been driven, God can reach them. While pilgrimages are necessary in order to reach holy places, the heart can find God any where on condition of repentance. Israel is without sacrifice or temple or approved priest after the Aaronic order, but there is a Great High Priest who can be reached from any place in the world.

A Reversal Coming. Things will be reversed some day. Instead of the curses being on the Jews, it will be on those nations and peoples who have oppressed them, as stated to Abraham in Genesis 12.3: "And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee." The blessings mentioned in the blessing chapter, recently studied, will then replace the cursings so long endured by the Jews.

The Land and People United. Palestine and the Jewish question is the thorniest problem the nations are now considering. It looks impossible for any satisfactory solution of the problem of Jews and Arabs ever being reached. But God's promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will come to pass. God knows how to bring it about. Read these passages: "Unto thy seed will I give this land." (Gen. 12.7). "Unto thy seed I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swear unto Abraham." (Gen. 26.3). Read also Jeremiah 31.27-40 and see but one of many prophecies of the coming restoration of Israel to their land. Also see Hosea chapter 3.5:

"Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord in the latter days." Many other Passages may be cited to prove that God will eventually restore the people to the land of their fathers.

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19 -- THE CHARGE AND SONG OF MOSES -- (Deuteronomy 31:1-32:52)

THE Charge of Moses is recorded in the 31st chapter of this precious book we are studying. Moses mentions his age, and adds the fact that God has decreed that he shall not go over Jordan. But there is no repining at what he has been told is God's will for him. He points to the precedent of what God has done for the Israelites in overcoming the two kings east of Jordan, Sihon and Og, as an encouragement to their faith in the overcoming of the great nations of Canaan.

Moses Calls Joshua to him, and in the presence of the assembled multitude, encourages him. Joshua is eminently fitted to succeed Moses, as he has been closely associated with him since the time he led the war on the Amalekites as recorded in Exodus 17.8-15. There is no jealousy apparent in his manner. It reminds us of the words of John the Baptist when he spoke of Jesus: that He must increase and he himself decrease. "Be strong," says Moses, "and thou shalt cause them to inherit it." The Lord is going to go before them.

Publishing the Law. In order to see that the people were kept informed of God's law Moses wrote it and delivered it to the priests with instruction that it be read at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles every seventh year. At that time men, women, children, and the strangers among them were to be gathered together to hear the reading of the law. It is still profitable for all these classes to meet together in religious meetings. By this means each generation was kept informed of God's requirements..

Preserving the Law. In order to see that the written law was preserved and not scattered. It was committed to the priests who were told to see that it was put in by the side of the ark. This was in the Most Holy place in the Tabernacle, where only the high priest, and he only once in a year, was permitted to go. No safer place could have been found for it. God has special care for His Word. We should treasure it in our hearts.

Apostasy Foretold. God reveals to Moses the fact that the people will apostatize after his death. This must have been grievous information for Moses, but he had experienced much of the rebellion of the people in the wilderness. It is the incurable disposition of human nature to go away from God when leaders die. This is true of the church just as it was of Israel. Witness the decline of spirituality in the various denominations when their great spiritual leaders die.

The Song of Moses is recorded in chapter thirty-two. In a sense this is retrospective and prophetic. The past and future of Israel are epitomized here, and, to some extent the past and future of the nations of the world.

Great importance is attached to this song. The heavens and the earth are called to give attention. While we call it the song of Moses, the words are spoken by the Lord Himself to Moses

who is instructed to teach them to the people. God's doctrine is likened to rain and dew, refreshing and renewing in its effect. God Himself is likened unto a Rock.

The People's Condition. What a contrast is the conduct of the people when compared with the perfections of God! "They have corrupted themselves." "They are a perverse and crooked generation." In spite of this condition God uses the endearing term of "Father" as His relation to Israel. How it must grieve Him for His people, either in the Old Testament or in the church at present, to be so inconsiderate of His claims!

Arrangement of the Nations. In a sense we have in verse 8 Bible Geography and Bible History, and, also the scheme of the geography and history of the world. Let us ponder the words: "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." This makes the little land of Palestine the center of the world. Consider the effects that have issued from that land, and the prophecies about its future. It is the land of the patriarchs, the prophets, and apostles, and, most of all, the land where Jesus did His mighty works, and where He died for the sins of the world.

History Centers in that land. Most of the events of ancient history that we know in an authentic manner occurred in Palestine or within a thousand or fifteen hundred miles of that land, The great monarchies of the ancient world clustered about that land: Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome, The future of the world's history will also center there. Read on to the end of verse 13 and see how God has blessed Israel.

Israel's Ingratitude. What a contrast to these great things God has done for Israel are the things they have done against Him! Read the record in verses 15-25 and compare it with what the Jews have suffered of late, and to some extent during a large part of their history.

God's Solitude is manifest beginning with verse 26. The nations of the world are disposed to think they are doing things to the Jews and are having their own way with them, but, while God is using them to punish them for their rebellion, there is a limit set to what they can and will do.

Their latter End of verse 29 evidently points forward to the future. Notice the reverse of chapter 28.7, where the enemies of Israel shall flee seven ways from them, and this verse 30 where their enemies so overcome them that one can chase a thousand of them, and two put ten thousand to flight.

