

The First Sermon of Moses Deuteronomy 1

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Moses reviewed Israel's sojourn at Mt. Sinai.

2. Moses reviewed Israel's sojourn at Kadesh Barnea.

Practical Application

1. Always distinguish between confident faith and presumptuous pride.

Questions

1. Give some evidence why the book of Deuteronomy is important for believers of all times.
2. What was the setting for the book of Deuteronomy?
3. According to the description in verse 7, what was the extent of the land given to the Children of Israel?
4. Has Israel ever possessed all the Land that God promised them?
5. What was the report from the twelve men sent to spy out the Promised Land?

Answers

1. The book of Deuteronomy is quoted frequently in the New Testament. The Lord Jesus quoted Deuteronomy three times in response to Satan's temptations.
2. In a series of sermons, Moses prepared the Children of Israel to enter the Promised Land by reviewing God's covenant with them. This served as a preview for what was to come as they conquered the land the Lord God had given them.
3. The Land included all of the land of Canaan from the Negev in the south to the Euphrates River in the far northeast and from the Mediterranean Sea on the west side to the Jordan River and the Arabah on the east side.
4. No, under King Solomon they controlled all this land, but never fully possessed it. They will when the Lord returns, as we know from the prophetic Scriptures.
5. The spies brought back the report that indeed it was a good and fruitful land, but because of unbelief, ten of the spies and the rest of Israel refused to go and possess the Land. They were convinced that they would be defeated by the giants.

Discuss / Consider

1. The journey from Mt. Horeb to Kadesh Barnea could have taken the Children of Israel 11 days –instead it took them 40 years. Think of the last time you wandered around in circles in your Christian life, falling short of maturity and growth because of sin.
2. The Children of Israel wanted to check out the Land first –even though God said it was a good land and that He would give them victory. This indicates a lack of faith on the part of Israel. Can you relate to the Children of Israel's mentality?

Challenge

1. When the Children of Israel were told that they could not go into the Land, they changed their minds and proceeded to go up and fight the enemy. But it was too late and they were soundly defeated. This was presumptuous pride, not confident faith.

The First Sermon to Moses, Continued
Deuteronomy 2

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Moses reviewed Israel's journey to Transjordan.

2. Moses reviewed Israel's conquest of Transjordan.

Practical Application

1. Remember the right way is sometimes the long way.

Questions

1. How long was the Children of Israel's journey to the Promised Land?
2. What is notable about verses 10-12 and 20-23?
3. What is Transjordan?
4. Why did God route the Children of Israel through Transjordan to enter Canaan from the east, rather than going straight north from Kadesh Barnea?
5. Why were the Israelites instructed to fight the Amorites in Transjordan but not the Edomites, the Moabites, or the Ammonites?

Answers

1. They spent a total of 40 years between Egypt and Canaan with 38 of those years actually wandering in the wilderness.
2. These verses, possibly marked by parenthesis in your Bible, were likely added later by another inspired writer. This is not a problem for the doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture. The doctrine of inspiration does not require every book of Scripture be written totally by one author.
3. Transjordan is the east side of the Jordan River.
4. One reason was so the Children of Israel would see the miracle of the Jordan River held back, since this generation had not seen the miracle of the parting of the Red Sea. Another reason was so the Amorites on the east side would be defeated and would not come to the aid of the Amorites or Canaanites on the West side of the Jordan River during the conquest of Canaan.
5. The Edomites were descendants of Esau. And the Moabites and Ammonites were descendants of Lot. God had given these distant relatives of the Children of Israel the land where they dwelt to the east and southeast of the Jordan River and the Dead Sea. God's people were not to take what God had not given them – then or today.

Discuss / Consider

1. The fact that Israel was to leave no survivors in their conquest can be a hard concept to comprehend. It must be viewed from the divine viewpoint. Discuss the two points given regarding this instruction.

Challenge

1. For Israel, the right way into the Promised Land was the long way. The same may be true in your life as well. Does God seem to be taking you on a detour from your plan for your life? Remember the right way is sometimes the long way.

Moses Reviews Israel's Conquest of Transjordan Deuteronomy 3

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. **Moses reviewed Israel's conquest of Transjordan.**

2. **Moses reviewed Israel's distribution of Transjordan.**

Practical Application

1. **Don't say "please" when God says, "No!"**

Questions

1. Who was Og?

2. What do we know about the Children of Israel's battle experience?

3. How do we know that God was patient and longsuffering with the Amorites and Canaanites?

4. How did two and a half tribes end up on the east side of the Jordan River?

Answers

1. Og, king of Bashan was one of the two kings of the Amorites who were on the east side of the Jordan River. Og was of the remnant of the Rephaim – giant people who lived in that area. The other Transjordan king was Sihon king of Heshbon.
2. The Children of Israel were battle-hardened warriors before they even entered the Promised Land. They captured 60 cities with high walls as well as a great many unwallled towns before they crossed over the Jordan and conquered Jericho (verses 4-5).
3. God told Abraham in Genesis 15:16 that his descendants would be enslaved in Egypt for 400 years before they conquered Canaan because the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet complete. God gave the Amorites and Canaanites plenty of time to change their ways, but they would not.
4. God wanted all twelve tribes to cross over Jordan and dwell on the east side, but the two and a half tribes wanted to live on the east side because the land was good for grazing and raising livestock. They agreed to help the other tribes fight the battles, would return to the east side after the conquest. God allowed this arrangement, so the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh settled in Transjordan. See Numbers 32.

Discuss / Consider

1. How do you balance the basic teaching about God in 1 John 4:8 with the foundational truth about God's dealing with mankind in Genesis 18:25? Are you convinced of the basic principles that God is love and He always does the right thing?

Challenge

1. God told Moses that he would see the Promised Land from a distance, but that he could not go into the land because of his disobedience (Numbers 20). Moses pleaded with God, thinking he would change His mind, but God did not. Has God said "No" to you in some area of your life? Are you willing to take "No" for an answer?

Obedience Commanded and Idolatry Forbidden **Deuteronomy 4:1-43**

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Moses preached the importance for Israel to keep the Law.**

- 2. Moses preached the importance for Israel to keep the Law.**

- 3. Moses predicted the restoration of Israel to the Lord.**

Practical Application

- 1. Help is not that far away.**

Questions

1. Throughout Israel's history they have failed to keep God's commandment not to add to His Word or take away from it (verses 1-2). Give an example of this from Christ's time.

2. Why did God give His people the Law, according to verses 5-8?

3. Put into your own words at least three of the questions God asked the Children of Israel to show their uniqueness as a nation (verses 32-40).

4. Is the return of the State of Israel the fulfillment of the prophecy in verses 29-31?

5. What was a city of refuge?

Answers

1. The Pharisees added additional laws to the Word of God, and the Sadducees, for example, took away from God's Word – even denying the possibility of bodily resurrection.
2. God gave His people the Law, not only so that they could have a full and blessed life, but also so that they would be a light and testimony to the surrounding nations and draw these nations to the one True God.
3. - Had any other nation literally heard the voice of God?
 - Had any other nation experienced a miraculous exodus like Israel had with signs and wonders?
 - Had any other nation been able to drive out the Amorites as Israel had done against overwhelming odds?
4. No, but it is the groundwork for the spiritual reawakening of Israel in the future. Israel will return to the Lord.
5. Cities of refuge were for the protection of a person who was involved in an accidental death such as a hunting accident or building accident. The one who caused the death could flee to the city of refuge and be safe and protected from any revenge until his case was tried and proved that it was not murder.

Discuss / Consider

1. Two temptations exist with God's Word: to become a legalist who tends to add to Scripture or to ignore passages of Scripture that we don't like and thus take away from Scripture. Which of these tends to be your temptation? Why do you think this is so?

2. Just as the removal of Israel from the Land took place as Moses predicted, so the restoration of Israel to the Lord will surely take place. We have a God Who keeps His word in both large matters and small. How does their truth encourage your faith?

Challenge

1. Hebrews 6:18 tells us that the cities of refuge are a picture of Christ to Whom we have fled as our true refuge. We do not have to go to great lengths to find strength, help, and safety – Help is not that far away.

The Ten Commandments
Deuteronomy 4:44-5:33

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. The Ten Commandments were given for keeping.

2. The Ten Commandments were given for blessing.

Practical Application

1. Don't limit the 8th commandment to money and material.

Questions

1. Give the setting for Deuteronomy 5.

2. In what battles had the Israelites recently engaged?

3. Why did God give the Law?

4. Should we keep the Law today?

5. How did the people respond to the giving of the Law?

Answers

1. Forty years after the Ten Commandments were originally given at Mount Sinai, the Children of Israel are situated on the Plains of Moab ready to cross over into the Land of Promise. Moses reviews the Ten Commandments and begins his second sermon to the people.
2. Deuteronomy 4:44-49 summarizes the recent fighting of the people on the east side of the Jordan River and their victories over the two major kings of the Amorites – Sihon king of Heshbon and Og king of Bashan. This conquered land would be possessed by the two tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh.
3. According to Galatians 3, God gave the Law not only to show God's perfect standards and to show that anything less than perfection was sin, but He also gave the Law to lead us to faith in Christ, knowing that we couldn't keep God's perfect Law.
4. We do not keep the Law as a means of salvation or the means of our sanctification. Our aim and goal as Christians is to love and serve our Savior, and in doing so we will keep the Law more than if we tried to do so in our own strength.
5. The reaction and response of the people was good. They showed great respect for the holiness of God and they asked Moses to go near and hear all that the Lord commanded and they would do it.

