

## **Deuteronomy Notes**

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### **Introduction:**

Deuteronomy is quoted or referred to in the NT more than any other OT book (nearly 100 times). Jesus quotes from Deuteronomy all three times in His temptation in the wilderness.

The Hebrew name of the book is “elleh haddabarim” (“these are the words”- as in Deut. 1:1) or, more simply “debarim” (“words”).

Deuteronomy means “the second Law.” God is repeating instructions and warnings for the next generation. He is asking them to learn from the disobedience of their parents, rather than having to learn the hard way.

- God never gives an empty warning. He sees the end and instructs us from there. He knows where we are prone to fail. And if we turn off to this repetition, we will miss out on instruction God seems to think of as doubly important.

The word “love” is used 16 times in noun form in Deuteronomy (and only 7 times in the rest of the Pentateuch). Deuteronomy contains the first specific mention of God’s love for humanity (Israel specifically). And about 12 times in this book, the people are asked to love their God (ie. the Shamma of Deut. 6:3).

The word “land” appears 153 times in Deuteronomy; “inherit” appears 36 times, “possess” (meaning “to become the heir”) appears 65 times, “hear” or “listen” appears 71 times, and “heart” appears 46 times.

Deuteronomy 4:1 is a major theme verse of the book: “Now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I teach you to observe, that you may live, and go in and possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers is giving you.”

- For the NT church, the promised land is a picture of the spiritual life, as opposed to the fleshly life of Egypt or the natural life of the wilderness, that is available to every believer in Jesus Christ.

### **Chapter 1:**

1:2 – “eleven days’ journey” – Their disobedience stretched this journey to 40 years.

- Disobedience always seems easier at first, but it never is in the long run.
- There is a part of our journey that is a prescribed wilderness journey (the 11 days from Sinai to Canaan). And they saw great things in the wilderness and learned much of God there.
- “Horeb” – That is Mount Sinai.

1:3 – “fortieth year, in the eleventh month” – This is one month before Moses’ death.

1:4 – “Sihon” – means “warrior.” He was a very powerful king.

1:5 – “explain” – The Hebrew comes from the root words meaning “to dig deeply” and “to mine.” It refers to the expository teaching of the Scriptures to the people.

- 1:6 – “long enough” – They were receiving the Law and instructions for the tabernacle at Sinai for nearly 1 year.
- 1:7 – “River Euphrates” – God defines an area of over 300,000 sq. mi. as their promised land.
- 1:8 – “have set the land before you” – God speaks of the promised land in the past tense.  
 - “go in and possess...give to them” – Both God’s part and our part are necessary.
- 1:9 – “at that time” – Moses is referring to Kadesh Barnea.
- 1:10 – “the Lord your God” – This title of God is used nearly 300 times in Deuteronomy.  
 - The promised land is always in relation to God. It isn’t just about the work or the land.  
 - “stars of heaven in multitude” – Moses is pointing to God’s promises to Abraham. (Gen. 15:5)  
 - This would be a great encouragement to the people as they begin to fight to possess these promises.
- 1:12 – “problems...burdens...complaints” – These are the reasons for the administrative structure set up over the people.
- 1:16 – “judge righteously” – They are to follow God’s precepts “for the judgment is God’s” (v. 17). Justice is always based on righteousness.  
 - For justice to be a reality there must be more of a fear of God than a fear of man.  
 - The most dangerous problem in the US is the lack of the fear of God.
- 1:19 – “Kadesh Barnea” – means “holy, wilderness-wandering.” The name signifies what they were standing in between.
- 1:22 – “let us send men before us” – The spies were the people’s idea and totally unnecessary. God had already spied out the land.  
 - “the way by which we should go up” – The excuse is so that they would know which route to take. But the real motivation is their fear.
- 1:26 – “you would not” – It was not a matter of ability, but a matter of the will.
- 1:27 – “the Lord hates us” – This is a lie and exactly opposite of what is true.  
 - There are battles on both sides of the Jordan. Life is not about trying to avoid all battles, but in finding the right battles to fight.
- 1:28 – “discouraged our hearts” – It only took 10 men of unbelief to discourage the hearts of 2-3 million people.  
 - “we have seen” – They have evaluated their chances based on what they can see.  
 - “Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” (Heb. 11:1)  
 Faith is action initiated by the unseen that points to the unseen.
- 1:30 – “He did for you in Egypt” – God has already demonstrated His ability to His people in delivering them from Egypt.  
 - God is only asking them to walk in the faith He has already worked into them through various experiences up to this point.

1:31 – “as a man carries his son” – God carried Israel.

1:32 – “did not believe” – Their failure was a failure of faith. (Ps. 78:22)

1:33 – “to search out a place for you to pitch” – God was going before them to prepare the place for them.

- He is also busy preparing them for the place.

1:36 – “Caleb” – means “dog.” He was a Kennizite, one of the original Canaanite tribes. But he, at some point, was absorbed into the tribe of Judah and the civic life of Israel.

1:37 – “you shall not go in there” – Moses was also kept out of the promised land because he didn’t listen. He disobeyed the Word of the Lord and misrepresented God to the complaining people.

1:38 – “Joshua” – The type is beautiful. Moses, who represents the Law, couldn’t get the people into the promised land. But Joshua, whose name means “Jehovah is salvation,” is a picture of Jesus who is able to get us into our promised land.

1:39 – “no knowledge of good and evil” – They were not accountable and were not to be punished for the sins and faithlessness of their parents.

1:42 – “I am not among you” – God’s presence is the determining factor of success.

- The people tried to take the land alone. They failed in their own strength.

## **Chapter 2:**

2:1 – “many days” – That is about 38 years.

2:3 – “turn northward” – 38 years earlier, they turned away from God in disobedience and unbelief. But now He gives them another chance.

- God says they have been walking “long enough.” Now it is time for them to enter into their rest.

2:4 – “Esau” – means “red, or hairy.”

- “Seir” – means “hairy.” This is Esau’s territory.

- Israel was not to touch Seir, Ammon, or Moab. God honors His promises to these non-Israelites.

- In Dan. 11, God makes it a point to tell us that He will again spare Ammon and Moab from the future judgment involving the anti-Christ.

- Israel will fight Sihon of Heshbon and Og of Bashan.

2:6 – “buy food” – They were allowed to eat other food besides for the manna, as long as they kept the dietary law.

2:5 – “given Mount Seir to Esau as a possession” – The Edomites took this land from the trans-Jordan giants as Israel was to do 40 years earlier. (v.12)

- 2:7 – “lack nothing” – God was faithful to the nation, even in the wilderness. He provided everything necessary for 2-3 million people traveling near 40 years in the desert.
- “If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.” (2 Tim. 2:13) God’s faithfulness despite our failure should not give us license to faithlessness, but rather motivate us to greater love, trust, and obedience.
- 2:9 – “given Ar to the descendents of Lot” – God was faithful to get the descendents of Lot into the promised land. How much more faithful would God be to get His people into the land?
- “Ar” – This became the capital of Moab.
- 2:10 – “Emim” – means “fearful, or terrible.” They are a tribe of giants from Gen. 14:5.
- These are giants related to the Anakim. Israel failed to go into Canaan because of the giants, but here are accounts of the giants being defeated.
- 2:12 – “Horites” – means “cave.” The verb form of the word means “to dig, or bore.” Many feel that the Horites were the ones to carve out the rock city of Petra.
- 2:15 – “they were consumed” – They were afraid of dying in battle, so they died without one. The men of Israel died because God drove them away, not because they lacked strength.
- 2:20 – “Zamzummim” – means “powerful, or noisy ones.”
- In this area of Jordon, there are huge stone monuments that archeologists are unsure of how they got there.
- 2:23 – “Caphtor” – That is Crete. These are likely the descendants of the Philistines.
- Even they could defeat the giants of Canaan.
- 2:24 – “engage him in battle” – God orders them to go after Sihon king of Heshbon, while all the other nations around Heshbon are afraid of Sihon.
- 2:26 – “with words of peace” – Israel simply asks to pass through the territory as they did with Seir and Moab.
- 2:30 – “the Lord your God hardened his spirit” – This is the real motivation behind the actions taken by Sihon.
- It has been 400 years since God’s promise to Abraham (Gen. 15:16). The iniquity of the Amorites is now full.
  - God knows when there is no longer any good to redeem out of a nation and a culture. It is at that point that He moves in absolute judgment to preserve the surrounding peoples. In Rev. 16, the angels cry that God is just in judgment.
- 2:36 – “not one city too strong for us” – The battle is won in obedience. The enemy is inconsequential when we are fighting on the side of the Lord.

### Chapter 3:

3:1 – “came out against us” – This is another attempt to utterly destroy God’s people.

- “Edrei” – This is a city 30 miles straight east of the southern tip of the Sea of Galilee.

3:4 – “sixty cities” – Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown mention excavations of this region uncovering cities that were carved out of solid rock, doors still on their hinges that were 18 in. thick, and roofs on houses made of a single stone slab.

- These were real situations with real giants that the nation had to encounter. There was no natural way for Israel to overcome these obstacles.

3:5 – “high walls, gates, and bars” – God is preparing them to fight in the promised land. He is developing faith in them.

3:8 – “from the River Arnon to Mount Hermon” – This is all of the Golan Heights and Gilead.

3:11 – “giants” – (Heb. “rephaim”) These seem to be related to the “nephilim” of Gen. 6.

- “iron bedstead” – It was a bed or sarcophagus 13 ft. long and 6½ ft. wide.
  - The defeat of Og and the 60 cities of the giants stands as a memorial to the nation of Israel throughout the rest of their history. (Ps. 139)
- “Rabbah of the people of Jordan” – Rabbah was the capital of ancient Ammon (Amos 1:13-14). Today its name is Amman, the capital of Jordan.

3:16 – “River Jabbok” – This river is still the border of Jordan and Syria today.

3:17 – “Chinnereth” – That is the Sea of Galilee. (Chinnereth means “harp.” The Sea of Galilee is shaped like a harp.)

3:20 – “beyond the Jordan” – These are the orders for the trans-Jordan tribes.

3:21 – “I commanded Joshua” – Moses is encouraging Joshua.

3:22 – “must not fear” – Fear is the enemy of faith. It can keep an individual wandering in the wilderness until death.

- “Faith comes by hearing...hearing by the Word of God” (Rom. 10:17; Deut. 4:1)
- “for the Lord your God Himself fights for you” – This is the key. The one on our side has to be bigger than our obstacles.
  - “He who is in you is greater than he that is in the world.” (1 John 4:4)

3:23 – “I pleaded” – Moses is making his pitch to the Lord. This conversation is very intense and personal.

3:24 – “begun to show Your servant Your greatness” – The victories over the giants are getting Moses excited about the possibility of taking the promised land.

3:25 – “I pray” – The Hebrew word is a very intense word implying a continual begging.

- Moses did make it into the promised land on the Mount of Transfiguration in Matt. 17 and may be one of the two prophets testifying outside of Jerusalem in Rev. 11.

3:26 – “Enough of that” – God has had enough and tells Moses to shut his mouth.

3:27 – “Go to the top of Pisgah” – We will see Moses there in Deut. 32:48-52; 34:1-6.

3:29 – “opposite Beth Peor” – They have come to the place where the walls of Jericho are in sight.

#### **Chapter 4:**

4:1 – “listen” – Lit. “to listen with the intent of obedience.” There is a difference between hearing and listening. They are to “listen...to observe.”

- The verb meaning “to hear” is used nearly 100 times in the book of Deuteronomy.
- “be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.” (James 1:21)
- “statutes” – These are the religious rules.
- “judgments” – These are the civil laws.
- “that you may live” – True life is a result of hearing and doing the Word of God.
- “possess” – Lit. “to be an heir, or to take an inheritance.”
  - How to avoid the fail, correct, love-serve, fail cycle...stay in and obey the Word.

4:2 – “not add to...nor take from” – This instruction was to stop humans from fashioning the Word of God to meet their own ends which would prevent them from completely obeying the Word. Jesus instructed His disciples to “beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees” in Matt. 16:6. (See also Rev. 22:18-19)

- We need to be careful to not be reacting against something that is not right, but consistently be moving toward the truth of the Scriptures. The secret to obedience is to never add to or take from the Word of God.
- In Gen. 3, Eve added to God’s command and Satan took away from it.
- “You have magnified Your Word above all Your name.” (Ps. 138:2)
- “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.” (Matt. 24:35)

4:3 – “what the Lord did at Baal Peor” – This is an example of God arranging things according to His Word. In the incident of Baal Peor, those who didn’t obey God’s Word were destroyed.

4:7 – “God so near to it” – It is a tremendous blessing to have God with us and so close to us. That we sinful humans could access to the throne of God is only by His grace. (Heb. 4:16)

4:8 – “what great nation is there that has such statutes and righteous judgments” – The national of Israel is governed by the Word of God.

- God is birthing a nation and laying out the rules and groundwork from the start.

4:9 – “take heed to yourself” – We, not they, are the ones who need most to hear and change.

- God is speaking to the nation as 2-3 million individuals.
- “forget” – Lit. “to mislay, or set aside.” It is not that we will not remember God. But instead it is allowing something else to dictate the course of our life.
  - Familiarity can lead us to forget.
- “depart from your heart” – The Word of God can be choked out of our lives by the weeds of the Parable of the Sower.
- “teach them to your children” – Biblical instruction of the children is the responsibility of the parents, not the Sunday school. The most confusing message parents can send to their children is to talk about Jesus while at church and then not live it at home.
  - The Church is always 1 generation away from extinction.
  - A psychologist’s study says that parents have 60-65% of the influence over their children.