The Two Rocks, God likens Himself to a Rock, "the Rock," (vs. 4) but Israel leaned on another rock, (vs. 27), that did not profit them. They forsook the Rock and leaned on another rock and gave to that rock their sacrifices, meaning they left the worship of the true God and worshipped idols. All this came to pass in their history after entering Canaan, until God was obliged to allow the Babylonians to carry them captive.

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20 -- THE BLESSING OF MOSES AND HIS DEATH -- (Deuteronomy 33:1-34:12)

MOSES' Method Changes in the 33rd chapter of Deuteronomy. He has been very solicitous of the Israelites, and what they will do, and what will befall them after his departure. He has been sometimes stern as he has told them what they will do after his death. He has repeated the blessings and curses that will befall them on condition of obedience or disobedience, and the curses have taken more space in the book than the blessings, But now he looks to their future and relates prophetically the good things that await them -- things that are yet future to the Jew. We see them today distressed and disobedient, driven from country to country, bated by more than they are loved, but, as Moses looked from the top of Pisgah and saw the land of their future inheritance, he sees far down into the prophetic future when Israel will be the most favored of nations. In the light of his prophetic vision he pronounces these blessings. Let us consider them briefly.

A Contrast -- This chapter, to one well acquainted with the Bible, immediately reminds one of the 49th chapter of Genesis, where is recorded the words of Jacob as he tells them one by one what "shall befall you in the last days." In Jacob's message to his sons mention is made of some of the evil things they did, in some cases a very unpleasant history. In contrast with this Moses makes no mention of the evil of the doings of the ancestors of the different tribes. Here mercy rejoices against judgment, for where there is repentance there is forgiveness, and the Jews will eventually repent and be forgiven.

Tribal Blessings. We cannot enlarge on all the tribes. The statements are quite explicit. But we will notice some things. Reuben is first mentioned, both by Jacob and Moses, because he was the oldest. Jacob says he will not excel, but Moses pleads, "Let Reuben live."

An Omission. If the reader will carefully read this chapter and underline the name of each tribe, he will find, on counting them up, that there are but eleven, and if a search is made, it will be found that the tribe of Simeon is omitted. However, much is said favorably of Levi. It will be remembered that Levi and Simeon were associated in the slaughter of the Shechemites (Gen. 34.25-31). When, at the time of the worship of the golden calf, and Moses called for all that were on the Lord's side to rally to him, the Levites responded to the call, but Simeon did not, though he was present and heard the call. Moses makes much of the doings of Levi on that occasion, and it resulted in that tribe being made the priestly tribe.

Judah, though the ancestral tribe of Jesus Christ, is not elaborated in Moses' blessing. Jacob has more to say about Judah, and plainly declares that the scepter shall not depart from Judah until Shiloh come, evidently looking forward to the coming of Christ and His eventual reign over the other tribes and the whole world.

Joseph's Blessing is elaborate, both in Jacob's prophecy and in Moses' blessing, which is also prophetic. Sun and moon, mountains and hills, heaven and earth and sea are drawn upon to describe what Joseph has been and will be. He evidently will have much to do in the coming restoration.

Benjamin, the tribe that was almost exterminated in the days of the Judges, (See Judges chapters 20, 21, and 22), comes in for a good place in Moses' blessing. It is worth noting, also, that Paul was of this tribe (Philippians 3.5).

Zebulun and Issachar are put together in this blessing. Reference to Judges 5.15 and 18 shows that these two tribes responded to the call of Deborah and Barak in the battle against Sisera.

Gad has a blessing of enlargement pronounced on him. His mother named him Gad and said "a troop cometh." (Gen. 30.11).

Dan is mentioned with great brevity. Jacob calls him a serpent by the way, an adder in the path (Gen. 49.17). Moses here calls him a lion's whelp, and it is to be observed in the seventh chapter of Revelation, where the 144,000 sealed ones of the Israelites are mentioned, Dan is not named among those sealed.

Naphtali is well blessed. His tribe also responded to the call of Deborah and Barak and jeopardized their lives on the field of battle with Sisera.

Asher is last named, but not the least in blessing. The mention of his dipping his foot in oil, reminds me that somewhere I read that it is significant that one of the great pipe lines that convey oil from the Arabian oil fields passes through the former territory of this tribe.

Tributes to God begin and end this interesting chapter. Jeshurun is a name applied to the entire house of Israel. Here it is used with special reference to blessing, evidently in the last days. Verses 26 to 29 speak of blessings it is difficult to locate in Israel's past history, and surely do not apply to them now, but must look forward to their restoration to their land and to their place as the head of all the nations of the world.

The Death and Burial of Moses is related in a short closing chapter. In one way it is a sad picture to see the faithful leader deprived of seeing the consummation of his service pass to a successor. But, after all, it was a grand way to die. He was not sick. He climbed a mountain to meet the Lord and went home to heaven with Him. He did not die of sickness, of old age, or of the infirmities that so often mark the close of life here. He had a grand look at the Promised Land of the earthly people and then went to his better home with God. The phrase "according to the word of the Lord," is otherwise translated "at the mouth of the Lord," and Matthew Henry says that the Jews say "with a kiss from the mouth of God."

The Burial of Moses was different from most funerals. God buried him, but hid his sepulchre so that it has never been discovered. Later we find Moses in the land of Palestine with Elijah at the transfiguration of Jesus. Surely he is not dead. We will see him some day.

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THE END