Discuss / Consider

1. Discuss this teaching: "As Christians we do not make keeping the Ten Commandments our goal in life, but in following Christ we certainly will be keeping the moral aspects of the Law with the Lord's help."

2. Notice the promise associated with the 5th commandment in Deuteronomy 5:16. Honoring your parents is still a moral principle basic to enjoying the blessing of long life. See Ephesians 6:1-3. Do you want to live a long life?

Challenge

1. Do you have a high standard when it comes to the commandment "Do not steal"? This general commandment covers more than just the stealing of money or material possessions.

**Israel's Confession of Faith – The Shema
Deuteronomy 6**

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. God's people are to be committed to the truth and love of God's Person.
2. God's people are to be committed to the practice and teaching of God's Word.

Practical Application

1. Don't test the Lord.
2. Wear verses, not advertisements.

Questions

1. What is a phylactery? What does one contain?
2. What is the Shema?
3. What is a mezuzah?
4. Read Deuteronomy 6:10-11. How does archeology once again support the accuracy of the Bible?
5. What is the great emphasis of Deuteronomy 6?

Answers

1. A phylactery is a small hard leather box that is strapped to the forehead and left forearm of observant Jews during worship. In the leather boxes are strips of paper or parchment contain Hebrew Scriptures, in particular Deuteronomy 6:4 the celebrated Jewish Shema.
2. "Shema" is the Hebrew word for "hear," the first word of Deuteronomy 6:4, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one!"
3. A mezuzah is a small metal or wooden box placed on the doorpost of a Jewish home. These boxes also contain the Hebrew Shema. Mezuzah is the Hebrew word for "doorpost."
4. When Israel came into the land, they did not destroy the cities. They took over the cities and possessed these cities. The archaeological record shows a change of culture around 1400 B.C., but not a lot of destructions of cities. Only the cities of Jericho, Ai, and Hazor were destroyed.
5. The great emphasis in this chapter is not only practicing the Law, but teaching it as well.

Discuss / Consider

1. The Hebrew Shema emphasizes the unity and wholeness of the Lord. The love of God is intimately associated with the truth about God. Discuss the various ways you could study more about God Himself- through His names, through His attributes, through prayers in Scriptures, to name a few.

2. It is required and demanded in Scripture that parents be responsible for the education of their children, and that education is to be centered and focused around the Word of God. Whether you have chosen to send your children to public school, private school, or homeschool, how are you ensuring that your biblical worldview is passed on to them?

Challenge

1. The Hebrew culture encourages awareness of Scripture throughout the home and daily life through phylacteries, mezuzahs, etc. Think of a way that you could see more Bible verses throughout your day.

God Commands Israel to Drive Out the Canaanites Deuteronomy 7

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Israel's conquest of Canaan brought God's judgment on the Canaanite people.

2. Israel's conquest of Canaan brought God's blessing on the chosen people.

Practical Application

1. Don't play with fire!

Questions

1. What was Israel's history with the Land they were about to enter?

2. Give a couple of the reasons God commanded His people to utterly destroy the people in the land.

3. When else do we see God using a nation as His ax of punishment?

4. Why was Israel God's chosen people?

5. List some of the blessing that were promised to God's chosen people if they would just follow and obey the Lord.

Answers

1. God had given this land to Abraham and his descendants, but the descendants of Abraham had been temporarily out of the land while they were slaves in Egypt. Now they were coming back to claim what was theirs by divine right, and God was leading them.
2. 1. These were wicked pagan people who had not taken the opportunity to repent.
2. God did not want His people to be contaminated with the idolatry and immorality of these wicked people.
3. God used Israel as His ax to cut down and remove the wicked practices that were rampant throughout the land. Years later God would use the Assyrians and Babylonians as His ax to remove His own people from the land for their wickedness.
4. Israel was God's chosen people not through any merit of their own, but because of God's sovereign choice and the covenant He made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
5. They were promised blessings on their families, on their land, on their flocks, and on their herds.

Discuss / Consider

1. In Deuteronomy 7:21-22 we learn that God would strategically drive the enemies out little by little. God can use this same principle in spiritual warfare in our lives today. Some problems are best handled little by little. Can you think of an example?
2. During the conquest, Israel was to burn all idols, images, and occult objects. These were an abomination to the Lord and there was always the risk that the people could become ensnared. So we must be ruthless in the removal of anything in our lives that begins to take our hearts and commitment away from the Lord. Can you give a testimony of this in your life?

Challenge

1. In Deuteronomy 7:23-24 we learn that God would use confusion within the ranks of the enemy to defeat them. God can do this in spiritual warfare today. Ask Him to be your conqueror and defender.

Israel Commanded not to Forget the Lord Deuteronomy 8

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Believers should remember and not forget their beginnings.**
- 2. Believers should remember and not forget their blessings.**
- 3. Believers should remember and not forget their beatings.**

Practical Application

- 1. Watch out for the “Bread Alone” mentality!**

Questions

1. Why was Israel commanded to remember all the ways that God had led them for 40 years through the wilderness.
2. What three areas of wilderness experience was Israel not to forget?
3. List some of the aspects of Israel’s “beginnings” that they should remember.
4. What blessings from the wilderness should Israel remember?
5. Why did God lead the Israelites in the wilderness in a way designed to humble them, test them, and expose their hearts (verse 2)? Why did He let them get hungry and thirsty?

Answers

1. Because there was the danger of becoming too self-reliant when they came into the good land that God was giving them and thus becoming proud.
2.
 1. Their beginnings
 2. Their blessings
 3. Their beatings
3. Their exodus from more than 400 years of bondage, the providential leadership of Moses, the plagues that God brought upon their slave-masters, the crossing of the Red Sea, the drowning of Pharaoh's army, and more
4. Bread from heaven, Water from a rock, clothes and sandals that did not wear out for 40 years, and more.
5. To cause them to look to Him and learn that physical food alone is not sufficient for life; there must be a constant diet of spiritual food – the Word of God (verse 3).

Discuss / Consider

1. Deuteronomy 8 has a lot of practical application for the believer today. We too can forget what God has done for us and become too self-reliant, and thus be lifted up with pride. Can you give an example of this?

2. Discuss the teaching, "The Lord purposely permits us to go through hard times 'in the wilderness' to humble us and test us and know what is in our hearts – not just what is in our heads!"

Challenge

1. Do your priorities show that you are more concerned with feeding your stomach or feeding on the Word of God for spiritual sustenance, encouragement, guidance, and exhortation? Watch out for the "Bread Alone" mentality.

Why Did God Bring Israel into the Land? Deuteronomy 9

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. The Lord brought Israel into the Land because of the wickedness of the Canaanites.**

- 2. The Lord brought Israel into the Land because of the intercession of Moses.**

Practical Application

- 1. Watch out for religious pride.**

Questions

1. What is hyperbole? Where do we see one in Deuteronomy 9?
2. What is anthropomorphism?
3. How does Genesis 15:16 relate to this passage?
4. How long did Moses spend on Mount Sinai?
5. Review the three-fold basis for Moses' prayer of intercession in verses 26-29.

Answers

1. Hyperbole is an acceptable figure of speech where you purposely exaggerate in order to get your point across. We see hyperbole in verse 1 which says that the cities of Canaan were great cities fortified up to heaven.
2. Anthropomorphism is another figure of speech by which a human-like feature or characteristic is attributed to God. “Written with the finger of God” is anthropomorphism (verse 10).
3. In Genesis 15 God said to Abraham that his descendants would be in Egypt for 400 years because the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet complete. Now was the time for the ax to fall as Israel conquered the Land.
4. Moses spent 40 days and nights on Mount Sinai when he received the Law from the Lord. He then came down from the mountain and smashed the tablets of the Law during the sorrowful golden calf event. After this he returned to the mountain for another 40 days and nights to intercede before the Lord.
5.
 1. He reminded the Lord that He would be destroying His own inheritance – the very people that He redeemed out of Egypt by His great power.
 2. He prayed on the basis of God’s promises to the patriarchs – Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
 3. He reminded the Lord that the Egyptians would conclude that God didn’t have enough power to finish the job of bringing the people into the Promised Land or that He had only brought them out of Egypt because He hated them and wanted to destroy them. God listened to the prayers of Moses.

Discuss / Consider

1. The Lord did not bring Israel into the Land as a reward for their good behavior. In fact, they were a stubborn and rebellious people. Can you think of a time the Lord was gracious to you when you had done nothing to deserve it?

2. Only by the mercy of God, in response to the intercession of Moses, were Aaron and the nation spared there at Mount Sinai as well as at other times of rebellion throughout the 40 years of wilderness wanderings. Read James 5:16. Whether or not we see the effect of our prayers in this lifetime, we can be assured they do make a difference.

Challenge

1. Christians can exhibit religious pride and think that God owes them a blessing or that any blessing they receive they deserve and is God’s stamp of approval on their life and lifestyle. Watch out for religious pride.

Israel's Obligations and Responsibilities **Deuteronomy 10**

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Believers should follow the example of the Levites.