- 4:11 – “you came near and stood at the foot of the mountain” – We “have not come to the mountain that may be touched,” but we “have come to Mount Zion and the city of the living God.” (Heb. 12:18, 22)
- 4:12 – “you heard the sound of the words” – They heard God audibly. Think about how loud that voice would have had to be for 2-3 million people to all be able to hear. And the voice so freaked them out that they didn’t want to hear it again.
- Moses is reminding them of the day that they feared the Word of God.
- 4:15 – “you saw no form” – The power was in the spoken Word.
- They saw no form so they were not to try to replicate it.
- 4:16 – “a carved image” – This is not prohibiting art. It is prohibiting the making of something to bow down to and worship.
- Idolatry is a result of leaving off of the sense of the presence of God. Idolatry, not atheism, is the greater danger to the people of God.
- 4:19 – “driven” – This speaks of a motivating force behind the actions. Whatever drives you is your god.
- Humans were created to be worshippers. Everyone worships something.
- 4:20 – “iron furnace” – This is how God sees Egypt.
- “His people, an inheritance” – Ephesians 1 tells us that we are the riches of His inheritance. God actually considers Himself blessed to have us as His kids.
  - In Christ, God can see us as perfect; like Adam before the fall.
- 4:21 – “the Lord was angry with me for your sakes” – Moses reminds them of this again. (Deut. 1:37; 3:26)
- 4:24 – “your God is a consuming fire” – This is repeated in Heb. 12:29.
- “fire” – Fire either purifies or consumes, depending on the object it touches.
  - “a jealous God” – He is jealous over His name and His glory. James tells us that He is jealous over us too.
- 4:25 – “When you beget children” – Moses takes on the role of the prophet.
- 4:28 – “serve gods, the work of men’s hands” – Ps. 115 tells us that we become like the gods we make and trust in.
- Isaiah speaks of the silliness of making an idol by your own hands, for with the same piece of wood that you make an idol you also make some furniture or burn.
- 4:29 – “from there” – This was initially fulfilled in Babylon.
- “from there you will seek...and you will find Him” – This is God’s grace, even in punishment.

- 4:30 – “in the latter days” – This is looking down to the Great Tribulation. God will forever honor the covenant He made with His people, Israel.
- “when” – One day Israel will recognize Jesus and turn to their God. (Rom. 11)
  - “when you turn” – With repentance is forgiveness. God loves and will heal the backslider.
    - The NT picture is of the Father running to His prodigal son as the son is returning home. (Luke 15:11-32)
- 4:31 – “God is a merciful God” – God comes on the scene like a ambulance driver and not like a police officer.
- 4:33 – “hear the voice of God...and live” – This is a great evidence of His mercy; to allow a sinful people to hear His voice and it not kill them.
- 4:35 – “there is none other besides Him” – This is a good thing for the cults and other religions to remember.
- 4:37 – “He loved your fathers” – This is the motivation behind all that God does.
  - This is the first mention in Deuteronomy of God’s love for His people.
- 4:38 – “driving out from before you nations” – God is the one giving Israel this land.
  - In May of 1948, David Ben-Gurian declared Israel a nation. This was as impossible as anything we have ever heard of in the Scriptures regarding the promises of God to the nation of Israel.

## **Chapter 5:**

- 5:1 – “hear...learn...observe” – All are necessary to our growth in the Lord.
- 5:2 – “the Lord made a covenant with us at Horeb” – That was over 38 years earlier. Those still alive would have been very young at the time. God speaking from Mount Sinai would have been some of their very first memories.
- 5:6-21 – The Ten Commandments...repeated from Exod. 20
  - Gal. 3:11 – “no one is justified by the law in the sight of God.”
  - 1 Tim. 1:8 – “the law is good if one uses it lawfully.”
  - Rom. 4:15; 5:13; 7:7 – The law reveals sin.
  - Gal. 2:24 – “the law is a schoolmaster to lead us to Christ.”
  - The Pharisees turned the 10 Commandments into 613 rules.
- 5:6 – “out of the house of bondage” – America has become a nation that views the commandments of God as bondage, when in reality it is exactly the opposite.
- 5:7 – “before Me” – Lit. “in My presence.” God drives and dictates all of our life. He is the first god, the second god, the third god, etc. If we choose to transgress His word for anything, that makes that thing our god.



- 5:9 – “not bow down to them” – This is not a prohibition against art, but against idolatry. The tabernacle was full of art.
- “jealous God” – He is jealous over us, not just over our stuff.
  - “of those who hate Me” – This is the condition to God’s visiting of the iniquity. This is not referring to generational or ancestral sin. God judges each generation for their sin. (Ezek. 18)
- 5:10 – “thousands” – The idea carries from the previous verse of “thousands of generations.”
- 5:11 – “the name of the Lord your God” – Why does everyone feel compelled to use the name of Jesus when swearing and not Buddha or Mohammed or another?
- “in vain” – Not simply cursing, but misrepresenting Him in any way.
- 5:12 – “Sabbath” – The Sabbath is a sign between God and Israel (Exod. 31:17). It is not enforced on the Church (Col. 2:16). The OT Sabbath required the people to work six days per week, rest from sundown Friday until sundown Saturday, take off the Sabbath year, and take off the Jubilee year.
- Rom. 14:5 – “One person esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike.”
- 5:14 – “your servant may rest as well” – The Sabbath holds for the servants too. Masters were not to try to get around the Sabbath by having their servants work.
- 5:16-21 – The second half of the Law deals with our relationships with others.
- 5:16 – “honor your father and your mother” – Family contains the closest and most difficult relationships we have to deal with.
- “honor” – This word implies more than just obeying them when we are little. In the Bible times, it meant they would then take care of their parents in old age.
  - As parents, it is our desire to be parents worthy of honor.
- 5:17 – “murder” – In the NT, Jesus uses the Greek word for “murder” rather than for “kill.”
- 5:18 – “adultery” – Sexual fornication and adultery were capital offenses in Israel.
- 5:20 – “bear false witness” – This is not only referring to speaking lies, but also saying the right thing with the wrong implication.
- God hates those who sow discord. (Prov. 6:19)
- 5:21 – “not covet” – This commandment brings everything to the heart.
- In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus interprets the rest of the Law through this command. Hatred then becomes murder, lust becomes adultery, etc.
  - Paul said that it was this commandment that “killed him.” (Rom. 7:7-11)
  - The first and last commandments prove that we need a Savior.
- 5:24 – “God speaks with man” – It is remarkable that there is a God and that He would stoop to speak with man.
- 5:28 – “the Lord heard the voice of your words” – God also stoops to listen.

5:29 – “that they had such a heart” – They spoke well. It is what God wanted, but God knew better. It would only be 40 days later that they would be worshipping a golden calf. (Exod. 32)

- “fear...keep” – God so wanted to impress His glory upon His people that they would not have a desire to transgress these commands.

5:31 – “observe” – The purpose for God’s giving them these commandments and warnings is so that they would do them. The Law requires complete obedience.

5:33 – “that you may live” – This is the motivation for them to do what God has asked.

- Every good parent gives instructions to their children for the benefit of the children...don’t play in traffic, don’t touch the stove, don’t drink the drain-o, etc.

## **Chapter 6:**

Deut. 6 is a warning against idolatry.

6:2 – “that your days may be prolonged” – God wants us to flourish, not just to survive. He provides abundant life.

6:4 – “Hear” – (Heb. “shama”) Lit. “to hear, to listen with the intent to obey.”

- “one” – (Heb. “echad”) The Hebrew word is a compound unity (as opposed to the Hebrew word “yachid”). This word is pointing to the Trinity.
  - In Gen. 2:24 says that Adam and Eve become “one flesh.” The Hebrew word for “one” is “echad.”
  - God’s revelation of Himself is consistent.
- “God” – (Heb. “elohim”) This is a plural word in the Hebrew. (Gen. 1:1)
- “Lord” – (Heb. “Yahweh”) This is the covenant keeping God of Israel.

6:5 – “love” – When quoted in the NT, the Greek word “agape” is used (Mark 12:30). This is a devotion and commitment, more than an emotion.

- Jesus said the greatest commandment of God is to love Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. It is this Law that sums up the rest of the Commandments. (Matt. 22:37-40; Mark 12:29-31; Luke 10:27)
- The purpose of our existence is not merely to serve or worship God, but to love Him. Service and worship are only meaningful in the context of relationship.
- This is the greatest desire of God and the greatest responsibility of man.
- 1 John 4:19 – “We love Him because He first loved us.” We simply respond.
- “Love is altogether impossible without living faith.” (Keil & Delitzsch)

6:6 – “these words shall be in your heart” – In preparation for teaching our children, the word must be in our hearts and lives first.

- Our ministries will never rise higher than our devotional lives.
- “in your heart” – God looks deeper than just to what we do with our hand.

6:7 – “teach” – Lit. “to whet or to sharpen a sword.”

- In Hebrew, the rest of the verse (the “sit,” “walk,” “lie down,” and “rise up”) refers to how you teach diligently. This encompasses the entire day.
- Teaching them means that you will talk with your children. They are taught through relationship.

- “teach them diligently” – In Malachi 3:16 it says “those that love the Lord spoke of Him, and He kept a book of remembrance.”

6:8-9 – “bind them as a sign” – In Jesus’ day, the Pharisees made their phylacteries large. They made it an outward show, directly contradicting the spirit of the law.

- “hand...eyes...doorposts of your house” – This refers to what you do, what you look at and think about, and what surrounds your house.
  - Our lives are to match our talk or else we are teaching them the opposite of what we are saying.
  - More is caught than taught. Christianity is a relationship, not a religion. It is taught in the context of a relationship better than in the context of a classroom.

6:12 – “forget” – Lit. “to mislay, to set aside.”

- “beware, lest you forget” – It is very often the desperate men who pray desperate prayers.
  - It is a strange thing that as our obedience yields blessings, many times it is those blessings that hinder our further obedience to the Lord.

6:13 – “you shall fear the Lord” – Jesus quoted this during His temptation. (Matt. 4:10)

6:16 – “You shall not tempt the Lord your God” – Jesus quoted this during his temptation. (Matt. 4:7)

- “Massah” – This is where the nation of Israel claimed that God brought them into the wilderness to die and God brought water out of the rock. (Exod. 17:7)

6:20 – “when your son asks you” – We need to have a reason for doing what we are doing, because our kids are going to ask us “why.”

- The reason the nation of Israel is to give to their children is their testimony of how God delivered them from bondage in Egypt.

6:23 – “that He might bring us in” – He brings us out to bring us in. We have been saved to live in the life and good works God has foreordained for us from the foundation of the world.

6:25 – “righteousness for us, if we are careful to observe” – Our righteousness in Christ is a better righteousness.

## **Chapter 7:**

Deut. 7 is a warning against a false tolerance of the Canaanite tribes.

7:1 – “cast out many nations before you” – God is delivering the land to His people by casting these people out.

7:2 – “your God delivers them over to you” – God is warning the people about the dangers that follow victory.

- “utterly destroy them” – There are sins that keep us out of the promised land. And often, we would wish to weaken the sins to maintain control over them rather than completely destroying them.

- 7:3 – “nor shall you make marriages with them” – This is not a prohibition against inter-racial marriages, but against inter-worship marriages; unequally yoked – 2 Cor. 6:14.
- Rahab was of the Canaanite tribes, but will marry into the nation and be of the lineage of David and of Jesus.
  - The reason God gives for prohibiting unequally yoked marriages is that it will “turn your sons away.” (v. 4)
- 7:5 – “destroy their altars” – This is how they are to deal with the sinful practices of the people around them.
- “their wooden images” – These symbols are directly linked to their morality.
  - It is clear from the history of Israel that God did not give these warnings needlessly.
- 7:7 – “His love” – Their motivation to a total obedience was to be that they knew they were loved by God.
- 7:8 – “because He loves you” – There is no other reason why God loves us. He didn’t love them because they deserved it or because of their size, power, or influence.
- This takes all the pressure off...we are broken, little, and frail, but loved.
  - God’s love directly contrasts the earthly, conditional love we are so familiar with.
  - “keep this oath” – God always upholds His Word. He honors His Word above all His name (Ps. 138:2). And not one jot or tittle will pass from the Word (Matt. 5:18).
- 7:9 – “for a thousand generations” – This is a Hebrew idiom for “continually, or perpetually.”
- 7:10 – “to their face” – God doesn’t cut God-haters and Christ-rejecters any slack. And He is not afraid to repay them face-to-face.
- 7:14 – “blessed above all peoples” – This is a special blessing for the nation of Israel.
- 7:16 – “destroy all the peoples” – God is calling for a very severe judgment on the Canaanite tribes. At this time in history, these tribes were more wicked and perverted than any other of the nations on earth.
- In our nation, we sin and suffer because of our leniency, not because of our strictness.
- 7:18 – “not be afraid of them” – God did not bring them out to destroy them.
- “remember well” – Their recollection of God’s faithfulness in the past would give them hope for their current struggle.
- 7:20 – “send the hornet” – God is preparing the way for the victory of His people with the little hornet.
- This is the eternal purpose of the hornet.
- 7:22 – “little by little” – God is mighty and powerful. He could annihilate Canaan all at once. But He chooses to deliver to us only as much as we can handle at the time.
- God will not destroy us by blessing us.
  - God will not bless us any more than our relationship with Him can support. Our capacity is our own personal relationship with Him.
  - Think how miserable you would be to be around if you attained complete victory in your life all at once. You would have no patience for anyone else’s struggles.

- 7:25 – “burn with fire” – Nothing from these idols will benefit God’s people.
- “not covet the silver and gold” – A heart bent to money will lead to a life destroyed by compromise (like Achan in the battle of Jericho).
  - Money is a great servant and the terrible master.

7:26 – “detest” – This is the only place this word is used in the KJV translation. It literally means “to hate, to loathe.”

## **Chapter 8:**

8:1 – “that you may live...and possess” – Moses is exhorting them once again to have life and have it to the full. (John 10:10)

8:2 – “remember” – Lit. “to mark, to put a marker upon.”