2. Believers should follow the example of the Lord.

Practical Application

1. Do you know the ABCs of God's requirements for believers?

Questions

1. Describe one way Old Testament scholars approach the structure of Deuteronomy.

2. Describe the second way (primarily taken in this set of lectures).

3. What is referred to by the phrase "at that time" in verse 1?

4. Who replaced Aaron as high priest after his death?

5. Deuteronomy 10:16 is figurative language. How can we put it into practice?

Answers

1. It can be shown that the arrangement of the content of Deuteronomy follows the typical form of an ancient treaty, such as between suzerain lords and their vassals. These treaties followed a certain format beginning with a preamble, then a historical prologue, a stipulation of the treaty, the sanctions or blessings and cursings, and finally the arrangement for the continuation of the covenant. The book of Deuteronomy can be shown to follow this treaty structure in general with God as the suzerain Lord and the children of Israel as the vassal people.
2. The other approach is to see the Book of Deuteronomy as 3 or 4 sermons or addresses that Moses gave the Children of Israel as they were camped on the Plains of Moab preparing to cross the Jordan River into the Promised Land.
3. This phrase refers to the time at Mount Sinai, the second forty days and nights that Moses spent on the mountain after the event of the golden calf and the smashing of the first set of tablets. Now the Lord had Moses come up on Mount Sinai once again with two new stone tablets and God in His grace again wrote the Ten Commandments of the Mosaic Covenant.
4. Eleazar, the third son of Aaron, became high priest. Remember the first two sons, Nadab and Abihu, died by fire because they offered strange fire before the Lord (Leviticus 10).
5. We, like the Children of Israel, must circumcise our hearts and stiffen our necks no longer. This is figurative language for separating from sinful activities and stopping our disobedience and rebellion.

Discuss / Consider

1. Discuss the role of the Levites in their special place of service for the Lord. What did they do to earn this special role? How could you make the Lord's service a greater priority in your life?

2. Compare Deuteronomy 10:12-13 with Micah 6:8. Discuss the ABCs of God's requirements for believers.
 - A. To fear the Lord and walk in His ways.
 - B. To love the Lord and serve the Lord.
 - C. To keep the Lord's commandments.

Challenge

1. Think of it! The God Who created and owns the universe (verse 14) cares for the insignificant folks, the downtrodden, and the poor and needy. How can we do less?

Love and Obey the Lord **Deuteronomy 11**

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Believers should know that the consequence of obedience is blessing.**

- 2. Believers should know that the consequence of disobedience is discipline.**

Practical Application

- 1. Don't make literal what should be taken figuratively!**

- 2. Don't make figurative what should be taken literally!**

Questions

1. Who was the specific audience of Moses' address in Deuteronomy 11?
2. Is Deuteronomy 11:12 still true today?
3. Where and how do we see verses 26-30 fulfilled?
4. Mention some of the blessings Israel would receive if they obeyed the Lord.
5. How did God discipline His people?

Answers

1. In this section he is speaking to the generation that was under 20 years old at the time of the Exodus. In view of all they had seen in the Exodus and Wilderness Wanderings, they should love the Lord and obey the Lord.
2. Yes! Israel is a land for which the Lord cares in a special way.
3. When the Children of Israel crossed the Jordan River and entered the land, they would ratify the covenant by literally going to the center of the Land where Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim were located. There the covenant would be ratified by half of Israel standing on the slopes of Mount Gerizim to represent the blessings of the Law and half of Israel standing on the slopes of Mount Ebal to represent the curses of the Law. The Levites stood in the middle between the tribes for the reading of the stipulations of the covenant. These directions are given again in Deuteronomy 27 and carried out in Joshua 8.
4. The Lord would send rain on the Land, their harvests would be bountiful, their flocks and herds would be abundant, and no enemy would be able to defeat them.
5. He withheld the rains and made the land unproductive. Later God disciplined His people with captivity and scattering among the nations.

Discuss / Consider

1. Christians are not promised the blessing of productive crops and large flocks and herds, but we are promised every spiritual blessing that heaven has to offer. See Ephesians 1. Discuss: "The consequence of obedience is blessing."

2. God must discipline His disobedient children. What kind of heavenly Father would He be if He did not discipline us when we disobey? See Hebrews 12:6 and Proverbs 3:12. When has the Lord's discipline had a positive result in your life?

Challenge

1. Do you let God's Word speak as it is written? Do you let the literal sections be literal and the figurative be figurative?

God Requires One Place for Worship **Deuteronomy 12**

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. The believer's way of worship is different than the unbeliever's.**

- 2. The believer's way of life is different than the unbeliever's.**

Practical Application

- 1. "What makes you different?" is really a compliment!**

Questions

1. What is the emphasis of Deuteronomy 12?

2. What does Deuteronomy 12:1 teach us about the Land of Promise and the Children of Israel?

3. Why did God command the people to establish a central sanctuary in the Promised Land?

4. Which cities served as this central place of worship over the years?

5. How were the Children of Israel supposed to handle the blood of animals?

Answers

1. How God's people were to be different from the surrounding pagan people in their way of worship and in their way of life.

2. The Land of Promise was given to the Children of Israel as long as they would live on this earth – not as long as they kept the Mosaic covenant. It was given to them under the unconditional Abrahamic Covenant.

3. In the wilderness the tribes were all camped around the tabernacle, but when they entered the Land they would be spread out at quite some distance from one another. God instructed them to establish a central place of worship at which to gather.

4. During the time of the conquest the Tabernacle was located at Gilgal. During the time of the judges the Tabernacle was located at Shiloh before it was moved to Gibeon. When David came to the throne, Jerusalem was chosen by God to be the central place of worship.

5. Animals killed for food at home were to have the blood drained, because blood represented life and blood would be the ransom price for sin (Leviticus 17:11). Not eating or drinking the blood of an animal recognized the sacredness of blood and God's view of the blood.

Discuss / Consider

1. How is the believer's way of worship different than the unbeliever's? If we believe there is only one God and one way to worship Him- to come through Jesus Christ, the only mediator between God and Man (1 Timothy 2:5), what difference should this make in our worship?

2. Discuss the claim that you need to know about the practices of unbelievers to witness to them effectively. How do Romans 16:19 and Ephesians 5:1-4 relate to this discussion?

Challenge

1. As Christians, we will be different from this world if we live our lives in line with the Bible. Our priorities will be different. Our behaviors will be different. Our jokes will be different. Our entertainment will be different. Are yours?

Condemnation of False Teachers **Deuteronomy 13**

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. The success of false teachers is a test of the believer's faith.**

- 2. The judgment of false teachers is a test of the believer's faithfulness.**

Practical Application

- 1. Don't tolerate vestiges of idolatry!**

Questions

1. Deuteronomy 13 required the death penalty for which two groups of people?

2. What safeguards were in place to protect against false accusations?

3. How would the people know whether a prophet was false or true?

4. List 3 goals that would be accomplished by the death penalty in the case of false prophets or followers of false prophets.

5. In the history of the Old Testament did the people deal properly with false teachers?

Answers

1. The death penalty was demanded for false prophets who promoted the worship of any god besides the one true God. The death penalty was also to be carried out in reference to anyone following such false teaching.
2. The one who brought the charge had to throw the first stone, which would keep false charges to a minimum. If an entire city was led astray by false teaching, everything was to be burned and that city was not to be rebuilt. This would prevent anyone from profiting in any way from false accusations.
3. Signs and wonders were not the sign of a true prophet. It was whether or not that prophet followed and 3. proclaimed the Word of the Lord.
4.
 1. It would purge evil from among God's people.
 2. It would be a severe warning to all of Israel.
 3. It would be a test of the faithfulness of God's people.
5. False prophets did arise in Israel and they were not dealt with except during times of revival. Many times this was too little, too late, and idolatry did sweep through Israel and Judah. Even to the point of child sacrifice to foreign gods.

Discuss / Consider

1. There will be false prophets who will have very "successful" ministries – including signs and wonders. God allows this apparent success as a test for believer. Will you be taken in by the false teaching of false prophets or will you follow the clear teaching of the Word of God? How will you know?

2. While the Church does not carry out the death penalty, since it is not a theocracy as Israel was, the Church is called to deal with false teachers and eliminate false teaching. False teaching cannot be tolerated and false teachers within the church must be silenced and excommunicated if need be. Discuss this principle from 1 Timothy 1 and Titus 1.

Challenge

1. Any town in Israel that turned away from the Lord to other gods was to be completely destroyed and never to be rebuilt again. No vestiges of idolatry were to remain. Are there any vestiges of idolatry still present in your life? Memorize 2 Corinthians 10:5.

Clean and Unclean Food **Deuteronomy 14**

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. The Lord's people should be different than the world's people in what they consume.**

- 2. The Lord's people should be different than the world's people in how they give.**

Practical Application

- 1. Dare to be different!**

Questions

1. Explain the command in Deuteronomy 14:1.

2. Deuteronomy 14 gives two areas where Israel was to be different and distinct among the nations. What are they?

3. Give three reasons that help explain the dietary laws for God's people in the Old Testament.

4. What provision did the Lord make regarding tithing for those who lived far from Jerusalem?

5. How was this tithe on produce used to benefit others?

Answers

1. These were pagan practices of the Canaanites in connection with their false religion. The Children of Israel were not to get involved.
2. The area of food and the area of money.
3.
 1. For hygienic purposes
 2. To keep God's people separate from any pagan practices and any possible syncretism
 3. For the spiritual lessons associated with these laws
4. If the distance from Jerusalem was great, then the grain and flocks could be exchanged for money and the money brought before the Lord (verses 24-25).
5. Every third year the Israelites would give their tithe to the Levites who lived in their hometown. This tithe was also to provide for the orphans, widows, and aliens who were in that town (verses 28-29).

Discuss / Consider

1. How can the phrase "You are what you eat" hold true both physically and spiritually? If you kept a "food diary" of the spiritual foods you consume, what patterns would you see?

2. There is not a command in the New Testament for Christians to tithe, but if we follow the principles of giving in 2 Corinthians 8 and 9, we will be generous and at least tithing. What are these principles?

Challenge

1. Will you dare to be different than the world in what you consume and how you give? Dare to be different!

Canceling of Debts and Release of Slaves Deuteronomy 15

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Under the Law, Hebrew debts were remitted in the seventh year.**

- 2. Under the Law, Hebrew slaves were released in the seventh year.**

Practical Application

- 1. Don't give the Lord your defective stuff.**

Questions

1. How does Deuteronomy 15 fit into the overall structure of the book?
2. What was special about every seventh year in the Hebrew calendar?
3. Debts were to be cancelled in the sabbatical year. Give two points for this law.
4. When were Hebrew slaves supposed to be released?
5. What is emphasized in Deuteronomy 15 regarding the release of Hebrew slaves?

Answers

1. It is part of the second sermon of Moses to the Children of Israel on the plains of Moab, before they entered the Land (Deuteronomy 5-26). The bulk of this second sermon consists of a review and exposition of the various laws under the Mosaic Covenant.
2. Every seventh year in Israel was designated as a sabbatical year. Under the Law certain restrictions applied during the sabbatical year – for the good of the land and for the good of the people.
3.
 1. To aim at eliminating poverty from the land (verse 4), because there will always be poor people (verse 11).
 2. To prove that God would bless them and provide more than they need to help the poor if they would obey Him in this matter of kindness to the poor.
4. After they had served for six years, they would be released in the seventh year – whatever that year was. In the year of Jubilee, however, all Hebrew slaves were released regardless of how many years they served (Leviticus 25).
5. Hebrews slaves were not only to be set free, but they should not be sent away empty-handed (verse 13). They were to be given enough to get established in the society of Israel.

Discuss / Consider

1. Sometimes people are hesitant to give to the poor because of a bad experience with “freeloaders.” What is your attitude? How do you show kindness to the truly poor?

2. If any servant decided that he would rather not go free because he loved his master who treated him kindly and fairly, then he would have his ear pierced with an awl and he would serve permanently (verse 17). Discuss the beautiful picture we have here of the committed Christian who has been set free and now serves the Lord in love.

Challenge

1. Under the Law, the firstborn of the flocks and herds belonged to the Lord, but no defective animals were to be given to the lord. Do you offer the Lord defective stuff? Your spare time? Your leftover talent? Don't give the Lord your defective stuff.

Three of Israel's Annual Feasts Deuteronomy 16

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Under the Law, Israel celebrated yearly feasts.

2. Under the Law, Israel appointed godly leaders.

Practical Application

1. Remember, there are limits to religious freedom!

Questions

1. How many feasts were on the Hebrew calendar? Why are part of the feasts highlighted here?
2. Moses emphasized these feasts were to be celebrated “in the place which God chooses.” Where would this be?
3. Who was required to celebrate in Jerusalem?
4. Why were the men of Israel only required to go up to Jerusalem three times a year?
5. Why did the command concerning bribes need to be included here (verse 19)?

Answers

1. There were seven feasts celebrated annually in Israel (Leviticus 23 and Numbers 28-29). Here in Deuteronomy 16 the emphasis is on the command for Israel to come up to Jerusalem three times a year to celebrate certain feasts.
2. When the Children of Israel would cross the Jordan and come into the land, the Lord would choose Jerusalem as the central sanctuary. Here is where the feasts would then be celebrated.
3. Only the men were required to travel to Jerusalem three times a year, but families were encouraged to go as well (verses 11 and 14).
4.
 1. God was gracious, since coming up to Jerusalem took time and money.
 2. These three feasts included sacrificial meals that the people would participate in at the Tabernacle.
 3. By coming up to Jerusalem for these three feasts, they would actually be there for five feasts, since several were close together.
5. This command was given before any Judeo-Christian tradition that is intrinsic to our culture. It was not so obvious to them and certainly counter-intuitive to many Middle Eastern cultures. But Israel was to be different as God's people.

Discuss / Consider

1. Observe the three branches of government in Deuteronomy 16:18-19. God was the perfect legislating authority because He made the laws. Here the people were to appoint judges and officers to ensure that justice was maintained.

2. Discuss religious freedom in our country today. Are there limits to religious freedom? Are these limits good or bad?

Challenge

1. The men of Israel were to gather in Jerusalem three times a year for corporate worship. Do you enjoy the fellowship of other believers on a regular basis? If not, you are missing out on a dynamic part of the Christian life. See Hebrews 10:25.

Rules for Law Courts and Future Kings Deuteronomy 17

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Judges in Israel were to follow strict rules of justice.

2. Kings of Israel were to follow strict regulations in office.

Practical Application

1. Read the Bible all the days of your life.

Questions

1. What is the context of Deuteronomy 17? (Remember there were no chapter divisions in the original Hebrew text.)
2. Why was the regulation about defective sacrifices (verse 1) included in this passage?
3. Give two reasons stoning was the method of execution for the sin of idolatry.
4. Describe what was in essence a supreme court in Israel (verses 8-13).
5. What was God's intent regarding a king in Israel?

Answers

1. The context is laws against false gods and false religious activity
2.
 1. Because this was part of the Law, someone had to judge when an animal was defective.
 2. To give anything less than your best to the Lord was a step towards idolatry.
3.
 1. It clearly set this death penalty apart from any kind of human sacrifice. This was justice.
 2. Stoning ensures that all the people were involved in carrying out the sentence of judgment. No one could excuse themselves from being involved in maintaining justice. Public execution by the people was a way of having everyone acknowledge that God's laws were right and just.
4. Cases that were too difficult for local judges to handle were brought to Jerusalem where, in essence, a supreme court was set up with at least one chief judge and one chief priest to decide the case. The decision of this supreme court was final and considered the will of God.
5. God's original intent was that Israel would be a theocracy – directly ruled by God. He would be their king and they would be a kingdom of priests. But God knew that the nation would spiral downhill during the time of the judges and want a king like the other nations.

Discuss / Consider

1. We see in Deuteronomy 17:7 that the witness in a case of idolatry had to be the first to cast the stone. Describe why this was a safeguard against false accusations. What can it teach us about accusing others?

2. Discuss the regulations that God laid out for the kings of Israel (verses 14-20). Which requirement stands out to you the most?

Challenge

1. How do you stay humble, obedient, and reverent before the Lord? How do you practice teaching your children the right way of life? Read the Bible all the days of your life, so that you know it thoroughly and it characterizes your whole way of life – as a person and as a parent.

Requirements for Priests and Discerning a Prophet Deuteronomy 18

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Israel was to establish the Levites.**
- 2. Israel was to eliminate occult practices.**
- 3. Israel was to expect the Messiah.**
- 4. Israel was to execute false prophets.**

Practical Application

- 1. Keep your distance from occult practices.**

Questions

1. Summarize the Children of Israel's exposure to the Mosaic Law up to this point.
2. Who were the Levites? How did Levites and priests differ?
3. Where did the Levites live? How were they supported?
4. Explain the term "calling up the dead" (verse 11). Was it actually possible to contact people who had died?
5. Who is the prophet like Moses that is in view in Deuteronomy 18?
6. What was the test of a true prophet in Israel?

Answers

1. The Mosaic Law was given to Israel at Mount Sinai soon after the Children of Israel came out of Egypt. Now 40 years later the new generation of Israelites on the Plains of Moab are ready to cross the Jordan River and enter the Land of Promise. Before this new generation enters, Moses reviews the laws that God had given to His people.
2. The Levites were the priestly tribe in Israel. All Levites were not priests – only the family line of Aaron were priests, but all Levites were to be involved in serving the Lord.
3. The Levites has no tribal territory in Israel; they lived in 48 cities scattered throughout the Land. Besides being supported by the tithes of the people, the Levites were entitled to certain portions of sacrificial offerings and certain first fruits given by the people.
4. No medium or spiritist then or today is able to actually contact the spirits of people who have died. They are, however, able to contact demonic spirits who know about and can imitate the one who has died.
5. In a general sense it is the office of the prophet that would become the means of God speaking to His people when they entered the Land. Ultimately the specific fulfillment of this prophecy was in the Lord Jesus Christ himself.
6. The true prophet in Israel had to be right 100% of the time. If he wasn't it was evidence that he was not speaking the Word of the Lord and was instead a false prophet.