- “God led you” – The shepherd is not dependant on the IQ of the sheep.
- “to know what was in your heart” – God tests us to reveal our heart to us. He already knows what is in our heart...but to us our hearts are deceitfully wicked. (Jer. 17:9)

8:3 – “He humbled you” – God knows our pride is the deadliest sin. It is the first sin that makes us think that we can be independent of God.

- “allowed you to hunger” – God permitted their lack of food. Hunger was a mandatory course.
  - God let them run out of their own resources, strength, and ability. He let them see the end of themselves.
  - In the wilderness, some of the difficulties were God directed and others were because of their rebellion and disobedience. In all the difficulties, God desired to teach them that their sustenance and life depended on His Word and not on the physical provisions alone.
- “man lives by every word” – Money, food, tech gadgets, etc do not bring life.
  - In Matt. 4:4, when Jesus quotes this the Greek word “rhema” is used.

8:4 – “garments did not wear out” – In addition, Neh. 9:21 says their shoes didn’t wear out either.

- “nor did your foot swell” – It is a common desert problem to have a feet swell due to the heat.

8:5 – “chastens” – Lit. “everything necessary for proper education.”

- Heb. 12:3-11 – God chastens the sons that He loves.
- God doesn’t chasten as a drill sergeant, or a jailor, or a police officer, but as a dad.

8:10 – “you have eaten and are full” – “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.” (Matt. 6:33)

- “bless” – Lit. “to bless, kneel, or praise.” This is the Handbook for Managing Success.
- “bless the Lord” – The key to managing success is to praise and bless the Lord in it.
  - Times of prosperity can be times of forgetting God, as we tend to attribute our blessings to our own abilities and not to God.

8:11 – “no not forget the Lord your God by not keeping His commandments” – Remembering God is defined by obedience.

8:13 – “all that you have is multiplied” – We have full bellies, cars, savings accounts, etc we are so blessed.

- God sustained 2-3 million people for 40 years. They were never really in danger of not having enough because God was taking care of the details.

8:14 – “your heart is lifted up” – Pride is a result of forgetting God.

8:18 – “He who gives you the power to produce wealth” – Our abilities, our circumstances, our health are all God-given. There is no place for pride.

- In the Parable of the Talents, all the talents were given by the master and therefore He required faithfulness with those talents. (Matt. 25:14-30)

### **Chapter 9:**

Moses is rehearsing Israel’s history to make a point; that God’s blessings have come to them undeservedly.

- In these warnings, Moses is giving the children of Israel a guidebook in handling success.

9:1 – “cross over the Jordan today” – In actuality, it will be within 2 months. (Deut. 1:3; Josh. 4:19)

- “nations greater and mightier than yourself” – God was leading Israel into something too big for them. It was a challenge they could only meet if they trusted in God.
- “cities great and fortified” – They are likely camped with Jericho in view.

9:2 – “people great and tall” – The giants and the walled cities were the reasons for Israel’s failure to take the land nearly 40 years earlier.

9:3 – “God is He who goes over before you” – The only reason why we have any victory is because He has already won the victory on our behalf.

- “He will destroy them” – On the edge of the promised land, they have to look to God.

9:5 – “not because of your righteousness” – God is not blessing Israel because of their size (7:7), their strength (8:17), or their righteousness. They must be careful to not take the credit for these victories.

- Pride is actually more dangerous to Israel than the giants.
- We have a tendency to interpret our victories through our pride and attribute them to our ability and resources.
- “but because of the wickedness of these nations” – Giving Israel this land cleanses the land from the sin of the Canaanites.
- “that He may be faithful to fulfill the word” – Israel is successful because God is faithful to His Word. (Gen. 15:16)

9:7 – “you have been rebellious” – It wasn’t just one mistake. They walked in a pattern of rebellion (starting even while they were in Egypt).

9:8 – “Horeb” – This is at Mt. Sinai with the golden calf. (Exod. 32)

- We cannot earn God’s blessing, but we can forfeit/lose that blessing through disobedience and pride.

9:9 – “neither ate bread nor drank water” – Moses ended up being on the mountain for 80 days and nights without food and water, but he was sustained by the presence of God.

- We were designed to be in the presence of God.

9:12 – “a molded image” – This is after seeing all those miracles; the plagues on Egypt, the Red Sea parting, manna coming daily, water coming from a rock, etc.

- For the work of God to be successful, it must be internal; the incorruptible seed of the Word of God in our hearts.
- Aaron called this idol “Yahweh” (Exod. 32:5). He remade God in this image.

9:14 – “I may destroy them” – One might think that Moses would have given this a second thought after all the trouble they have put him through.

9:17 – “took the two tablets and threw them” – This is the picture of the broken Law.

9:20 – “I prayed for Aaron” – This is after Aaron claimed that he merely threw the gold into the fire and had this fashioned calf jump out.

9:21 – “sin” – God calls this idol for what it is.

9:22 – “Taberah” – means “burning.” (The complaining of Num. 11.)

- “Massah” – means “strife or temptation.” (Water from the rock in Exod. 17.)
- “Kibroth Hattaavah” – means “graves of lust.” (Meat to eat in Num. 11.)

9:23 – “Kadesh Barnea” – Where Israel turned from the promised land. (Num. 14)

9:26 – “Your people and Your inheritance” – Moses gives them back to the Lord.

9:28 – “Because the Lord was not able” – Moses appeals to God based on God’s name and reputation.

## **Chapter 10:**

10:1 – “Hew for yourself two tablets” – God is giving them a second chance with the Law.

10:8 – “separated the tribe of Levi” – By setting aside the tribe of Levi, God is signifying that He still has a plan and a purpose for them.

10:10 – “as at the first time” – Moses goes back for the 2<sup>nd</sup> 40-days stint on the mount.

- 10:12 – “And now, Israel” – This is a response of the people to the work of God on their behalf.
- “We love Him because He first loved us.” (1 John 4:19)
  - “what does the Lord require” – This is a good question for all of us, and particularly interesting in light of the Law Moses is reiterating here. The Law requires perfection.
    - “Love the Lord your God with all your heart.” (Deut. 6:5)
    - “Believe on the One that He sent.” (John 6:29)
  - “fear...walk...love...serve” – These things would have prevented Israel from worshipping the golden calf, and will prevent them from worshipping idols in Canaan.
    - They are on the border of the promised land and when God leads them in, they need to remember that it is not because of their strength, ability, or faithfulness. They’ve been rebellious and stiff-necked from the start. The promised land is due only to God’s grace, plan, and promise.
  - “fear” – A good father ought to be feared as well as loved.
    - As we see ourselves as we truly are before Him, we will fear.
  - “fear...love” – The fear of God is to be united with the love of God; for love without fear makes men remiss, and fear without love makes them servile and desperate.

- 10:13 – “for your good” – Every command of God is for our good.
- If God has been this good and faithful to them while they are stubborn, just think what could happen if they cooperate.

10:14 – “the highest heaven belongs to the Lord” – “What is man that You are mindful of him?” (Ps. 8:4)

- 10:16 – “therefore” – This is because of the choice of God in our favor.
- “circumcise” – Lit. “to cut around.” This is the removal of the flesh.
  - “your heart” – Circumcision was the outward, physical sign of the covenant God made with Abraham, but God has always been more concerned with the heart than with merely external religious actions.
    - “For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.” (Gal. 5:17)
    - “Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.” (Prov. 4:23)

10:17 – “no partiality nor takes a bribe” – God is not bribed through prayer, self-sacrifice, fasting, service, etc. The only things necessary is His righteousness imputed onto us.

- 10:20 – “hold fast” – This is as a man is “united” to his wife (Gen. 2:24) and as Ruth “clung” to Naomi (Ruth 1:14).
- “take oaths in His name” – God is the only one to make our words mean anything substantial.

## **Chapter 11:**

- 11:1 – “love the Lord” – Maintaining our personal walks with Jesus will allow us to go from victory to victory. He wants us to deal with Him in the context of a relationship and not as a religion.
- It is God’s desire for His people to love Him.
- 11:3 – “which He did” – This phrase is repeated 5 times in 7 verses. Moses is asking them to remember how they experienced God in times past. These are not mere lessons from a textbook. And it is God’s faithfulness in the past that gives us hope of His continued faithfulness in the future.



11:6 – “Dathan and Abiram” – This the rebellion of Korah. (Num. 16)

11:9 – “prolong your days in the land” – This is what God wants for them.

11:10 – “watered it by foot” – Egypt depended on the people’s natural strength.

11:11 – “water from the rain of heaven” – Canaan was entirely dependant on God. They cannot and are not to try to take care of themselves. They are to be sustained and cared for by heaven.

- “hills and valleys” – There are hills and valleys there; difficulties and successes. But they are all watered by the rain of heaven.

11:12 – “a land for which the Lord your God cares” – God wants to be the blessing of their lives. And He wants them to focus on Him and not the blessings alone.

- “from the beginning of the year unto the very end” – God is watching and He doesn’t take a day off.
  - Israel seems to be the only plot of land on earth that has a godly angel looking out over it.

11:13 – “earnestly obey” – Our refusal to function merely in our natural strength requires us to even more diligently walk with the Lord to be blessed spiritually.

- The blessedness of living dependently. God can use anything then to chasten or bless as needed in our walks with the Lord. (v.17)
- “love the Lord” – God repeats this again.

11:14 – “I will give you the rain” – The rain comes from God and it is given in relation to His people. It doesn’t come from Mother Earth or from some harmonic convergence.

- “the early rain and the latter rain” – The early rain comes during the planting in October/November and is needed to soften the ground for plowing and preparing the soil of the seed. The latter rain come just before the harvest in the spring in February/March and is needed to bring the crops to final harvest.
  - For over 1,000 years, the latter rains had ceased. But since the people came back into the land in 1948, the latter rains have come.

11:16 – “Take heed to yourselves” – The only thing that stood between them and what God wanted to do for them was them. They weren’t to mind other people or spiritual boogiemen, just themselves.

- “lest your heart be deceived” – God had to warn Israel against the deceptions of prosperity.
- “serve other gods” – Baal was the fertility god of Canaan, supposedly in charge of the rain, produce, and harvest. The Lord said that when they turn to Baal, He will close off the rain to prove to them that Baal is no god.
  - This is a warning against serving other gods.
  - What might God do to the USA of 2007 to get our attention?

11:22 – “to love...to walk...to hold fast” – This is what God desires from them and from us.

11:25 – “the fear of you upon all” – This happened in Josh. 2:9.

11:26 – “Behold” – Lit. “to think about, or consider.”

- “a blessing and a curse” – God gives them a choice. You cannot have love without a choice.
- This puts to rest the problem unbelievers have with God condemning unbelievers to hell. In judgment, God is honoring our ability to choose.

11:29 – “Gerizim...Ebal” – The nation will act this out when they enter the land. (Josh. 8)

- The name “Gerizim” is supposed to be associated with fruitful harvests, and the name “Ebal” is supposed to be associated with barrenness.

11:30 – “trees of Moreh” – This is where Abraham first came into the promised land (Gen. 12:6). It is as if Moses is reminding them of the promise God made to Abraham in that very place.

## **Chapter 12:**

12:1 – “in the land” – Moses is again preparing his people for the promised land.

12:2 – “utterly” – This destruction is to be complete.

- They were to tear down any place of devotion that could take them away from the one, true and living God. It only takes one shrine to draw us away.
- “gods” – The polytheism of the nations is in direct contrast to Israel’s one, true God.
  - Everything here is written in the plural – “places...nations...gods...mountains...hills.”
  - They believed that being higher up made them closer to their gods, therefore they built their temples and shrines on mountains. Their worship was pervaded with phallic symbols, therefore they worshipped their gods under groves and trees in the hopes of increasing fertility.

12:4 – “with such things” – (NIV “in their way”) We are to worship the right God the right way. Both are necessary. God is the one to prescribe how He is to be worshipped. And when we choose to worship God our way, we aren’t really worshipping Him at all. At that point, we are actually worshipping ourselves.

12:5 – “the place” – In Canaan, after Gilgal and Shiloh, this place will be Jerusalem. For the Church, that place is Jesus.

- Jerusalem was the place where Abraham offered Isaac (Gen. 22), where David offered sacrifices when the plague stopped (2 Sam 24), where Solomon’s Temple was constructed, and where Jesus was crucified.
- In the NT, we don’t have a physical location required to worship God. The true worshippers will worship in Spirit and Truth. (John 4:23) But, there is still only one place for us to meet God...through the veil of Jesus’ body.

12:7 – “rejoice” – This word is used 3 times in this chapter. (12:7, 12, 18)

- There should be joy for believers. This joy is not an emotional giddiness, but an overarching joy pervading all circumstances of life.
- It is hard to walk in joy when following a religious system.

- 12:8 – “whatever is right in his own eyes” – As is typified in Judges. (Judges 21:25)
- They are doing what they think is right. They are sincere. But sincerity is not obedience! It can still be that we be sincerely wrong. If we elevate our reason or our circumstances above God’s Word, we are destined to fall.
  - “There is a way that seems right unto man, but it leads to death.” (Prov. 16:25)
  - There is one way, one door, one God. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. (John 14:6) We need to be right in God’s eyes.
  - Within 10 years of this exhortation, the nation of Israel will already begin to fall away. (Judges 3:5-6; 21:25)
- 12:15 – “you may slaughter” – Sacrifices are different than killing for food.
- In Canaan, they will be spread out and have to travel a significant distance to worship.
  - “you may slaughter and eat meat” – Eating meat is permissible. (Gen. 9:1-7)
  - “Every creature of God is good...received with thanksgiving.” (1 Tim. 4:4)
- 12:16 – “not eat the blood” – The Scriptures teach that the life of the creature is in the blood. (Gen. 9:1-7; Lev. 17:1-16)
- 12:18 – “must eat them before the Lord” – This is referring to the fellowship offerings.
- “your son and your daughter” – Again, God shows concern for the next generation.
- 12:19 – “do not forsake the Levite” – The Levite was a minister without an inheritance.
- 12:28 – “that it may go well with you and your children” – Obedience to God effects national blessing.
- It is always the vertical relationship that corrects and leads the horizontal relationships.
- 12:30 – “do not inquire after their gods” – There is a dangerous curiosity. We are to “be simple concerning evil.” (Rom. 16:19)
- “Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ...do not receive him into your house nor greet him.” (2 John 9-10)
  - We do not need to understand the world and other religions to know God.
- 12:31 – “burn even their sons and daughters” – Contrast this with God’s concern for the next generation. (12:18)
- Only the Creator has the prerogative to sacrifice the life of His Son.
- 12:32 – “not add to it nor take away from it” – This is the second injunction to maintain the purity and fullness of the Word of God in Deuteronomy. (Deut. 4:2) This is the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.
- Adding to the Word leads to legalism and condemnation. Taking from the Word leads to compromise and a failure to separate from the sins of the world.
  - Traditions are okay, as long as they do not have a bearing on our relationship with Jesus.