Discuss / Consider

1. All occult practices were not to be tolerated in Israel. Discuss how the occult has made subtle but steady progress into our society today.
2. While we don't execute false teachers in the Church today, it is very important to the Lord that we don't tolerate false teaching. False teaching must be silenced by the excommunication of the false teachers. Without going into details, have you ever seen this handle properly or improperly in your congregation? What was the effect?

Challenge

1. Israel was to expect the Messiah, but they failed to acknowledge Him as the Messiah when He appeared. We know Who the Messiah is. How are you anticipating His return?

Cities of Refuge and the Importance of Multiple Witnesses Deuteronomy 19

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. The Cities of Refuge were given for manslaughter – not for murder.**

- 2. The Law of Retribution was given as a limit – not as a license.**

Practical Application

- 1. Watch out for stealing little by little!**

Questions

1. Deuteronomy 19:1 emphasizes that the Lord gave the land of Canaan and its cities to Israel. What is the implication?

2. Did the Children of Israel destroy the cities of Canaan during the Conquest?

3. What is the difference between manslaughter and murder?

4. What was an “avenger of blood”? What was a “City of Refuge”?

5. What was the consequence if a witness was proven to be false?

Answers

1. If God Himself gave the land of Canaan to the descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Jewish people do have a biblical claim to that land. God never took away His promise of this land to the Jewish people.
2. No, most of the cities and farms they dispossessed and took over. Archaeologists should not expect to find a lot of destruction in the tells at the time of the Conquest. Only Jericho, Ai, and Hazor were burned in conquest according to the record in the book of Joshua.
3. The premeditated taking of life is murder. Accidental death where there is no intent to kill is manslaughter.
4. The avenger of blood (verse 6) was the next of kin who had the responsibility to avenge the blood of his dead relative as a matter of justice. Cities of Refuge were set up for manslaughter as a safe place to flee until the case was decided.
5. Whatever penalty that was intended for the innocent person was done to the false witness (verse 19).

Discuss / Consider

1. The Law of Retribution was given as a limit for social justice. However, for many Jewish people through the years it was used as a basis wrongly to retaliate in interpersonal relationships. Discuss the difference in these two mentalities. Why is it so important to distinguish?
2. In the ancient world property boundaries were generally marked with stones. These stones could be easily moved in most cases, and if they were moved little by little over time you could gain some of your neighbor's property without him being aware of it. Discuss other ways you might be tempted to steal little by little.

Challenge

1. The safety of the City of Refuge pictures the refuge that a believer has in Christ. Read Hebrews 6:18.

Conduct in Warfare **Deuteronomy 20**

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. When Israel went to war dedicated soldiers were encouraged by the priests.**
- 2. When Israel went to war domestic duties were still of primary importance**
- 3. When Israel went to war distant cities were offered terms of peace.**

Practical Application

- 1. Let's motivate others to fight the good fight.**

Questions

1. What is the topic of Deuteronomy 20?
2. What important role did the priests perform before a battle?
3. List the four categories of men who were excused from going out to battle.
4. What was the result of these regulations?
5. How were distant cities handled differently in the Conquest than the cities of Canaan?

Answers

1. Deuteronomy 20 contains formal instructions as to how warfare should be carried out in the Land of Canaan that God had given them, and also the wartime policy when confronting cities that were outside the land of Canaan. These instructions were not only good for the Conquest, but good for whenever Israel was engaged in warfare.
2. Before every battle one of Israel's priests would give an encouraging and challenging talk to the troops.
3.
 1. The man who had built a new house, but had not yet dedicated it.
 2. The man who had planted a new vineyard, but it was not yet productive.
 3. The man who was engaged to a woman, but had not yet married her.
 4. Any man who was afraid and fainthearted and didn't want to go into battle.
4. Israel's army would consist only of highly dedicated and committed troops – a very effective fighting force, trusting in the Lord for victory.
5. Cities in the land of Canaan were to be totally wiped out. Houses and fields were to be preserved, but all pagan life was to be eliminated. For cities outside the Land, where the foreign culture was far enough removed so as not to include God's people, Israel was permitted to make peace treaties with them. These cities would become vassal states and pay annual tribute to Israel.

Discuss / Consider

1. It is significant and important to see that building homes, raising families, and planting crops were more important than fighting wars on God's priority list. What might be an implication for us today? Are you showing support to those focused on domestic duties?

2. God directed the priests to give a motivational talk to the troops before they went into battle. In the same way, we can motivate other believers to fight the good fight. How can you motivate fellow believers to be strong in their spiritual battle?

Challenge

1. Israel was to be ruthless in wiping out the pagan Canaanite presence in the Land. Are you as intent on ridding your life of sinful influence?

Laws of the Mosaic Covenant Deuteronomy 21

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. In the Mosaic Law regulations were given for right living.**
 - 1. The case of an unsolved murder.**
 - 2. The case of a captive woman.**
 - 3. The case of a firstborn son.**
 - 4. The case of a rebellious child.**
 - 5. The case of a hanged criminal.**

Practical Application

- 1. Do what you can to reduce sin in your home!**

Questions

1. What is the topic of the second sermon of Moses in Deuteronomy 5-25?
2. What is the specific emphasis of the laws in chapter 21?
3. What happened in Israel when someone was killed, but the murderer was nowhere to be found?
4. Does God approve of polygamy, marriage to foreign wives, or divorce?
5. Explain the regulations concerning hanged criminals in verses 22-23.

Answers

1. A review of all the laws of the Mosaic covenant, starting with a review of the Ten Commandments in Deuteronomy 5.
2. The five regulations given in this chapter governed various areas of life so that the sacredness of life was maintained as well as personal rights protected.
3. The elders of the city nearest to where the murder took place were to take a young heifer and kill it as a substitute for the murderer who deserved to die
4. No, God hates divorce (see Matthew 19:7-8). These laws are given as regulations of these practices, not approval of these practices.
5. Hanging in these verses was not the means of death. Sometimes the body of a criminal who was stoned to death was publicly hung on a tree as a deterrent to crime. Under the Law, that body was to be cut down and buried before sunset to avoid defiling the land further.

Discuss / Consider

1. Discuss the damage that can be done if parents play favorites between their children.

2. Deuteronomy 21:23 is quoted in Galatians 3:13 in reference to Christ. Discuss why it is important to understand that hanging was the result of the curse, not the cause of the curse. The Lord did not become cursed because He was put on the cross. No! He was put on the cross because He had become a curse for us and died as our substitute.

Challenge

1. In the case of an unsolved murder (verses 1-9), the nearest city was charged with corporate guilt and had to make the appropriate sacrifice. In application, when sin takes place within our homes, there is corporate guilt involved. What can you proactively do to reduce sin in your home?

Moral Guidelines and Marriage Guidelines Deuteronomy 22

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. The moral guidelines contained in the Law are valid today.**

- 2. The marriage guidelines contained in the Law are valid today.**

Practical Application

- 1. Tie a string around your finger.**

Questions

1. How can the Mosaic Law be subdivided? Which category of the Law still applies today?
2. What moral principle could be drawn from verses 1-3?
3. What moral principle could be drawn from verse 4?
4. What would be the moral guideline in the laws about not mixing different seeds or different fabrics or different animals for plowing (verses 9-11)?
5. What moral guideline do we see repeated in verses 22-24?

Answers

1. The Mosaic Law can be divided into civil, ceremonial, and moral regulations. While the civil and ceremonial regulations of the Mosaic Law no longer apply, the moral directives certainly apply today.
2. “Finders are not keepers.” Just as the Children of Israel were responsible to return any lost item that they found to its owner, so we are responsible to do our best to return any lost item that we find – including lost money.
- “3. Don’t pretend ignorance.” It’s so easy to play ignorant and pass by someone who needs our help.
4. One would be “Keep separate from pagan practices.” The foreign nations surrounding Israel were involved in at least some of these mixtures as part of their religious rites and practices.
5. Both the man and woman involved in adultery or consenting fornication were to be punished. There was no double standard with God, which is certainly a moral guideline for today.

Discuss / Consider

1. Although there are many civil and ceremonial laws from the Mosaic Law that are not in effect for believers today, they may contain moral principles that are good for us. Discuss some of the moral principles from the nonmoral laws mentioned in this Talk, and others backed up by Scripture.

2. Have you ever tied a string around your finger or used another method to help you remember something? That is the essence of the law to tie tassels on the edges of garments (verse 37-40) – to constantly remind the Children of Israel of the commandments of the Lord. How could you apply this principle in your life?

Challenge

1. Imagine for a moment, what our society would look like if it followed the moral guidelines on marriage outlined in Deuteronomy 22. How would your family look different?

**Laws of the Mosaic Covenant
Deuteronomy 23**

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. There are spiritual lessons to be learned from the Law.

a) Laws concerning public worship.

b) Laws concerning personal hygiene.

c) Laws concerning the treatment of slaves.

d) Laws concerning cultic connections.

e) Laws concerning charging interest.

f) Laws concerning making vows.

g) Laws concerning eating crops.

Practical Application

1. Watch out for travel temptations when you are away from home.

Questions

1. Explain one benefit of studying of the Law, even if many aspects of the Law are not in effect for believers today.

2. Why is the phrase “enter the assembly” in verses 1, 2, 3, and 8 important?

3. Verses 15-16 are concerning what specific type of slave?

4. Money earned in connection with temple prostitutes was not to be associated with Israel’s worship of the Lord. What is the spiritual lesson for us?

5. Verses 19-20 forbade charging interest from poor fellow citizens in need. What is the spiritual lesson for us?

Answers

1. These laws, which may not apply to believers today, may contain moral principles that are good for us.
2. It clarifies that these restrictions were in reference to public worship. The restrictions did not mean, for example, that eunuchs were put out of the covenant community of Israel or that foreigners could not become proselytes and come to know the one true God of Israel.
3. The slaves mentioned here would be those who fled for refuge to Israel from their cruel masters in the surrounding foreign nations.
4. The Lord does not want our tithes and offerings to be from money that was wrongfully earned.
5. We should not take advantage of one another. See Galatians 6:10.

Discuss / Consider

1. Deuteronomy 23:15-16 addresses the treatment of slaves who have fled from cruel masters. We can draw an application from this regarding our responsibility to be compassionate and helpful to those who have been abused and mistreated. How have you done this practically? How could you improve?

2. Under the Law, no one was required to take a vow before the Lord. If a person voluntarily took a vow before the Lord, he or she was required to keep it. What does this say about the seriousness of how the Lord views our marriage vows, for example, that were made before Him.

Challenge

1. Businessmen and women, military personnel, and other travelers face temptations on the road that they do not face at home. Who you really are could be described by what you allow yourself to do when no one is watching. Watch out for travel temptations when you are away from home.

**Laws of the Mosaic Covenant
Deuteronomy 24**

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Some of Israel's laws regulated existing practices.

2. Some of Israel's law anticipated potential problems.

Practical Application

1. Learn to say "Keep the change" more often!

Questions

1. What is important to note from verses 1-4 regarding divorce?

2. How was this law protection for the women in that society?

3. What application could we draw from the law concerning new marriage in verse 5?

4. Why was the law in verses 14-15 necessary?

5. Explain the law in verse 16.

Answers

1. This is not a law commanding divorce, but a law regulating divorce and remarriage. The law comes in verse 4, where under the conditions described in verses 1-3, the first husband was not allowed to remarry the first wife if she had been remarried to another man after the first divorce.
2. The law forbidding a man from remarrying his former wife after her second divorce prevented legalized affairs and wife swapping. It protected the woman from being abused as a sex object. This law was meant to regulate an existing practice.
3. Newly married couples should spend quality time together getting to know one another in their early months of marriage.
4. This law required that wages not be withheld from the poor and needy. The poor and needy should be paid daily because they need the money to provide basic needs for themselves and their families.
5. Even though parental input and childrearing have a lot to do with how the children turn out, parents were not to be put to death for a sin of their offspring which demanded capital punishment. Children were not to be put to death for a sin of a parent which required the death penalty. In the surrounding foreign nations sometimes, whole families were put to death based on an individual's guilt.

Discuss / Consider

1. Deuteronomy 24:10-13 addresses the dignity of a debtor – especially if he was poor. Put yourself in the shoes of the desperately poor and consider the indignity they often face. How can you develop a heart of compassion for people in these circumstances?

2. How were the gleaning laws in Deuteronomy 24:17-22 different from the welfare programs in the United States? What effect do you think these differing philosophies have on the mindset of the poor and needy?

Challenge

1. God was very concerned about protecting and providing for the poor and needy, orphans, widows, and aliens. At the same time there was no free lunch. People were expected to work and do what they could to make ends meet. Apply this principle yourself by learning to say “Keep the change” more often!

Laws of the Mosaic Covenant Deuteronomy 25

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. The Mosaic Law provided for the disadvantaged.

2. The Mosaic Law protected the disadvantaged.

Practical Application

1. Obey the Lord in the hard areas of life.

Questions

1. What is the common theme of the laws reviewed in this section of Deuteronomy?

2. Outline the four levels of physical punishment for breaking the law in Israel.

3. What rules regulated the punishment by beating?

4. Explain the law of levirate marriage.

5. What was the purpose of the laws in verses 13-16?

Answers

1. Laws that protected and provided for the disadvantaged in Israel
2.
 - The death penalty for murder, adultery, kidnapping, idolatry, and certain other capital offenses
 - Excommunication, that is being cut off or banished from the covenant community
 - The lex talionis, the law of retribution – an eye for an eye
 - A beating as described here in Deuteronomy 25
3.
 1. The court consisted of plural judges – not just one judge to decide the disputed case.
 2. The guilty party was not necessarily beaten – only if the judges decided that physical punishment was appropriate.
 3. The punishment had to be administered in the presence of the judge.
 4. The maximum number of lashes was 40.
4. Levirate means “husband’s brother” in Latin. If a man died without an heir then an unmarried brother or closest eligible next-of-kin male was to marry the widow and raise up an heir for her. The first-born son of this marriage would assume the name and the property of the brother who had died.
5. To protect the consumer from unfair business practices.

Discuss / Consider

1. Discuss how Deuteronomy 25:4 is applied to Christian service in the New Testament. What is the principle? How is your local church applying this principle? Refer to 1 Corinthians 9:9-10 and 1 Timothy 5:17-18.

2. There are lots of practical applications for the laws on consumer protection in Deuteronomy 25:13-16. When have you found it difficult to be honest in your business practice? What choice did you make?

Challenge

1. Israel failed the hard assignment of blotting out the Amalekites from the Land. God expects us to obey. Even in the hard areas of life. What hard thing is God asking you to do this week?

Firstfruits and Tithes **Deuteronomy 26**

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. The Lord's people should remember their roots.**

- 2. The Lord's people should remember their responsibilities.**

Practical Application

- 1. Put your money where your mouth is.**

Questions

1. What was the content of the second sermon of Moses given to the Children of Israel on the plains of Moab before they crossed over the Jordan River into the Promised Land?

2. What was the purpose of the Feast of First Fruits according to Leviticus 23:9-14? What additional aspect do we see here in Deuteronomy 26?

3. How does the tithe in verses 12-15 fit in with the other tithes required of the Children of Israel?

4. The responsibility of meeting the needs of the poor with the extra tithe was in addition to the responsibility of supporting the ongoing work of the Lord with the regular tithe. What is the lesson for us?

5. What is the topic of verses 16-19?

Answers

1. This second sermon largely reviewed the many laws of the Mosaic Covenant.
2. According to Leviticus 23, the Feast of First Fruits anticipated the fall harvest to come and consecrated the entire harvest to the Lord. We see in Deuteronomy this was also to be a reminder of their roots as a nation.
3. Under the Law, the Children of Israel were to tithe from their annual income to support the Levites. Every third year it seems there was a double tithe that was not brought to Jerusalem, but was kept at home to feed the hungry in all the local towns. See also Deuteronomy 14:28-29.
4. We too should not forget the normal needs of the Lord's work when special needs arise – at a time of national disaster or some other crisis.
5. God's people are challenged to make good on their oath of allegiance.

Discuss / Consider

1. When the Children of Israel celebrated the Feast of First Fruits, the ritual to remember their roots was to be accompanied by worship and rejoicing. See Deuteronomy 26:10-11. When do you take time to remember your spiritual roots and rejoice where God has brought you?

2. As God's people under the Law were to remember their responsibility to give the extra tithe to meet the basic needs of the poor, so we who are God's people today have a responsibility to meet the needs of the poor around us. How are you doing this?

Challenge

1. Israel did not make good on their oath of allegiance – they did not put their money where their mouth was. What about you?

Instructions for a Covenant Renewal Ceremony Deuteronomy 27

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. The importance of the Mosaic Covenant was emphasized by covenant renewal.**

- 2. The importance of the Mosaic Covenant was emphasized by covenant curses.**

Practical Application

- 1. Praise the Lord that there were two groups of stones on Mount Ebal.**

Questions

1. What is the topic of Deuteronomy 27?
2. Where was this covenant renewal ceremony supposed to take place?
3. What is significant about the city of Shechem, situated between these two mountains?
4. What were the people to set up on Mount Ebal in preparation for the ceremony?
5. How were the people to carry out the ceremony?
6. Where do we read of the Children of Israel fulfilling this ceremony?

Answers

1. Instructions for a covenant renewal ceremony that was to be carried out by the Children of Israel after the Conquest
2. On Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim in the Promised Land. See Deuteronomy 11:29-32.
3. Shechem, where Nablus is located today, is where the Lord appeared to Abraham when he came into the Land. Here Abraham built an altar to the Lord (Genesis 12). Shechem is also the area where Jacob's well was located where our Lord met the Samaritan woman in John 4.
4. After the initial conquest of the Land, the Children of Israel were to build an altar to the Lord on Mount Ebal out of uncut stones, unlike the pagan altars of cut stone. Furthermore, large lime-covered stones were to be set up with the law inscribed on them.
5. After the stones and altar were in place and sacrifices and peace offerings were made, the covenant was then ratified by half of the tribes of Israel going up on the slopes of Mount Gerizim, the Mountain of Blessing, and the other half going up on the slopes of Mount Ebal where the curses of the Law would be reiterated.
6. Joshua 8:30-35

Discuss / Consider

1. Imagine yourself as a young child in the nation of Israel. What would it be like to experience the covenant renewal ceremony on Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim? What impression would this make on your mind?