## Chapter 13:

13:1 – “prophet” – Calvary Chapel is a non-prophet organization.

- “dreamer of dreams” – False prophets get more of an audience when the Word is compromised.
  - “The prophet who has a dream, let him tell a dream; And he who has My word, let him speak My word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat?” (Jer. 23:28)
- “he gives you a sign or wonder” – Moses’ ministry was confirmed to Israel with signs and wonders. He doesn’t want them to be deceived by any others who would come with signs, but draw people away from God.

13:2 – “the sign or wonder comes to pass” – One of the criteria of evaluating a prophet was to see if what they prophesied actually came true. (Deut. 18:21-22)

- Biblically, signs are to follow the Word. The message is more important than the presentation and the show.
- Even the Egyptian magicians could do miracles to a point. And our generation is scheduled to be deceived by lying signs and wonders (2 Thess. 2:1-12), as the anti-Christ will be granted “exousia” power to do miracles at will. (The Church currently has “dunamis” power, but not “exousia.”) Jesus said, “let no man deceive you” (Matt. 24:4-5).
- Grant Jefferies, in the “Signature of God,” surveyed the check-out line prophecies and found them to have a mere 5-10% success rate.

13:3 – “not listen to the words of that prophet” – We shouldn’t buy his books or tapes either.

- In Acts 20, Paul warned the church leaders of those who would draw people away to themselves.
- Peter, who had some tremendous spiritual experiences, encourages us rather to trust in the Word of God. (2 Pet. 1:16-19)
- “the Lord your God is testing you” – God allows these people and those miracles so that the hearts of His people will be revealed to themselves.
  - False prophets offer the greatest temptation to those with a divided heart or those with itching ears.

13:5 – “in order to turn you away” – There is a deliberate effort made to take us from God.

- Jesus said it would be better for an individual who caused His people to stumble for them to have a millstone placed around their neck and to be thrown into the sea.
- “put away the evil from your midst” – Paul quoted this in referring to NT Church discipline in 1 Cor. 5:13.
  - The OT punishment for kidnapping was capital punishment. These people are stealing the hearts of God’s kids and must be punished accordingly.

13:9 – “you shall surely kill him” – These situations are even more difficult to discern, as they often happen as one secretly tries to seduce another away.

- Gal. 6:1 and Matt. 18:15-17 instruct NT believers to confront the sinning brother in an attempt to restore them to fellowship with God and fellowship with the congregation.

13:10 – “stone him with stones” – One person’s sin has consequences on the entire congregation (like Achan in Josh. 7).

13:11 – “all Israel shall hear and fear” – Justice is a deterrent to future trespasses.

- “Because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.” (Eccl. 8:11)

13:14 – “ask diligently” – An open and honest evaluation is very important here.

13:15 – “strike the inhabitants of the city with the edge of the sword” – Either the nation will punish the rebellious city or God will punish the rebellious nation (as God did with Babylon in 586 BC).

- There has been a progression here from the stranger, to the friend and family member, and then to the entire city. And as the trespass progresses, so does the punishment.

13:16 – “heap” – Lit. “tell.”

13:17 – “none of the accursed things shall remain in your hand” – There is a stricter judgment on a city of Israel that has turned away, than even on the common Canaanite city. At least when they took a Canaanite city, they were allowed to take the spoil.

- Judgment begins at the house of God. (1 Pet. 4:17)

13:18 – “right in the eyes of the Lord” – Canaan is meant to be the place where Israel dwells with God. Canaan without the Lord is meaningless.

#### **Chapter 14:**

14:1 – “not cut yourselves nor shave the front of your head” – These were idolatrous ways of mourning for the dead. (Isa. 3:24; 15:2; 22:12; Jer. 16:6; 41:5; Ezek. 7:18; Amos 8:10; Micah 1:16)

- Unbelievers have no good way to deal with death. Paul wrote in 1 Thess. 4:13 that he didn’t want the Church to be ignorant and therefore have to sorrow as the world sorrows...“with no hope.” It is not that believers don’t sorrow at the passing of a loved one; it is just that we have a hope.
- The Scriptures teach that created and regenerated human beings are spirits inside human bodies. Death simply separates the spirit from the body suit.

14:2 – “holy” – The idea is “separate.”

- “chosen you to be a people for Himself” – All these commands are in light of their relationship with God Himself.

14:3-21 – The dietary law was given in more detail in Leviticus 11.

- The book “None of These Diseases” speaks of the diseases that would have been avoided by not eating these forbidden foods.
- Jesus did away with the dietary law by saying it is not what “enters a man from the outside which can defile him.” (Mark 7:15-23) In Acts 10, Peter was instructed to kill and eat animals he previously thought were unclean. And Paul wrote to the Church that “every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.” (1 Tim. 4:4-5)

14:6 – “chews the cud” – Ruminants are those animals with 5 stomachs that systematically eat, swallow, regurgitate, and re-chew their food before digesting it completely.

14:10 – “does not have fins and scales” – Shellfish are included here.

14:19 – “every creeping thing” – Leviticus 11 specifically refers to locusts as clean. John the Baptist kept a kosher diet.

14:21 – “sell it to a foreigner” – Israel was not to eat it because its blood was not drained properly, but they could give it away or sell it to a Gentile.

- “not boil a young goat in its mother’s milk” – This was similar to a Canaanite fertility ritual.
  - Modern Judaism has turned this verse into an elaborate kosher system where milk products and meat products cannot be consumed at the same meal.

14:23 – “tithe...that you may learn to fear the Lord” – The purpose of the tithe is to teach the people dependency on God and the fear of God, because they were constantly giving their first and best to God.

- Malachi 1:8 spoke of how they had more respect for their governor than they did for God and how it was reflected in their giving to the Lord.
- The New Testament principle is giving from a willing heart. (1 Cor. 9)

14:24 – “the journey is too long” – If the journey was too far to travel with all those animals, they could sell the animals and travel with the money gained from the sale. They would then buy animals at the Temple to sacrifice in the place of the animals they sold.

14:26 – “similar drink” – Some think this refers to beer (or another alcoholic drink).

- The Pharaohs of Egypt actually supported their own brew masters.

14:28 – “tithe of your produce” – This seems to be a second tithe. This tithe is given directly to the poor.

## **Chapter 15:**

15:1 – “end of every seven years” – This was the Sabbath year. But more properly, it is called “the Year of Release.”

- “release of debts” – This is speaking of the monetary debts. This is either holding off the loan interest free for the year or canceling the loan altogether. (All debts were canceled in the Jubilee.)
  - The people were not to work during the Sabbath year, so delaying the loan repayment would allow them to take not keep up with debts.
  - The Sabbath year would help to equalize wealth. It would protect the poor from being oppressed as well as protect the wealthy from the temptation of oppressing the poor. It would also help eliminate the “us vs. them” (or the “have’s vs. the have not’s”) mentality, helping to unify the congregation

15:4 – “when there may be no poor among you” – The Hebrew of this verse indicates that they do this so that there would be no more poor among them.

- But v. 11 says that they will always have the poor among them. It seems that God is saying that He has established a system where no one must be chronically poor, yet He knew that because of disobedience there would always be some poor in Israel.

15:5 – “if” – This is a conditional national blessing for Israel.

15:6 – “shall not borrow” – A sign of a healthy nation functioning under the commands of God is that it will lend and not borrow.

- 15:7 – “shut your hand” – This carries the idea of “tight-wad.”
- 15:9 – “the year of release, is at hand” – If an individual needs to borrow money before the Sabbath year, they were to lend even though the debt would be absolved at (or during) the Sabbath year.
- 15:10 – “God will bless you” – In giving to the poor, we will never out-give God.
- 15:11 – “the poor will never cease” – Jesus affirmed that in Matt. 26:11.
- “He who has pity on the poor lends to the Lord.” (Prov. 19:17)
  - Paul was instructed to care for the poor (Gal. 2:10). James instructs us that pure religion is to care for “orphans and widows in their trouble.” (James 1:27)
- 15:12 – “let him go free from you” – More details are given in Exod. 21:1-11.
- 15:13 – “not let him go away empty-handed” – God knows human nature. We would even take back the uniform given to him.
- 15:15 – “the Lord your God redeemed you” – God never asks us to do something He Himself hasn’t done.
- 15:17 – “take an awl and thrust it through his ear” – Jesus’ ear was pierced as a servant in His Father’s house. (Ps. 40:6; Isa. 50:5; Heb. 10:5)
- Paul often referred to himself as a bondservant (“doulos”) of Jesus Christ.
  - If the greatest in the kingdom is the servant (Matt. 23:11), then the believer’s highest quest is to become a servant/slave. But that would not be the impression you get from the books in the Christian bookstore.
- 15:19 – “firstborn males” – This was a reminder of God’s slaying of the firstborn of Egypt to bring freedom to Israel.
- Giving is a reminder to us. It helps to increase our capacity to enjoy the rest of that which God has given to us. We give because we need to give, not because God needs it.
- 15:21 – “if there is a defect in it” – The sacrifice is a picture of Jesus Christ.
- Human nature is to give the worst to God, in contrast to David in 2 Sam. 24:24.

## **Chapter 16:**

- 16:1 – “Abib” – This month would later be referred to as Nisan.
- “Passover” – This feast was for remembering God’s deliverance of His people from bondage. Passover was pre-Levitical and pre-Law.
  - Josephus records that at about the time of Jesus, nearly 200,000 lambs were killed at the Temple each Passover. The blood run off from the Temple turned the Kidron Valley black.
  - Jesus fulfilled the Passover in His death on the cross (1 Cor. 5:7). The NT believer remembers His sacrifice by receiving the Lord’s Supper until He comes.
- 16:3 – “no leavened bread” – The Feast of Unleavened Bread became closely associated with the Passover.
- The Feast of Unleavened Bread follows the Feast of Passover making it a picture of how sin is removed from our life after (not before) receiving the Passover sacrifice.

16:10 – “Feast of Weeks” – This is Pentecost. It was also known as the Feast of Harvest.

- This feast was fulfilled when God sent His Spirit to start the Church in Acts 2.
- There was no ritual of sacrifice commanded at Pentecost. It was a time of joyful thanksgiving for the harvest.

16:11 – “rejoice” – God is looking for joyful worshippers. It is a recognition of God’s blessing.

16:13 – “Feast of Tabernacles” – This feast was a reminder of God’s faithfulness to the nation through the wilderness and of His promises for the promised land. Sometimes this feast was called “The Lord’s Feast,” or simply “The Feast.”

- The Talmud commanded 70 bulls to be killed on the last day of the feast; one bull for each nation.
- Each day of the feast, the priests would fill golden pictures from the pool of Siloam, down the Kidron Valley, and dump the water at the altar and have the water run out from beneath the altar. This was to symbolize the rock they received water from in the wilderness. On the last day of the feast, they went to Siloam 7 times. The last time, the pitchers were empty, as they were looking forward to the fulfillment of this feast in the coming of the Messiah.
- Jesus used this feast to speak of Himself in John 7:37-39, but it doesn’t seem to be fulfilled until we participate in this feast with Christ in the millennium. (Zech. 14:16-19)

16:14 – “you and your son and your daughter” – They were to bring as many from their family as possible.

16:18 – “appoint judges and officers” – All of these responsibilities were linked to the worship of the nation.

- “gates” – This was the place where the elders of the city would sit to make judgments and plan strategy.

16:22 – “not set up a sacred pillar” – Speaking to the elders and government leaders, God is saying they are not to plan to establish an idolatrous site in their city.

- God speaks this command to all the different groups of people in Israel. Everyone has a responsibility.

## **Chapter 17:**

17:1 – “sheep which has any blemish” – They were not to defile this type/picture of Christ.

- From Gen. 3:15, God’s people have been waiting for the Redeemer to come. Every believer’s sacrifice from that time looked forward to the spotless Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world.
- “blemish or defect” – God knows us so well. We tend to give God our leftovers.

17:2 – “in the sight of the Lord” – They may have gotten away with it for a while, but God has seen it.

- In the Bible, “sin” means to “miss the mark” and covers all intentional and unintentional imperfections, “iniquity” means “bent, or twisted” and refers to our nature, and “transgression” means “to step across a line” and speaks of willful and deliberate disobedience.
- Willful disobedience has an impact on all those around, therefore God deals with it very severely (in the OT and in the NT – 1 Cor. 5).



17:5 – “stone to death that man or woman” – A capital crime in Israel had a sentence executed quickly as led by the elders.

17:6 – “testimony of two or three witnesses” – The claim and verdict must be certain.

17:7 – “hands of the witnesses shall be the first” – The two or three witnesses threw the first stones.  
- If they were lying, they would be committing murder and would then be stoned themselves.

17:8 – “up to the place” – They were to bring this case to the Temple/tabernacle, which was eventually located in Jerusalem.

17:9 – “come to the priests” – It seems the priests would seek God through the Urim and Thummim.

17:12 – “acts presumptuously and will not heed” – If the case goes this far, all rights of coming to a mutual agreement are off and the priest is the final arbitrator. The individuals were then expected to do exactly as was spoken by the priest.

- Many go to counseling and/or church with no true desire to obey the Word. It is mere presumption to hear the Word without any desire to do as it says.
- “that man shall die” – Contempt of court was a capital crime in Israel.

17:14 – “When...” – This happened with Saul in 1 Sam. 8:4-9.

- This is the only place in the Law that instructions were given to the king.
- “I will set a king over me” – God desired to administrate as a theocracy in Israel rather than as a monarchy.
- None of these instructions regard the skill of the king, but only his character.

17:15 – “whom the Lord your God chooses” – It was very important for Israel to allow God to call the king He desired.

- “not set a foreigner” – The king must be an Israelite.

17:16 – “horses” – Chariots were the A-1 tank of the day.

- Not having an abundant supply of horses to pull chariots would keep Israel and its king dependant on God, and not on their weapons.
- “Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; But we will remember the name of the Lord our God.” (Ps. 20:7)

17:17 – “multiply wives” – David and Solomon both took many wives. (1 Kings 4:26; 11:1-4)

- Kings took wives for political advantage. But eventually the wives would turn the hearts of the king away from the Lord.
- “silver and gold for himself” – This is a personal accumulation of wealth and power.
- The king was called to serve, not to look out for their own advantage.

17:16-17 – “horses...wives...gold” – Power, sex, and money are still the greatest temptations to leaders.

- As joint-heirs with Jesus who will rule and reign with Him, we too are not to give into these three things: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. (1 John 2:16)

17:18 – “a copy of this law” – This likely refers to Deuteronomy, but some think it was speaking of the entire Torah. Before a king could take office, he was to take the time to transcribe his own copy of the Law for himself first.

- The Word of God can keep even the greatest of leaders from falling.
- “How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your Word.” (Ps. 119:9)
- “Sanctify them by Your truth; Your Word is truth.” (John 17:17)

17:19 – “he shall read it” – There is a benefit to simply reading the Bible on a daily basis.

- “fear the Lord his God” – This fear of the Lord leads us to obey His commandments.
- The real goal of life is to find and submit to the proper ruler. Everybody is ruled by someone or something. This is even better than being a ruler, for to be a great king, one must be a great servant.

17:20 – “heart may not be lifted above his brethren” – Pride is a deadly trap for a leader. These commands can help a leader from falling in pride.

### **Chapter 18:**

18:1 – “His portion” – This is God’s portion. God will provide for the needs of the Levites directly from what had been given to the Lord.

- The tribe of Levi would take no inheritance in the land of Canaan. They would live in 48 cities spread throughout Israel.

18:3 – “the priest’s due from the people” – Those who minister to the people of God are to be supported by the people of God.

- The NT allows for the financial support of ministers. (Luke 10:7; 1 Cor. 9:14; 1 Tim. 5:18)
- “the shoulder, the cheeks, and the stomach” – This was the portion allotted to the priests, in contrast to the portion Eli’s sons took to themselves.
- “the cheeks” – This is probably referring to the stomach or the internal organs.

18:5 – “God has chosen him” – The tribe of Levi separated to Moses after the golden calf incident (Exod. 32). But it was Levi, through Aaron, that made the calf to begin with. The only good reason for their place in Israel is because God has chosen him.

18:6 – “comes...to the place which the Lord chooses” – If the Levite chooses to move his family from one of the cities of the Levites to minister full-time in Jerusalem, then they were to be supported by the people in this way too.

18:8 – “sale of his inheritance” – The Levite is to keep the proceeds from the sale of his estate in the city he is leaving, when he moves to Jerusalem.

18:9-13 – The responsibility of the prophets is prefaced with these instructions and warnings.

- 18:10 – “son or daughter pass through the fire” – This refers to the sacrificing of infant children to Molech.
- “witchcraft” – Also called “divination.” This refers to the mixing of blood and other objects in a cup to read the blood.
    - This would also refer to reading tea leaves, palm reading, or tarot cards.
  - “soothsayer” – This is augury; reading an animal’s entrails or other “random” items.
    - This would also refer to astrology and psychic hotlines.
  - “one who interprets omens” – This refers to the use of potions in telling the future.
  - “sorcerer” – This is a male witch.
- 18:11 – “conjures spells” – Reaching spiritual realms through the use of drugs.
- American Indians used peotie and South American Indians licked toads.
  - Gal. 5:20 speaks of “sorcery” (Greek “pharmacia”) as a work of the flesh.
  - “spiritist” – This would refer to the operating of séances
  - “calls up the dead” – Necromancy is communicating with the dead.
- 18:13 – “blameless” – This can also be translated “perfect, or upright” and refers to one’s relationship with God.
- “Godly perfection is not a perfection of performance, but a perfection of relationship” – Oswald Chambers.
- 18:14 – “not appointed such for you” – We need not look to astrology or necromancy for our futures, God will grant us the information we need through the Word and by His Spirit. It is okay for God’s people to desire to know the future, but they must go about it the right way.
- Only God knows and tells the future accurately. (Isa. 41:21-23; Deut. 18:22) It is the fact that God declares things before they come to pass that is one proof that He alone is God.
  - The ministry of the prophet was a valid ministry in the history of Israel, even all the way back to Abraham and Jacob. About 2/3 of the Bible has prophetic content.
- 18:15 – “a Prophet” – Moses is pointing to Jesus. (Acts 3:22-23; 7:37; see also John 1:45; 6:14)
- This prophet stands in stark contrast to the “prophets” of vv. 9-14.
  - The modern Jew believes the Messiah will be a man like Moses, speaking with smooth words. They do not believe their Messiah will be the Son of God. But these understandings will lead to the rise and acceptance of the anti-Christ.
- 18:16 – “let me not hear again” – They are asking for a Mediator. The nation of Israel was so shaken at Horeb/Sinai due to the sight of the glory of God and the audible voice.
- “...any mediator between us, who may lay his hand on us both.” (Job 9:33)
  - “For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.” (1 Tim. 2:5)
- 18:19 – “will not hear” – It is a matter of the will.
- “He speaks in My name” – This Prophet will live up to His Word, spoken through the life of the Mediator. (Jesus is the Word - John 1:1.)
    - “God has in these last days spoken to us by His Son.” (Heb. 1:2)
    - The Scriptures testify of Jesus. (John 5:39)
    - The way to the spiritual realm is through the blood of Christ in forgiveness of sin.

18:20 – “the prophet who presumes to speak” – No matter what signs that prophet might perform, his message speaks louder.

18:22 – “if the thing does not happen” – If the prophesied event doesn’t happen as it was said, then the prophecy wasn’t of God.

- False prophets are not driven to speak the truth. They are merely motivated by the money they can make off the people. (1 Pet. 2:1-3)

## **Chapter 19:**

19:2 – “three cities” – These are the cities of refuge given to us in Num. 35. There were to be three cities of refuge on each side of the Jordan.

- Jesus Christ is our “refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.” (Heb. 6:18)

19:5 – “the head slips from the handle” – This is an example of an involuntary killing and was to be protected by the cities of refuge.

19:6 – “the avenger of blood” – Because Israel didn’t have a public police force per say, the next of kin was responsible to avenge the blood of any in his family who were murdered. If the death was involuntary, cities of refuge would be given.

- Much of what we call terrorism is at times this avenging of blood.

19:10 – “guilt of bloodshed” – God would hold the nation accountable for innocent blood.

19:11 – “hates his neighbor” – This is premeditated murder.

19:13 – “put away the guilt of innocent blood” – God was just as concerned that the guilty be punished as He was that the innocent be protected (v. 10).

- “that it may go well with you” – God asks for justice for the preservation of the society.
- We have lost the sense of justice in the United States of 2007.

19:14 – “landmark” – God honors the right of personal and private ownership. He asks that we respect one another’s property.

- God doesn’t move the landmarks in our lives and He asks the same from us.

19:15 – “the mouth of two or three witnesses” – There was to be no conviction based on one witness.

19:18 – “careful inquiry” – This may have involved the Urim and the Thummim.

19:20 – “hear and fear” – God knows that swift and severe punishments would act as a deterrent.

- “Because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.” (Eccl. 8:11)

19:21 – “life shall be for life” – This is in the case of perjury. They were not to put up with it.

- God understands human nature and reveals it to us in these commands.

## Chapter 20:

Deut. 20 relates the “rules of warfare” for God’s people.

20:1 – “When” – Not “if.” We are in a war...and need to hear from our High Priest.

- Peace is not an absence of war, but a victory of the right war.
- “God is with you” – The greatest cure for fear is the sense of the presence of God.
- They were not to fear when they came against greater armaments.

20:2 – “the priest shall approach” – These are holy wars and are therefore led by the priest and not the commander.

- Dan. 12:1 speaks of Michael the archangel who stands up on behalf of Israel.

20:5 – “the officers shall speak” – The officers come to downsize the army.

- The Lord fights our battles for us (v. 4). But he fights them through people committed to the work and the warfare.
- “No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please Him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.” (2 Tim. 2:4)
- “No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.” (Luke 9:26)
- “dedicate it” – They made it a part of the inheritance of the family by living in it.

20:6 – “vineyard” – Sometimes they would let the tree go 4-5 years before taking the harvest.

20:7 – “return to his house” – He was to stay home for one year. (Deut. 24:5) It is a good rule of thumb to stay out of the battle (or heavy public ministry and responsibility) during the first year of marriage.

- The items here mentioned are things of normal life: “houses,” “vineyards,” and “marriage.” Our first ministry is at home...only after doing that well can we effectively fulfill a more public role. But spending an inordinate amount of time and energy on the ordinary things of life can keep us from effectively serving the Lord.
- There are times to delight in the blessing rather than being devoted to the battle.
- Judges 7:2-8 – Gideon sifted his army using these same principles.

20:8 – “fearful” – Fear is contagious. Better is an army of a few bold warriors, than an army of many fearful ones. It is God’s battle and He doesn’t need the fearful warriors.

- Our boldness, strength, and confidence are in the Lord. (Phil. 4:13)

20:10 – “near a city” – These were foreign wars; battles outside the promised land.

- In the promised land, they were to destroy all (v. 16), for the iniquity of the Amorites was now full. (Gen. 15:16)

20:17 – “Hittite...Jebusite” – This is not an indiscriminate slaughter. God names who needed to go.

- How evil must these people to have been to push such a long-suffering God to this point?

20:19 – “tree of the field is man’s food” – They were only to cut down the trees they cannot eat from.

- There can be a mania in war and uprisings that lead the victors to suffer long term consequences after the fighting is over (for example: Haiti and the destruction the slaves inflicted when freeing themselves from white landowners).

## **Chapter 21:**

21:2 – “measure the distance” – This is in an effort to find the nearest city.

21:4 – “break the heifer’s neck” – They are acknowledging the severity of the crime.

- This is not an atoning sacrifice, which would have been slaughtered in Jerusalem.

21:6 – “wash their hands” – They are proclaiming their innocence.

21:10 – “out to war” – This is again referring to foreign wars.

21:13 – “mourn her father and her mother” – She was given one month to mourn and deal with the separation.

- “a full month” – They were not to rape and abuse women captives.

21:14 – “because you have humbled her” – After the marriage, they were to no longer treat them as foreigners.

21:15 – “two wives” – God is making a concession. His plan from the beginning was for one man to be married to one wife for life. (Gen. 2:24)

- Modern Bedouins still take 4 or more wives; the first three to work and bear children and the 4<sup>th</sup> for pleasure.

21:16 – “the true firstborn” – They were not to rip off the firstborn son simply because he didn’t like her mother.

21:18 – “will not obey” – This is a deliberate choice. It doesn’t say that he “cannot.”

- God asks all of us to honor the authorities He puts in our lives.
- “chastened him” – This is in an attempt to bring the child into obedience.

21:20 – “obey our voice” – It is necessary for parents to teach young children obedience.

- Parenting changes when children come to the age of reason. (Isa. 1:18)
- “For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.” (1 Sam. 15:23)
- “a glutton and a drunkard” – This is evidently referring to an adult son.

21:21 – “stone him to death” – To honor and obey your parent was the first command with a promise (Eph. 6:2)...otherwise they would be under a pile of rocks.

- There would be an inquiry or witnesses needed in this case. Apparently, God knows how distraught and brokenhearted the parents must be to go through with this.

21:22 – “hang him on a tree” – The Hebrew for this phrase doubtless intends “impaled on a pole.” (See also Gen. 40:19 and Esther 2:23.)

- The Romans adapted the Assyrian form of capital punishment by putting a crossbeam on the impaling post as a more respectable form of execution.
- There are no reasons given why they would hang this person, rather than stone him with stones. It is interesting that this passage follows the death of a son at the testimony of a parent.