2. The twelfth curse in Deuteronomy 27:26 serves as a summary. It is quoted by the Apostle Paul in Galatians 3:10 in the context of the impossibility of the Law bringing salvation to anyone because no one can keep the Law. Do you find yourself, as a believer, trying to "keep the Law"? Maybe not the Mosaic Law, but one of your own making? What is the answer to this feeling?

Challenge

1. Only because the Lord went to the altar of the cross of Calvary and died as a sacrifice for our sins can we be saved from the curse of the Law. Praise the Lord!

The Blessings and Cursings of the Covenant Deuteronomy 28

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Blessings follow obedience to God's Word.

2. Cursings follow disobedience to God's Word.

Practical Application

1. Don't put yourself under the Law!

Questions

1. Explain the covenant renewal ceremony which was laid out in Deuteronomy 27.
2. Was the Mosaic Covenant conditional or unconditional?
3. Are the physical blessings mentioned here guaranteed for the Christian who follows God's Word?
4. Why is the list of curses almost 4 times as long as the blessings?
5. Give two logical problems for Christians who love to apply the blessings of the Law to themselves today.

Answers

1. When the Children of Israel entered the Promised Land, the blessings and the cursings of the Mosaic Covenant were read and ratified. Half of Israel would stand on the slopes of Mount Gerizim to approve the blessings and half of Israel would stand on the slopes of Mount Ebal to approve the curses.
2. It was conditional. Note the "if" in Deuteronomy 28:1.
3. No. Christians in the New Testament are not guaranteed the physical blessings of the Old Testament Mosaic Covenant such as good health and financial prosperity for obedience to the Word, but we are guaranteed every spiritual blessing that God has to offer if we love the Lord and keep His commandments. See John 15 and Ephesians 1.
4. To emphasize the seriousness of breaking the covenant.
5. 1) The blessings of the Law were not given to Christians and are not guaranteed in the New Testament for Christians.
2) What about the cursings of the Law if you don't obey the Word? These Christians love to claim the blessings of the Law, but not the cursings. You can't have it both ways!

Discuss / Consider

1. Imagine yourself as one of the Children of Israel. Which would you find more motivating personally? To hear the encouragement of the blessings or the deterrents of the cursings?

2. Read the curses of coming exile and destruction of the nation in Deuteronomy 28:58-68. Discuss how these predictions were fulfilled to the detail. We have a God who keeps His word – in blessings and cursings.

Review of the Covenant Deuteronomy 29

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Keeping the covenant would result in possession of the Land.**

- 2. Breaking the covenant would result in expulsion from the Land.**

Practical Application

- 1. Concentrate on what God has revealed!**

Questions

1. Is Deuteronomy 29 the beginning of a new sermon by Moses?

2. Does Deuteronomy 29:1 refer to a different covenant than the Mosaic Covenant?

3. What is the emphasis of Deuteronomy 29?

4. Was the Land promise to Israel conditional or unconditional?

Answers

1. Various commentators take different positions. Some have the second sermon by Moses ending at chapter 26, thus the third sermon consists of chapters 27 and 28, with 29:1 being a final summary statement of that sermon. Then the fourth sermon would begin with 29:2 and end with chapter 30. Other commentaries conclude the second sermon after chapter 28 and thus chapters 29 and 30 become Moses' third sermon to the people on the Plains of Moab. Dr. Dave tended to think the second sermon ended in chapter 26, making the instructions for the covenant renewal ceremony in chapters 27 and 28 an interlude. Now chapters 29-30 are the third sermon to the children of Israel before they crossed over the Jordan River into the Promised Land

2. A number of commentators see Deuteronomy 29-30 as a separate covenant from the Mosaic covenant and call it the Palestinian Covenant. However, there is nothing new in these chapters that has not already been stated in the Mosaic Covenant, so some commentators say the point of verse 1 is not a new covenant but rather for renewed commitment to the Mosaic Covenant.

3. The emphasis here is not on possession of the Land for keeping the covenant, but expulsion from the Land for breaking the covenant.

4. Ownership of the Land was unconditional, because the guarantee of the Land goes back to the Abrahamic Covenant, which was unconditional. But possession of the Land was conditional upon obedience.

Discuss / Consider

1. The Children of Israel were warned about letting roots of bitterness get the best of them (verse 18). We too are warned about the deadly nature of bitter roots in Hebrews 12:15. What effects of bitterness have you seen in your own life or someone you know?

2. The Children of Israel had been taught repeatedly that keeping the covenant would result in possession of the Land, but breaking the covenant would result in expulsion from the Land. In Deuteronomy 29:16-21 the emphasis shifts to the responsibility of every individual in the nation to keep the covenant. Why is it crucial to make that shift to individual responsibility?

Challenge

1. Some Christians like to spend their time speculating on what God has not revealed. The Lord has not revealed everything to us in His Word, but He has revealed a lot. We should concentrate our studies on what God has revealed.

Blessings for Following the Lord **Deuteronomy 30**

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Some of the predictions of Deuteronomy 30 have been fulfilled in the past.

2. Some of the predictions of Deuteronomy 30 await to be fulfilled in the future.

Practical Application

1. Thank the Lord that getting saved is not all that difficult!

Questions

1. Look back at Deuteronomy 29:1. Is a new covenant being introduced in chapters 29-30?

2. What is the emphasis of this third sermon of Moses, Deuteronomy 29-30?

3. What is the bad news and good news in chapter 30?

4. Which predictions of Deuteronomy 30 have been fulfilled in the past?

5. What three promises were given for Israel's future?

Answers

1. We can't be sure. Some commentators say a new covenant called the Palestinians Covenant is introduced here. Others say these chapters are a renewal of the Mosaic covenant with the new generation, the generation after the 40 years in the wilderness. In other words, the former covenant was made at Mount Horeb (Sinai) with the former generation, but now the covenant is being renewed on the plains of Moab with the new generation.
2. The emphasis is that the Children of Israel would possess the Land if they kept the covenant but they would be sent out of the Land if they broke the covenant.
3. The bad news is that they would break the covenant and as a result they would be sent out of the Land. The good news is that God also revealed to Moses that after they were scattered as outcasts to the ends of the earth, the Jewish people would have a change of heart in the future and turn back to the Lord. As a result, they would not only be restored to the Lord, but they would be brought back to the Land as well.
4. The Children of Israel did not obey the Lord. They did not choose the way of life. They did turn to foreign gods to worship and serve. They were driven out and banished from the Land. They were scattered among the nations of the world.
5.
 1. The Jewish people would be brought back from the ends of the earth to the Land that their fathers had possessed (verses 3-5).
 2. The Jewish people would have a change of heart, would return to the Lord, and would continue to be abundantly blessed if they continued to follow and obey the Lord (verses 6-10).
 3. The enemies of Israel would be judged (verse 7).

Discuss / Consider

1. Discuss the miraculous existence of the Jewish people as a distinct people. How have they kept their identity even though they have been scattered around the world for over two thousand years?

2. Review the three promises given for Israel's future. Discuss how these have been partially fulfilled in history, but wait to be completely fulfilled to the literal Jewish people in the future.

Challenge

1. The Lord was not asking the Children of Israel to do an impossible thing – just to love the Lord, to follow Him, and be obedient to Him. Paul applied these verses to the gospel in Romans 10:6-8. Thank the Lord that getting saved is not all that difficult!

Joshua Succeeds Moses as Leader Deuteronomy 31

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Spiritual leadership must be passed on to the next generation.**

- 2. The Lord prepares the spiritual leadership for the next generation.**

Practical Application

- 1. Don't be afraid to tell people about God's anger.**

Questions

1. Give a brief outline of the life of Moses.

2. What was Moses' point in Deuteronomy 31:2?

3. Did the work of the Lord with the Children of Israel end with Moses?

4. List the four steps Moses took to prepare for the transition of leadership.

5. How did the Lord prepare Joshua for this transfer of leadership?

Answers

1. - Forty years in Egypt
 - Forty years in the land of Midian
 - Forty years leading the Children of Israel from Egypt to Canaan
2. He knew his days were drawing to a close because the Lord had told Moses that he would not cross the Jordan River to enter the Land. This was part of God's discipline when Moses wrongly struck the rock twice, instead of speaking to it in Numbers 20.
3. No! The work of the Lord would continue, but the spiritual leadership would be transferred from Moses to Joshua.
4.
 1. Moses made sure the people clearly understood that this transfer should not disrupt or diminish the work of the Lord in any way (verses 4-5).
 2. Moses encouraged both the people and Joshua, the next leader, to be strong and courageous, because they would not fail if they were faithful (verses 6-8).
 3. Moses made sure all Israel knew that Joshua was the next leader (verse 7).
 4. Moses insured that the emphasis on the Word of God would continue by giving directions to the priests to publicly read the Law every seven years at the Feast of Tabernacles (verses 10-11).
5. Joshua first appeared on the scene in Exodus 17 where he proved to be an effective military leader in defeating the Amalekites. Joshua became the right-hand man of Moses and was with him on Mount Sinai (Exodus 24). He would have learned many leadership lessons from Moses. Joshua, along with Caleb, was one of the faithful spies.

Discuss / Consider

1. Of which generation are you in your local church? Are you a Moses or a Joshua? What steps are being taken to ensure the spiritual leadership will be passed on to the next generation? Will it be a smooth transfer?