- 21:22 – “accursed of God” – Jesus redeemed us by being made “a curse for us.” (Gal. 3:13)  
- “bury him that day” – This was written for Joseph of Arimathea. (John 19:31, 38)

## **Chapter 22:**

- 22:1 – “bring them back to your brother” – This is a sin of omission. It would be like watching a crime occur in the United States and not do anything to help.  
- This is the sin of doing nothing. To see your brother in need, and to do nothing, is sin.  
- “your brother” – Seeing this person as a brother goes a long way to loving them as yourself...which is what Jesus asked of us.
- 22:2 – “restore it to him” – There was no such thing as “finders keepers” in Israel.
- 22:3 – “any lost thing” – This applied even to the smallest of things.
- 22:4 – “your brother’s donkey or his ox fall down” – In our culture, this would be equivalent to a car with a flat tire or a dead battery.
- 22:5 – “an abomination to the Lord” – This is transvestitism, or dressing as the opposite sex to give the impression they are that gender.  
- This prohibition is not against women wearing slacks.
- 22:6 – “not take the mother with the young” – Not a sparrow is forgotten by God. (Luke 12:6)  
- This is a conservation thing. God asks them to respect the wildlife as well as keep the food source alive and producing.
- 22:8 – “make a parapet” – This was a small wall or railing (about 3’ high) to keep people from falling off the roof.  
- This covers liability.
- 22:9 – “different kinds” – God is teaching His people about purity. (Purity means to be all of one substance.)
- 22:12 – “tassels on the four corners of the clothing” – This would go along with the borders of blue on their robes to remind them of heaven and their commitment to God.
- 22:14 – “not a virgin” – This is an accusation against, not only the woman, but also against the entire family.
- 22:15 – “evidence of the young woman’s virginity” – These were the sheets from the wedding night.  
- This would keep the husband from making up an excuse for divorce.
- 22:19 – “one hundred shekels of silver” – This was twice the typical bride price. (v. 29) This was a very heavy fine being several times what Hosea paid to buy Gomer back (Hosea 3:2) or what Jeremiah paid for the field at Anathoth (Jer. 32:9). Warren Wiersbe says this was the equivalent to 10-years wages.  
- God hates slander.

22:21 – “put away the evil” – She deceived her father, lied to her husband, and committed adultery. It was not to be tolerated.

- This is how God views morality, despite what entertainment turns it into or what Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinsky made it out to be.

22:22 – “both of them shall die” – In John 8:4, the religious leaders only brought the woman.

22:23-24 – “betrothed...wife” – These were considered the same in Israel.

22:24 – “she did not cry out” – Her silence was an indication of consent.

22:25 – “man who lay with her shall die” – Rape was a capital crime in Israel, equated with murder (“as when a man rises against his neighbor and kills him” – v. 26).

22:29 – “she shall be his wife” – The man would understand that ahead of time. This would prevent “casual sex” from being without consequences. This man would have to take responsibility for his sexual activity, even if he didn’t father a child from this relationship.

22:30 – “his father’s wife” – This is the man’s step-mother. (1 Cor. 5)

- Lev. 20 outlined the punishment for incestuous relationships.
- “uncover his father’s bed” – Lit. “uncover the corner of his father’s garment.” (Ruth 3:9; Ezek. 16:8)

### **Chapter 23:**

23:1 – “He who is emasculated” – Mutilation, emasculation, and castration were actually practiced among the Canaanites as part of their idol worship.

- “For thus says the Lord: ‘To the eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths, And choose what pleases Me, And hold fast My covenant, Even to them I will give in My house and within My walls a place and a name better than that of sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off.’ ” (Isa. 56:4-5)
- In Acts 8:26-39, Philip baptized the Ethiopian eunuch.
- It is also possible that Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were made eunuchs by Babylon.

23:2 – “one of illegitimate birth” – This may refer to those born as a result of sexual idol worship or mixed marriages.

23:3 – “Moabite” – Ruth was an exception to the rule; King David was her great-grandson.

23:5 – “the Lord your God turned the curse into a blessing for you” – Balaam was intent on cursing Israel, but God turned it into the blessings we see in Num. 22-24.

23:7 – “Edomite, for he is your brother” – The Edomites were descendants of Esau.

23:9 – “keep yourself from every wicked thing” – God is directing Israel’s army how to maintain hygiene and cleanliness even while going to war.

23:13 – “cover your refuse” – This was for health and sanitary reasons, as well as giving a spiritual picture.



23:15 – “the slave who has escaped from his master to you” – This is speaking of the slave of a foreigner who has escaped to Israel for refuge.

23:16 – “he may dwell with you” – Israel was to be a refuge for the oppressed.

23:17 – “no ritual harlot...or a perverted one” – This is speaking of the Canaanite female and male temple prostitutes.

23:18 – “not bring the wages of a harlot” – They were not to attempt to give to and worship God in their own way. Disobedience to God’s rules is idolatry and cannot be justified by an offering of money.

- “To obey is better than sacrifice.” (1 Sam. 15:22)
- How they got the money is considered when giving in worship.
- “dog” – The word refers to the male temple prostitutes of the Canaanites.
- “But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.” (Rev. 22:15)

23:21 – “when you make a vow” – The easiest way to not break a vow is not to make it. (v. 22)

23:25 – “pluck the heads with your hand” – They were allowed to eat by the handfuls, but not to harvest it and carry it off.

- The disciples were challenged on this in Matt. 12:1-2.

## **Chapter 24:**

24:1 – “some uncleanness” – There was a debate in Jesus’ day over this phrase. Hillel taught that anything could be an uncleanness, while Shammai taught that it was referring to adultery.

- Matt. 19:1-10 – Jesus goes back to the original design: one man, one woman, for life. He says that any “sexual immorality” is the meaning of this phrase. (Matt. 5:31-32)
- Some say this phrase means that she was not a virgin when she got married, but that was dealt with in the Scriptures already. (Deut. 22:20-21) This uncleanness is something that develops after marriage.
- “certificate of divorce” – In Jesus’ day, they would simply say “you’re divorced” three times and then write it on a sheet of paper to finalize a divorce.
- Alfred Edersheim says that some Pharisees had 15-20 wives.
- “divorce” – The Hebrew root to this word carries the idea of “a hewing off, a cutting apart.”

24:4 – “her former husband who divorced her must not take her back” – This would simply reduce to trading and rotating wives.

24:5 – “home one year” – This was a one-year honeymoon. This would solidify the marriage and give the couple a chance for children.

24:6 – “millstone” – The two millstones were necessary for food preparation.

- We must take care that we never unfairly profit from the poverty or difficulty of others.

- 24:7 – “kidnapping” – Kidnapping was a capital crime in Israel. (It also used to be a capital crime in the United States.)
- Child pornography is big business in the US and around the world. (Some stats say that 250 child pornography magazines come out every month. And there are 3x more pornographic stores in the US than McDonalds restaurants.)
  - This is not referring to custody battles of divorced couples.
- 24:10 – “not go into his house to get his pledge” – They weren’t to degrade the poor by going into their house to repossess an item. They were to let the poor bring it to them.
- 24:12 – “his pledge” – The only thing he has left to give is the cloak off his back.
- 24:15 – “Each day you shall give him his wages” – They were to pay the poor for the day worked on the day it was worked, as they lived hand-to-mouth and otherwise wouldn’t have anything to eat.
- 24:16 – “put to death for his own sin” – Ezek. 18 refutes the concept of ancestral curses.
- In the pagan practice of that time if a man offended someone of another tribe, the offended person would find justice in killing the man and his entire family.
  - We are glad that we are not judged based on our parents’ failure, for we all have sinning parents. Every family is “dysfunctional” to some degree.
- 24:19 – “it shall be for the stranger” – The Jewish welfare system required work to eat, but made allowances to those without privileges.
- 24:22 – “remember that you were a slave” – These practices would remind Israel of their bondage and their deliverance.

## **Chapter 25:**

- 25:1 – “justify the righteous and condemn the wicked” – There was to be justice in the Jewish judicial system.
- 25:3 – “forty blows” – In the NT period they capped the beating at 39 lashes in mercy.
- Paul three times received the 39 lashes of the Jews. (2 Cor. 11:24)
  - Jesus was scourged by the Romans who did not limit the number of lashes.
  - “blows” – These are with rods, not whips.
- 25:4 – “not muzzle the ox” – Paul quotes this in 1 Cor. 9:9 & 1 Tim. 5:18 referring to the NT minister’s ability to be supported by those he is ministering to.
- 25:5 – “her husband’s brother” – This is a Levirate marriage and was meant to bring up posterity and keep the inheritance in the family. The provision was to maintain the family name.
- “Levirite” means “the wife of a brother.”
- 25:10 – “who had his sandal removed” – We see this practiced in Ruth 4.
- We are not given any specific reasons why the man would not marry this woman.

25:11 – “seizes him by the genitals” – Even fights in the nation of Israel were to be fair.

- This woman was hitting below the belt.
- It is possible that the severity of the punishment was directly linked to the sterility that could result from something like this.

25:13 – “differing measures” – They were also to do business fairly.

25:17 – “Remember what Amalek did” – They attacked the slowest and weakest of the camp as Israel was beginning their wilderness journeys. (Exod. 17:8)

- Amalek is a type of the flesh. We are to crucify the old way and the old man, not try to rehabilitate it.

25:19 – “blot out the remembrance of Amalek” – As Saul was commanded in 1 Sam. 15. (See also 1 Sam. 28:18.)

### **Chapter 26:**

26:1 – “when you come into the land” – The Israelites have been journeying from the time of Abraham leaving Ur of the Chaldees. They are now very close to entering their land.

26:2 – “the first of all the produce of the ground” – The offering described here occurred only once and must not be confused with the annual offerings of firstfruits as described in Num. 18:12.

26:5 – “my father was a Syrian” – This seems to be speaking of Jacob. (Gen. 27-35)

26:10 – “firstfruits of the land” – As we begin to take our inheritance, we must be sure to give a portion of the initial blessing back to the Lord and not take it all to ourselves.

- This practice would be a great way to acknowledge their wanderings and God’s work to bring them out of Egypt and bring them into Canaan.
- The nation of Israel’s entering into the promised land is a picture of the Church’s entering into His rest. (Heb. 4:1-10)

26:11 – “rejoice” – God desires a joyful people.

26:12 – “the year of tithing” – This is the second tithe, also described in Deut. 14:28-29. (Some scholars believe this was the only tithe and that it was simply redirected from the Temple and the priests to the poor in the third year. Others believe this was a second tenth to the poor on top of the tenth already given to the Temple and the priesthood.)

- The NT doesn’t seem to enforce tithing on the Church. The word tithe (which means 10%) is used 4 times in the NT (Matt. 23:23 & Luke 11:42; Luke 18:12; Heb. 7:5), all in connection with the priesthood and OT Law. The NT principle for the Church is giving. (2 Cor. 9) God will dictate the amount and the manner. (Giving covers much more than just money. It also includes service.)
- If the Holy Spirit is running the church, it should always run in the black. It should have all it needs to do what it has been asked to do.

26:14 – “I have obeyed the voice of the Lord my God” – They were to tithe even in a bad harvest year.

- “for the dead” – The Canaanites practiced giving offerings of produce to the dead.

26:18-19 – “special people...holy people” – This doesn’t mean weird, but set apart to God and His purposes. (Exod. 19:5-6)

### **Chapter 27:**

When the nation of Israel gets into the promised land, they will set groups of people on both Mt. Ebal and Mt. Gerizim. The altar will be placed on Mt. Ebal. It will be whitewashed and have the Law written on it. The leaders will then speak the blessings from Gerizim and the curses from Ebal while the rest of the congregation stands in the valley below. (Josh. 8:30-35)

27:4 – “Ebal” – means “barren, or confusion.”

- Mt. Ebal is located about 40 mi. north of Jerusalem. Some archeologists have claimed to have found the stone Joshua set up on Ebal, but because of the Jewish and Palestinian conflict, it is nearly impossible to visit the site.

27:5 – “not use an iron tool on them” – The altar was not to be fancy or ornate. And the focus of the structure was not to be on their labor.

27:6 – “burnt offerings” – These are offerings of consecration.

- These blessings are made possible only through the death of an innocent substitute.

27:7 – “peace offerings” – These are fellowship offerings.

- “rejoice” – This is not to be heavy or sanctimonious. The joy is a result of placing the freedom of the promised land in light of the bondage of Egypt and the wilderness.

27:8 – “very plainly” – The Word was to be simple and clear. The structure wasn’t to get the attention; it was only to facilitate the hearing of the Word of God.

- It is much better to be clear than to be fancy.
- The rule of thumb when making building decisions at CCPhilly is “Excellent, not extravagant” – Joe Focht.

27:9 – “This day you have become the people of the Lord your God” – This commitment is almost like a wedding is to a marriage.

27:12 – “Gerizim” – means “bountiful, or beautiful.”

- Clarke’s account is that “Gerizim abounds with springs, gardens, and orchards, and that it is covered with beautiful verdure; while Ebal is as naked and barren as a rock.

27:15 – “Cursed” – These curses are not civil curses; they are spiritual curses. These are things done in secret that the people might try to get away with.

- “a carved or molded image” – God is asking fidelity and faithfulness from the people as they enter the land.

27:16 – “treats his father or mother with contempt” – The teenagers would be standing in the valley listening to this.

27:18 – “makes the blind to wander off the road” – This would speak out against the blind religious leaders who want to lead the blind in order to fleece the flock of God.

27:15 – “a bribe to slay an innocent person” – This speaks against the hitman who would kill another for money.

### **Chapter 28:**

28:1 – “diligently obey” – This is the theme of Deuteronomy. The KJV translates this “hearken” and means “to lean the ear toward with the intent of obeying.”

28:2 – “overtake you” – They will not seek the blessing; the blessing will seek them.

- Ps. 23:6 – “Surely goodness and mercy shall [hunt] me all the days of my life.” And that is simply a result of following the shepherd.
- “obey” – The blessing pursues the obedient.
  - Obedience is all that God asks. We don’t need to be creative or ingenious.

28:3-6 – “Blessed...” – These are blessings in all areas of daily and normal life.

- God doesn’t always bless by changing our circumstances, but sometimes by blessing the circumstances we currently find ourselves in.

28:7 – “the Lord will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated” – The Church is to love its enemies and bless those who persecute her.

28:9 – “a holy people to Himself” – The greatest of blessings is just to “Be God’s.”

- “if” – These are conditional promises. God is asking for their cooperation.
  - In this chapter, Moses is exhorting the nation with a choice.

28:10 – “all peoples of the earth shall see” – Their holiness will be a witness of their relationship with God.

- This lesson is for the Church and for us as individuals. We will be blessed if we choose to be obedient and follow God.