2. What steps are being taken in your local church to develop the next generation for spiritual leadership? How will they be ready, as Joshua was, when the time comes for them to lead?

Challenge

1. Moses did not hold back from reminding the Children of Israel of their sinful natures and the fact that God is angry with sin and sinners. See Psalm 7:11 and John 3:36. We need to tell people that God loves them and has provided a way of salvation through Christ. But don't be afraid to tell people about God's anger.

The Song of Moses; Moses Views the Land
Deuteronomy 32

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. God is great in the history contained in the Song of Moses.
2. God is great in the prophecy contained in the Song of Moses.
3. God is great in the vengeance contained in the Song of Moses.

Practical Application

1. Capture the content of Scripture in song.

Questions

1. Where is Mount Nebo?
2. What occurred on Mount Nebo?
3. What is the theme of the Song of Moses in Deuteronomy 32?
4. What downfall do we see in verses 15-18? What is the meaning of "Jeshurun"?
5. While the Lord would discipline His people, why would He not destroy them (verses 26-27)?

Answers

1. Mount Nebo is a peak in the Abarim range of mountains overlooking the Jordan Valley and the Dead Sea from the east. Even today when you stand on top of Mount Nebo you get a wonderful view of the Promised Land – all the way from south of the Dead Sea to the snow-capped Mount Hermon in the north.
2. It was from Mount Nebo that Moses viewed the Promised Land from a distance, because in the Lord's discipline of Moses He said that Moses could see the Land, but could not enter it (Numbers 20). It was also on Mount Nebo that Moses would die.
3. The greatness of God (verse 3).
4. Israel went from being called "Jeshurun," meaning "upright one," to a nation characterized by idolatry.
5. Lest Israel's enemies should think that they had destroyed them.

Discuss / Consider

1. Which symbol of the greatness of God is most meaningful to you? That He is the Rock (verse 4)? That He is like a mother eagle (verse 11-12)? Or another?

2. Review Deuteronomy 32:19-33. One way God disciplined Israel for their sin was to make them jealous of the Gentiles. Discuss how verse 21 has been fulfilled by the gospel going out to the Gentiles around the world. Discuss Romans 10:19 and Romans 11:11.

3. Deuteronomy 32:34-43 addresses God's vengeance upon the nations that He allowed to defeat Israel. God used their evil intentions to punish His people, but that in no way condoned their actions. Do you think present day Iran or Syria can escape the vengeance of God after making threats and plans to annihilate Israel?

Challenge

1. Songs can be a vehicle to memorize solid biblical teaching. Capture the content of Scripture in song.

Moses Blesses the Tribes of Israel
Deuteronomy 33:1-12

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. The blessings of Moses on the tribes of Israel are both past and future.**
 - a) The blessing on Reuben.**

 - b) The blessing on Judah.**

 - c) The blessing on Levi.**

 - d) The blessings on Benjamin.**

Practical Application

- 1. Make your last days count for the Lord!**

Questions

1. How did Moses' blessing of the tribes fit with the culture of that day?
2. What interpretation does Dr. Dave Reid favor for Deuteronomy 33:2?
3. How was the blessing on Reuben in verse 6 suited specifically for this tribe?
4. What were the Urim and Thummim?
5. What special privileges and responsibilities were given to the tribe of Levi?
6. How did God fulfill His promise to Benjamin that they would "dwell between His shoulders"?

Answers

1. As a father would give a blessing to his children before he died, so Moses, who was like a father to the children of Israel, gave his blessing to the tribes of Israel before he died. In that day, a father's final blessings were looked on as binding – like a legal will. So in these inspired blessings of Moses on the tribes of Israel we have both blessing and prophecy.
2. That this is a vision that Moses had of the Lord in His care and concern for Israel all the way from Mount Sinai until the return of the Lord. This assured Moses that all the prophetic aspects of his blessing on the tribes of Israel will be fulfilled.
3. The tribe of Reuben was located on the east side of the Jordan River and thus more exposed and more vulnerable to enemy attacks. The prayer of Moses is that the tribe of Reuben would not be wiped out and become extinct in view of this danger.
4. The Urim and Thummim (verse 8) were items used by the priests, who were of the tribe of Levi, to determine God's will for the people.
5. As servants of the Lord the tribe of Levi was to teach God's Word and lead the people in worship.
6. The Lord chose Jerusalem in the territory of Benjamin as His special city and there He would place His temple. Earthly Jerusalem is God's special city forever.

Discuss / Consider

1. Moses' prayer in Deuteronomy 33:7 was that Judah would be successful in their leadership role and be militarily strong. What significant person was from the tribe of Judah? How was this prophecy displayed in Him?

2. Servants of the Lord are special targets of those who hate to submit to the spiritual and moral values and standards of Scriptures. See Deuteronomy 33:11. With this in mind, will you specifically pray for protection for those in spiritual authority over you?

Challenge

1. When Moses knew the time was near for him to die he transferred the leadership of Israel to Joshua. He wrote a great song filled with theological content for Israel to memorize and sing. And he gave a special blessing to each of the tribes of Israel. Follow the example of Moses. Make your last days count for the Lord!

Moses Blesses the Tribes of Israel
Deuteronomy 33:13-29

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. The blessings of Moses on the tribes of Israel are both past and future (continued).
 - e) The blessing on Joseph.

 - f) The blessing on Zebulun and Issachar.

 - g) The blessing on Gad.

 - h) The blessing on Dan.

 - i) The blessing on Naphtali.

 - j) The blessing on Asher.

Practical Application

1. You can be sure that your strength will equal your days!

Questions

1. What is the overall theme of these blessings of Moses?

2. How was Joseph, the son of Jacob, represented in the tribes of Israel?

3. What special blessing was given to the adjacent tribes of Zebulun and Issachar?

4. What territory was assigned to the tribe of Dan? Where did they end up?

5. Why are some well-to-do and well-meaning Christians drilling for oil next to Caesarea?

Answers

1. The greatness of the God of Israel.
2. Joseph was represented by his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, who both became significant tribes in the nation of Israel. They were the largest tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel.
3. We see in verses 18-19 that Zebulun and Issachar would not only be blessed themselves, but they would be special channels of blessing to others through their commercial wealth.
4. Dan originally tried to settle a region along the Mediterranean Coast, as far north as Joppa. Due to resistance from the Philistines, they moved north to Bashan (see verse 22).

Because of the prophecy to Asher that he will “dip his foot in oil.” The slightly boot-shaped territory of Asher 5. ends near Caesarea, but this promise is mostly like a figurative expression for abundance.

Discuss / Consider

1. The tribe of Gad was among the 2½ tribes that settled on the east side of the Jordan River. But they kept their word to help the rest of the tribes conquer the land on the west side of the river. They are commended for this in Deuteronomy 33:20-21. Think of a time when you have kept your word when it would have been much more convenient to stay home. What was the result?

2. Consider the promise to Asher, “As your days, so shall your strength be.” Deuteronomy 33:25 Whatever the Lord gives us to do in this life as believers, He will give us the strength to do it. Do you believe this? Have you seen it?

Challenge

1. Read the closing of Moses’ blessing of the tribes in verses 26-29. Moses dwells on the greatness of the God of Israel. Use this passage to lead you in worship of our great God.

The Death of Moses **Deuteronomy 34**

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. The death of Moses was a test of the Children of Israel.**

- 2. The life of Moses is a type of the life of Christ.**

Practical Application

- 1. Don't enshrine people!**

Questions

1. Who wrote the book of Deuteronomy?
2. Why was Moses unable to enter the Land?
3. Why did God bury Moses and not let anyone know where?
4. How was the death of Moses a test for the Children of Israel?
5. What made Moses unique as a prophet?

Answers

1. Moses. Moses wrote all five books of the Pentateuch – the first five books of the Bible. Most likely Joshua or another inspired writer wrote this last chapter recording the death of Moses.
2. Because of discipline for his sin at the waters of Meribah (see Numbers 20).
3. One answer is certainly that the Lord knew what would take place if people knew where the great leader Moses was buried. His tomb would have become a shrine and people would worship him and the place as well.
4. It was a test of whether they would follow Joshua as Moses had instructed them to do. Happily, they passed the test!
5. Moses was unique not only because of all the powerful miracles that he did against Pharaoh and the land of Egypt at the time of the Exodus, but also because the Lord spoke with him face to face. See Exodus 33:11 and Numbers 12:7-8.

Discuss / Consider

1. After Moses' death, the Children of Israel had to choose whether they would follow Joshua as Moses had instructed them to do. This is still an important question today whenever there is a transfer of leadership within the church for Christian ministry. Have you been in this situation? Did you follow the new leader?

2. Review the similarities mentioned between the life of Moses and the life of Christ.
 - 1) Both were divinely chosen to be deliverers.
 - 2) Both experienced a time of rejection by the very people they specifically came to help.
 - 3) Both acquired a Gentile bride during their time of rejection.
 - 4) Both were faithful over the house or people they were given to lead.
 - 5) Both had or will have a Second Coming, when the Jewish people had and will have a change of heart and receive the Leader they once rejected.

Challenge

1. If the Lord had not buried Moses in an unmarked grave, the people would have enshrined his body and gravesite as well. To enshrine people takes away from the glory of God and lowers the person of Christ. Don't enshrine people.