28:14 – “turn aside from any of the words...to go after other gods” – As far as God is concerned, turning aside from the Word of God to the right or to the left is idolatry.

- This world has its gods: Baal – nature and prosperity; Ashurim – pleasure; Molech – abortions for personal gain; and Mammon – money. Those who worship them become like them. (Ps. 135)
- Sin is pleasurable for a season (Heb. 11:25). But just like at the wedding of Cana, as the world typically puts out the good stuff first and then poison later, God works just the opposite by saving the best for last. (John 2)

28:15-68 – “cursed shall you be...” – There are 4 times more cursing verses than blessing verses, not because God is more desirous to curse, but because God knows the people and the situation they are going into.

- This is a description on a life that is apart from the Lord; unholy.
- The blessings and curses are not due to their effort and planning, but due to their obedience and disobedience of God’s ordinances.
- God’s covering means that His authority and His blessing go together.

28:15 – “But if” – These are the warnings.

- The NT Church is not under the Law; we don’t earn God’s favor with our effort. But this shows us the manner of God’s blessing in our lives through obedience.

- 28:16-19 – “in the city...in the country” – These are the exact opposite of the blessings given in v. 3-6.
- 28:20 – “destroyed” – This word is used 7 times in this chapter.
- This isn’t simply for punishment. These are to turn back the hearts of the people to the Lord.
- 28:23 – “the earth which is under you shall be iron” – This is speaking of drought and famine.
- Hunger gets our attention quickly. God has a lot of ways of getting our attention.
- 28:32 – “your sons and daughters shall be given to another people” – Many of the noble’s youth were carried away to Assyria and Babylon (including Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, and Daniel).
- 28:33 – “eat the fruit of your land” – There is barrenness in turning from the Lord. All of life’s blessings are in conjunction to our walking with the Lord.
- 28:36 – “there you shall serve other gods” – God often makes men’s sin their punishment.
- This is coming from the mouth of Moses, who they know loves and cares for them. It would have the same effect as a loving father warning and disciplining their children for their protection.
- 28:43 – “the alien who is among you shall rise higher” – This is much like the American economy in 2007.
- 28:47 – “you did not serve the Lord...for the abundance” – God’s blessings should cause us to serve Him more faithfully, but often the opposite occurs. We must remember to bless God for the blessings He has given to us, and resist the tendency to turn from Him in times of prosperity.
- The strength of a nation is not in its economy or its military or its political influence, but in its relationship to God.
- 28:48 – “He has destroyed you” – This is as a result of their lack of obedience.
- 28:49 – “the eagle” – Assyria, Babylon, and Rome all bore eagles on their standards.
- 28:52 – “in which you trust” – They have come to trust in their walls, rather than trusting the Lord.
- 28:53 – “eat the fruit of your own body” – They will turn to cannibalism. (2 Kings 6:24-29; Lament. 4:1-11)
- These things actually happened in the sieges of the Assyrians (in 722-721 BC), Babylonians (in 586 BC), and Romans 9 (in 70 AD). See also 2 Kings 17:6; 25:21.
  - It is amazing what humans are capable of.
- 28:58 – “awesome” – This carries the idea of “fearful.”
- “the Lord” – (Heb. “Yahweh”) The covenant keeping God of Israel.
  - The Almighty God can bless and protect us in obedience. But He also must punish us in disobedience. We must remember Who we are dealing with.

- 28:61 – “which is not written in this book” – God will bring even more things, some of which they have not even yet heard of.
- This is after all the things He has done for them. It has never been heard of before of God making a people His own and giving them His Word.
- 28:62 – “because you would not obey” – All those blessings to Abraham were contingent on the obedience of his people.
- 28:68 – “back to Egypt in ships” – Titus Vespasian entered Jerusalem with the Roman army in 70AD and killed over 1 million Jews and took over 100,000 captives. Of those captives, about 17,000 were put on ships and sold as slaves in Egypt.
- God, as a broken-hearted Father, is standing outside of time in eternity and laying out their future to them.
  - “no one will buy you” – Yet God will send Jesus to purchase His people with the blood of His Son...and this when no one else would touch us.

## **Chapter 29:**

- 29:1 – “covenant” – This is a contract; a promise. All starts and is based on a promise.
- “in the land of Moab” – This is with Jericho in view.
  - “in Horeb” – At Mount Sinai and the receiving of the Law. (Exod. 24:7-8)
- 29:2 – “you have seen” – Moses is asking them to make this commitment in light of the things they have personally experienced. They know what God is capable of because they have seen Him do these things in Egypt.
- 29:4 – “not given you a heart to perceive” – They grew accustomed and callous to the blessings of God...to the point where they couldn’t even see them as blessings.
- “ears to hear” – Jesus often called for people to have “ears to hear.”
- 29:5-6 – “clothes have not work out...have not eaten bread” – They failed to perceive that their food and clothing were being provided by the Lord.
- Food and clothing are “these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things.” (Luke 12:30)
  - “Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition.” (1 Cor. 10:11)
- 29:9 – “that you may prosper” – This is the reason God gives for them to follow His commands.
- The people of Israel who were now 40-60 years old remember all the plagues of Egypt and the miracles of the wilderness. God is calling them to recall all these things, because they failed to perceive them when they saw them.
  - We all have our own stories of deliverance that we must be careful to remember.
- 29:10 – “All of you stand today” – Evidently, this is a public gathering.
- 29:13 – “That He may establish you” – This is God’s purpose and God’s heart for His people.
- “We should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine.” (Eph. 4:14)
  - “a people for Himself” – God is looking for that personal one-on-one relationship.

29:17 – “you saw their abominations” – They have seen the sin and consequences of idolatry in Egypt and in Moab.

29:18 – “bitterness” – Often a result of unfulfilled expectations or unexpected pain.

- A “root of bitterness” (Heb. 12:15) can lead us away from God and His people.

29:19 – “he blesses himself” – He thinks he is okay for hearing, not doing, these words.

- The Lord is challenging them to yield to Him and live according to His Word.
- There are those who will presume upon the grace of God and His Word, assuming that their special circumstances give them a reason to not follow God’s commands. There are those who actually think they know better than God.
- “drunkard could be included with the sober” – The life determines the blessing.

29:20 – “the Lord would not spare him” – People decide whether or not they will obey. They do not decide whether or not their will be consequences to disobedience.

- We are not under the Law; we are under grace. But under grace, we are blood bought and that makes us very expensive to God. Now we are God’s children and He chastens the sons that He loves. (Heb. 12:5-11)

29:23 – “land is brimstone” – The land of “milk and honey” becomes a wasteland.

- About 100 years ago, Mark Twain commented on the barrenness of Israel in his journals.

29:24 – “All nations would say” – All of the nations will recognize God’s work.

- The nation of Israel was to be a priest nation to the rest of the nations of the world. In their sin, they failed, but God would not go without a testimony to the rest of the nations.

29:29 – “secret things belong to the Lord our God” – There will always be a mystery to this, especially as it relates to the heart of God. The things and ways of God will never be fully comprehensible to us.

- “‘For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,’ says the Lord. ‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.’” (Isa. 55:8-9)
- “things which are revealed” – God has revealed enough for us to be saved and enough to hold us accountable for if we walk contrary to His revealed will.

### **Chapter 30:**

30:1 – “among all the nations” – God is speaking to them about the time when they will be scattered among all the nations.

30:2 – “return...and obey” – This is the definition of repentance. These two go together.

- Daniel is a perfect example of seeking the Lord while in captivity.
- “all your heart” – This is without a temple, without ceremonial sacrifices, and without the religious trappings. God will have their heart; it is what He is looking for.



- 30:3 – “bring you back from captivity” – This happened under Ezra and Nehemiah...but also in 1948.
- David Ben-Gurion called the land “Israel” because of the prophecy in Ezekiel 37 which named the nation “Israel.”
  - In 1948, Israel was reborn. In 1967, Israel retook Jerusalem. These prophecies have only started to be fulfilled just over 50 years ago, but they are yet to be fully completed.
  - These prophecies may not be fully completed until the kingdom age. This may refer to “the elect” of Matt. 24:31.
- 30:4 – “farthest parts under heaven” – This is a Hebrew idiom speaking of the 4 points of the compass.
- 30:6 – “circumcise your heart” – That is the cutting away of the flesh.
- “that you may live” – The result of loving God is real life.
- 30:9 – “the Lord will again rejoice over you” – There is coming a day when His people of the nation of Israel will turn to the Lord with their whole heart.
- “The Lord your God in your midst, the Mighty One, will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing.” (Zeph. 3:17)
- 30:11 – “too mysterious for you” – Lit. “to wonderful for you.”
- 30:14 – “the word is very near you” – God has revealed what He wants us to know and obey in His Word. It isn’t complicated or super-spiritual. He has made that truth accessible to us; near to us.
- This is God’s Word and it is everywhere in our culture. But there is still a “famine...of hearing the words of the Lord.” (Amos 8:11)
  - Paul quotes this verse in Rom. 10:8 to speak of the faith with which we receive His revealed truth. Truth is not found; it is believed!
- 30:16 – “love the Lord your God” – This is God greatest desire for us...to love Him.
- “to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments” – This is what loving God means. (See v. 20)
- 30:17 – “heart turns away” – The heart dictates the course of the life. The heart always makes a convert of the mind.
- “Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.” (Prov. 4:23)
- 30:19 – “choose life” – It seems like a simple choice.
- This is God’s heart, begging and pleading with His people.
  - With the choice, God gives us the responsibility. But He also gives us the correct answer and good reasons for choosing what is right.
- 30:20 – “obey His voice...cling to Him” – This is the result of loving God. (1 John 5:3)
- “He is your life” – He doesn’t just give life, He is life. (John 10:10; 14:6; 17:3)
  - Their nation and their strength are dependant on their relationship with God alone. They are not dependant on their military, economy, or their exports.

## **Chapter 31:**

The theme of this final message is “The Lord, He is the One.” (Deut. 31:6, 8)

- Moses, as he is passing off the scene, is clear to let the people know that the previous victories were of the Lord and not of him. Therefore, the next wars will not lack anything for victory despite Moses being gone.

31:2 – “120 years old today” – Deut. 34:7 says “his eyes were not dim nor his natural vigor diminished.”

- Moses himself is evidence of God’s faithfulness to His promises.
- “not cross over this Jordan” – Moses must be heartbroken over this. He wanted so badly to get in.

31:3 – “Joshua himself crosses over before you” – The picture is that Moses, the lawgiver, cannot take the people into the promises of God. But Joshua, the type of Jesus, does take the people into the promised land. Joshua is the first book of the Bible named after a person and the Hebrew name Joshua is the equivalent to the Aramaic name Jesus.

31:4 – “as He did to Sihon and Og” – God is again holding up to the nation the victories over the giants. They have no excuses for not entering the land this time.

31:6 – “for the Lord your God...goes with you” – The presence of God with His people is reason enough to have faith over fear.

- God is asking them to walk by faith and not by sight.
- “be strong and of good courage” – The strength and courage is so that we can hold onto and obey the Lord in the midst of difficult and dangerous times. (Josh. 1:7)
- A leader of God’s people needs to be strong.

31:7 – “Moses called Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel” – Moses is passing the leadership mantle to Joshua before all the people.

31:9 – “Moses wrote” – Moses is clearly the author.

- See also Exod. 17:14; 24:4-8; 34:27; Num. 33:2; and Deut. 28:58; 29:20,27.
- “the law” – This refers either to the entire Torah or just this part of Deuteronomy.

31:11 – “read this law before all Israel” – In the Sabbath year, during the Feast of Tabernacles, this law was to be read aloud for all to hear.

- Who will read the law during the Feast of Tabernacles celebration during the millennium?

31:12 – “hear...learn...fear...observe” – Note the progression.

31:14 – “call Joshua” – This is Joshua’s ordination day.

- Joshua is now 103 years old. He will die at 110.

31:15 – “the Lord appeared at the tabernacle in a pillar of cloud” – This is the only time in all this book that we read of the glory of God appearing.

31:16 – “the Lord said to Moses” – God seems to speak in the hearing of Joshua, so that Joshua will overhear this pessimistic prophecy.

31:17 – “God is not among us” – They will leave Him; it is not that He is leaving them.

- 31:21 – “their behavior today” – Even as Moses and Joshua go into the tabernacle to hear from God, some of their own nation are thinking of ways to turn from God.
- This is Moses’ last day. After all that Moses has been through, including the miracles and deliverance, he still doesn’t get into the promised land and the people will still turn away.
- 31:22 – “Moses wrote this song” – Much of the Scripture that we have memorized is in song form.
- 31:23 – “Be strong and of good courage” – Here Joshua is told that his ministry won’t be any more successful in turning Israel to God than Moses’ was. That is why God has to keep telling him to be strong and courageous. (Deut. 31:6,7,23; Josh. 1:6,7,9,18)
- Success in ministry is entirely in being with God as He is with us. Joshua’s success was in being called the “servant of the Lord.” (Josh. 24:29)
  - God is behind this ministry, even though it seems to fail in the short run.
  - “I will be with you” – God is making a commitment to Joshua.
  - God’s presence is what keeps us going in the face of apparent failure and frustration.
  - “He Himself has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’” (Heb. 13:5)
- 31:26 – “this Book of the Law” – This is either Deuteronomy or the entire Pentateuch.
- “it may be there as a witness” – It is probable that this was the very book that was found in the house of the Lord (having been somehow or other misplaced) in the days of Josiah. (2 Chron. 34:14)
- 31:27 – “I know your rebellion” – Moses has heard their complaints all his life. Joshua had better get ready.
- 31:29 – “in the latter days” – This may still be in the future.
- 31:30 – “the words of this song” – This is the song to end Moses’ life.
- Other songs of Moses are found in Exod. 15:1-18; Ps. 90; and Rev. 15:3-4.

## **Chapter 32:**

- 32:1 – “O heavens...O earth” – God is calling the heavens and earth to witness of His faithfulness, because the people will not.
- 32:4 – “He is the Rock” – He is unchanging. His word abides forever. He is unmoving and immutable. And to forsake the Lord is to move away from the foundation, away from perfection, justice, and righteousness.
- The wise man builds his house upon the rock. (Matt. 7:24)
- 32:5 – “not His children, because of their blemish” – The blemishes come from being a son of Adam.
- 32:6 – “bought you...made you” – And this is as the Lamb of God was “slain from the foundation of the world.” (Rev. 13:8)
- We love God only because He has first loved us. (1 John 4:19)

- 32:8 – “Most High” – This is the only occurrence in Deuteronomy of this name for God. (Gen. 14:19)  
It emphasizes the Lord’s sovereignty over all creation.
- “set the boundaries of the peoples” – God does everything with Israel in view.
    - It is from Israel that the Messiah has come. It was in Israel that He was crucified. And it will be in Israel where He will reign over all the earth.
- 32:9 – “Lord’s portion is His people” – The thing God most wants is us.
- We were created for His pleasure. (Rev. 4:11)
  - In the NT, the Church is called “the riches of His inheritance.” (Eph. 1:18)
- 32:10 – “in the wasteland” – This was our life before and without Jesus.
- “He kept” – Lit. “He preserved.”
  - “apple of His eye” – Lit. “the pupil of His eye.” God guards His children as one guards their eyes in a dust storm.
- 32:11 – “as an eagle” – Parent eagles flutter to show the baby eaglets how to fly and exercise. And the parents will fly under the young eagles in tandem, possibly to show them a pattern that will form the pectins that will lead them back to their nest.
- Exod. 19:4 – “I bore you on eagles’ wings.”
  - Isa. 40:31 – “They shall mount up on wings like eagles.”
- 32:13 – “honey from the rock” – In Canaan, bees sometimes built their hives in the clefts of the rocks. (Isa. 7:18-19)
- God can bless us even in hardest situations. (Ps. 81:16)
  - “flinty rock” – This seems to speak of the terraces of the promised land.
- 32:14 – “breed of Bashan” – The best livestock came out of Bashan.
- This is describing the plenty of the promised land.
- 32:15 – “Jeshurun” – means “the upright one.” This is a Hebrew idiom for Israel. (Isa. 44:2)
- “forsook” – Lit. “abandoned.”
    - This is describing the process of turning on the One who took care of them and gave them these blessings.
- 32:16 – “provoked Him to jealousy” – It is nearly blasphemous to think that we could provoke God to jealousy.
- Are we jealous over God the same way?
- 32:17 – “to demons, not to God” – Satan’s work is always to take us out of our personal communion with the Lord.
- 1 Cor. 10:20 – “they sacrifice to demons and not to God.”
- 32:18 – “begot you” – Lit. “conceived you.” This is the paternal word for having children.
- “fathered you” – Lit. “birthed you, or delivered you with pain.”
- 32:19 – “His sons and His daughters” – God is the Father of sons and daughters.

- 32:20 – “hide My face” – They forgot His face in favor of His hand. They would rather have stuff from Him than to have Him Himself.
- When God’s people forsake Him, He withdraws the intimacy of His presence. At first, this is sometimes seen as a relief, because the conviction of sin is not so great. But then the darkness and desperation sets in.
- 32:21 – “move them to anger by a foolish nation” – This speaks of God’s use of the Gentiles to provoke Israel to jealousy. (Rom. 10:19)
- 32:27 – “it is not the Lord” – God’s concern is that when He judges His people that other people will take credit for it. He wants people to see and know Him.
- God would rather be known for His love than for his chastening.
  - A good dad is to be feared/respected as well as loved. Love, if it is not backed up by chastening, is hollow. Christ took our punishment on the cross, but we still need chastening from our heavenly Father.
- 32:29 – “consider their latter end” – God calls people to consider the end of their choices.
- God makes the appeal to all humanity to consider the consequences, both eternal and temporal.
- 32:30 – “their Rock had sold them” – God is speaking to the Gentile nations and telling them that their power over Israel only comes from Him.
- 32:35 – “Vengeance is Mine” – This is quoted in Rom. 12:19.
- “foot shall slip in due time” – People can mistake God’s patience for His approval. But in fact, they are not getting away with it; they are just running out of time.
  - Jonathan Edwards’ “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God” came from here.
- 32:36 – “the Lord will judge His people” – This is quoted in Heb. 10:30.
- “when He sees that their power is gone” – God will step in when they are left helpless and destitute.
- 32:38 – “let them rise and help you” – This is God’s rebuke of them seeking other gods.
- 32:39 – “I kill and I make alive” – God’s sovereignty and power can touch close to us. He will act to kill and wound at times, to work His purposes in this world.
- His sovereignty and power also allows Him to see us as perfect and righteous.
- 32:43 – “Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people” – This is implying that some Gentiles will be called His servants and counted with Israel.
- 32:46 – “set your hearts on all the words” – Everything hinges on keeping His word.
- Moses’ final exhortation is for them to take God’s Word and Law to heart. He is asking them to make choices based on the Word. It is not a vain thing.
- 32:49 – “Mount Nebo” – This is one of the highest points on the east side of the Jordan.
- 32:51 – “trespassed against Me” – Moses failed to sanctify God in the eyes of Israel. (Num. 20)

32:52 – “see the land” – Moses will get into the land at Jesus’ transfiguration (Matt. 17) and possibly will be one of the two martyred witnesses outside of Jerusalem (Rev. 11).

### **Chapter 33:**

33:1 – “the man of God” – This is the first occurrence of this phrase in the Bible. (See also Josh. 14:6 and 1 Sam. 2:27.)

33:2 – “Sinai” – This is the only place in Deuteronomy that the mountain is called Sinai. It is called Horeb nearly every other time.

- Ancient Sinai may possibly be the modern mountain called Jabel Arose which is located in the northwest corner of Saudi Arabia. Paul in the NT speaks of the Sinai which is in Arabia.
- “saints” – Lit. “holy ones.” This speaks of the angels who were involved in the giving of the Law at Sinai. (Acts 7:53; Gal. 3:19; Heb. 2:2)

33:3 – “He loves the people” – God’s love for His people is the theme of this chapter. This relationship was initiated by the love of God.

- We love Him only because He first loved us. (1 John 4:19)
- His Law (v. 2) came out of God’s love for His people.
- “saints” – This speaks of Israel.

33:6-25 – These are Moses’ last words to the nation; blessing the tribes of Israel. This is much like Jacob’s final words to his sons in Genesis 49, but more gracious.

- Simeon is not mentioned in this blessing. The tribe of Simeon would eventually be subsumed into the tribe of Judah.

33:6 – “Reuben live” – Reuben took its inheritance on the east of Jordan with Gad and half the tribe of Manasseh.

- “let his men be few” – The size of the tribe never matched Reuben’s status as the firstborn. (Reuben lost the blessing of the firstborn because of his infidelity – Gen. 49:4.)

33:7 – “may You be a help” – Judah would be the tribe to lead the camp and march first into battle.

33:8 – “of Levi” – Moses was of the tribe of Levi.

- “Your Thummim and Your Urim” – Lit. “perfections and lights.” They were used to get instructions and judgments from God.
- “Your holy one” – This is speaking of the High Priest.
- “contended at the waters of Meribah” – This is speaking specifically of Moses and Aaron.

33:9 – “nor did he acknowledge his brothers” – This is speaking of Exodus 32 when, after the golden calf incident, Levi separated from the nation to stand with Moses and execute judgment on those committing sin before the golden calf.

33:10 – “Jacob” – The name for Israel in its stubbornness and rebellion.

- 33:12 – “Of Benjamin” – Benjamin was the son of Jacob’s right hand and son of his old age.
- “in safety by Him” – Jerusalem and the Temple will be located in the tribe of Benjamin.
  - We are safe when we walk by Him, not when we try to get Him to walk by us.
  - “between his shoulders” – Other translations have “between his weapons.”
  - Jerusalem was stuck between the mountains between Judah and Benjamin.
- 33:16 – “separate from his brothers” – Joseph’s suffering is still being blessed.
- 33:17 – “Ephraim...Manasseh” – Joseph’s inheritance became two portions and was split between his sons, Ephraim and Manasseh.
- 33:18 – “Zebulun, in your going out” – Zebulun was wealthy because of their trade near the sea.
- “Issachar in your tents” – Issachar was located more inland, but was still rather wealthy because of its agriculture.
- 33:19 – “treasures hidden in the sand” – Oil companies are examining the area inhabited by Zebulun for oil based on this verse.
- John D. Rockefeller made his fortune on oil in Iraq after reading of “pitch” used in Shinar (Iraq) in Gen. 11:3.
- 33:21 – “enlarges Gad” – Despite locating on the east of Jordan, Gad still went with Israel to fight with them in the promised land.
- 33:21 – “the first part for himself” – Gad took their land east of the Jordan.
- 33:22 – “lion’s whelp” – Dan’s weakness caused it to move from the south to the far north to take an easier land. (Judges 18)
- Dan, because of its location in the north, would be one of the first tribes to fall when Israel was attacked by foreign nations.
  - Dan was also a leader of idolatry in Israel. (Judges 18:30; 1 Kings 12:26-30; Amos 8:14)
- 33:23 – “satisfied with favor” – The idea is “content.” This is a result of being in the presence of God. This is also to be “full of the blessing of the Lord.”
- “the west and the south” – This area, near the Sea of Galilee, was very lush.
- 33:24 – “oil” – Olive oil orchards are very abundant in that part of Israel.
- 33:25 – “iron and bronze” – This speaks of the mineral wealth of that region.
- “so shall your strength be” – God is faithful to give us what we need to do what He wants us to do clear to the end.
- 33:26 – “Jeshurun” – means “the upright one.”
- The nation being seen as upright has nothing to do with their own merit, but rests entirely on the grace of God.

33:27 – “eternal God” – Lit. “East God.” (See also “eastward” in Gen. 2:8.) For Israel, the east spoke of beginnings. Moses is pointing to the God of new beginnings.

- God’s eternality means that he is as close to us as He was to Moses and Paul or anyone else through the Scriptures.
- “your refuge” – The word also signifies “your habitation, or mansion-house.” Every Israelite indeed is at home in God.
- “everlasting arms” – For the Jew, “everlasting” carried the idea of “beyond the vanishing point.” This is looking off to the future.
  - Moses is passing away, but God will remain. As a father to this nation, he is leaving them an eternal legacy and a testimony of the Lord.
  - “He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the children of Israel.” (Ps. 103:7)

33:28 – “dwell in safety” – Moses seems to be looking all the way to the fulfillment of God’s work among His people, Israel.

33:29 – “a people saved by the Lord” – This is speaking specifically of Israel, but seems as if it could apply to the Church as well.

#### **Chapter 34:**

Moses is passing off the scene after spending 40 years in Egypt, 40 years in Midian, and 40 years in the wilderness. He is just about to have his desire to see God’s glory (Exod. 33:18) fulfilled.

34:1 – “Nebo” – The top of the Pisgah range was 4,500 ft. above the plains of Moab.

- “the Lord showed him all the land” – This is a supernatural vision; Moses is seeing great distances and into the future. From Gilead to Dan, Naphtali, and Ephraim were up to 100 miles away. And the children of Israel haven’t entered the land nor cast their lots yet. It will be about 7 years before Naphtali and Ephraim take their lands and about 50 years before Dan takes their land in the north.
  - At this point, even with 120 years behind him, his life must seem like a vapor.

34:2 – “all the land of Judah” – Did Moses see Jerusalem and what would one day happen on Mt. Moriah/Golgotha?

34:5 – “Moses the servant of the Lord” – This is how God wants Moses to be remembered.

- “When the Master is glorified, the servants are satisfied” - Guzik.
- “word” – (Heb. “peh”) Of the 425 uses in the OT, 341 of them are translated “mouth.” The Hebrew scholars translate this verse as “Moses...died...at the kiss of the Lord.”
  - The analogy of dying is much as a baby being born and passing from one place of life to another through a long, dark process.
  - “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death...For You are with me.” (Ps. 23:4) Otherwise, we go through that valley alone.



34:6 – “He buried him” – God Himself buried Moses.

- “in the valley” – Moses wasn’t buried on Mt. Nebo. He was buried in the valley.
  - If Moses was buried far enough down in the valley, he may have been buried near where Elijah crossed the Jordan before being taken to heaven.
  - Moses will appear with Elijah and Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. (Matt. 17) And it may also be Moses standing with Elijah outside of Jerusalem in Rev. 11.
- “no one knows his grave” – This was so Israel would not be able to enshrine Moses burial site.
  - Jude 9 says that Michael, the archangel, and Satan disputed over the body of Moses.

34:7 – “one hundred and twenty years old” – Moses’ father, Amram, lived to be 137. His grandfather, Kohath, lived to be 130 years old. And his great-grandfather, Levi, also lived to be 137 years old.

- “nor his natural vigor diminished” – Lit. “his moisture is not dried up.”
  - Moses did not die because his body failed. He simply went at his appointed time, place, and manner.
  - Ps. 139 says that God knew all our days before any of them were at all.
  - Jer. 1 says that God knew Jeremiah before he was even conceived.

34:8 – “wept for Moses” – Israel gave Moses a hard time while he was alive, but they cry for him at his death.

- Some of these tears may have been of regret for all they did to him and all they didn’t say before he passed away.

34:9 – “the children of Israel heeded him” – The real test of leadership is to see if people actually follow you.

34:10 – “not arisen in Israel a prophet like Moses” – The first thing mentioned in the qualifications of the greatness of Moses is his relationship with his God.

- “face to face” – The Hebrew grammar indicates that God knew Moses in all the things listed in vv.11-12. Moses did everything in fellowship with the Lord.
  - “Moses was faithful in all His house.” (Heb. 3:2) He finished His course.