

Deuteronomy

God's love and how we should live in response

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The book of Deut was written by Moses and it contains His final 3 sermons

- Moses had led the people for 40 years and he knows that he will soon die, and the people will go into the land without him
- The book of Deut. records 3 final sermons where he summarizes all they've been through, restates important parts of the law, gives them a new vision of God's love and promised blessings if they obey and his increasing punishment if they sin.
- The book is a bridge from the formation of the people of God (out of Egypt, through the 40 years in the desert) to the history of the people of God

Book begins

- "These are the words Moses spoke. . . . This speech was given on February 15, **forty years** after the people of Israel left Mount Horeb—**though it takes only eleven days to travel by foot from Mount Horeb to Kadesh-barnea**, going by way of Mount Seir." Deut.1:2 LB
- Let that sink in. . . . 11 days or 40 years
- This was not a scenic, enjoyable trip
- It was through the desert

There was no food, no water, no anything but rocks and sand

About the Manna

- Seems unkind to have to eat it for 40 years
- God could have done so much more
- But Manna for 40 years was not the original plan!
- Nor was no water or being in the desert for 40 years!
- Manna was a short-term solution, immediately when they entered the land, the manna ceased
- Application—much of what we complain about we brought about

Additional application: God often allows difficult delays in life

- For various reasons
- Sometimes we need to grow (Joseph and Moses)
- Sometimes time given to repent (Israel given time to repent again and again)
- Sometimes disobedience causes a delay (Israel not trusting)
- **Regardless, God's plans will always be fulfilled**
- They got into the land
- **And God's love never waivers**
- Yet the LORD says, "During the forty years that I led you through the wilderness, your clothes did not wear out, nor did the sandals on your feet. Deut.29:5—powerful, but Context, Context

Time and context of the passage

- Timing: Moses close to end of covenant and final challenge to the people

- Context: Whole paragraph: Deut. 29:5,6
- **NIV:** Yet the Lord says, "During the forty years that I led you through the wilderness, your clothes did not wear out, nor did the sandals on your feet. ⁶You ate no bread and drank no wine or other fermented drink. I did this so that you might know that I am the Lord your God.
- **TLB:** For forty years God has led you through the wilderness, yet your clothes haven't become old, and your shoes haven't worn out! ⁶The reason he hasn't let you settle down to grow grain for bread or grapes for wine and strong drink is so that you would realize that it is the Lord your God who has been caring for you.
- **Message:** I took you through the wilderness for forty years and through all that time the clothes on your backs didn't wear out, the sandals on your feet didn't wear out, and you lived well without bread and wine and beer, proving to you that I am in fact God, your God.

After their sin of disbelief, the 40 years were a constant reminder to depend on God

- God did give them food, water, material provision as a CONSTANT, daily reminder that all their life is from Him
- **"The preservation of their clothes and shoes, the supply of daily food and fresh water—these continued without interruption or diminution during so many years' sojourn in the desert. They were miracles which unmistakably proclaimed the immediate hand of God and were performed for the express purpose of training them to a practical knowledge of, and habitual confidence in, Him."** Robert Jamison
- We are in the same situation—of total dependence
- We need to live like it

But now they are about to enter the land

- Moses gives these sermons
- One generation ago a mob of slaves
- Since then formed into the people of God
- One generation died out
- Needed to be reminded of:
- What God has done for Israel in the Past 1:1-4:43
- What God expects of Israel in the Present 4:44-26:19
- What God will do for Israel in the Future 27:1-28:68
- Before that a brief review and overview of the land they were going into

Review of Human history

That pagan world is what they were facing

- They were prepared
- But they needed to be reminded
- Older ones had seen God work
- Younger had not
- Deuteronomy=Second Law
- Not new laws, a reminder, summary, expansion of the past one
- 3 Sermons
 - What God has Done in the Past: Deut. 1:1-4:43
 - What God Expects in the Present: Deut.4:44-26:19

- What God Will do in the Future: Deut. 27:1-34:12

1st Sermon: What God has Done in the Past: Deut. 1:1-4:43

- 40 years instead of 11 days
- Reminds them of deliverance from Egypt and how God spoke the 10 Commandments to them
- Then the Lord spoke to you out of the fire. You heard the sound of words but saw no form; there was only a voice. He declared to you his covenant, the Ten Commandments, which he commanded you to follow and then wrote them on two stone tablets. Deuteronomy 4:12-13

Even after this...

- Reminds them of their sin, God's forgiveness, but consequences remain
- Recalls his sin and that he cannot go into the land
- Recent victories over Sihon King of Hesbon and Og, King of Bashan
- **Implied lesson—they can fight and win**
- Preliminary summary and challenge:
- Acknowledge and take to heart this day that the Lord is God in heaven above and on the earth below. There is no other. Keep his decrees and commands, which I am giving you today, so that it may go well with you and your children after you and that you may live long in the land the Lord your God gives you for all time. Deut. 4:39-40

2nd Sermon: What God Expects in the Present:

Deut.4:44-26:19

- Begins with a repeat of the 10 Commandments
- After them, God said: Oh, that their hearts would be inclined to fear me and keep all my commands always, so that it might go well with them and their children forever! Deut. 5:29
- And he declares his love for them (first time, prior commands to love, but God's love not stated):
- The Lord your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession. The Lord did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. **But it was because the Lord loved you** and kept the oath he swore to your ancestors that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Know therefore that the Lord your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commandments. Deut.7:6-9

Based on that relationship of love, this sermon goes on to tell them:

- How they are to live
- Drive out, destroy, all pagan worship
- Emphasis to only worship where and how God chooses (at his Tabernacle, sacrifices in his way)
- Goes into many details of life (no repetition of Levitical, ritual laws)

- Key passages from this section (so many, do take time to read carefully)

The Shema-defining statement of the Hebrew faith

- "Hear" Hebrew "Shema"
- *Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. Deut.6:4-9*
- Note "God" Elohim is a plural word
- "One" is the Hebrew Echad, can mean a singular thing, but often used to signify the joining together to make one and in "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be **one** flesh." Two persons, one flesh.
- Clear description of the Trinity—three persons, Father, Son, Holy Spirit—one God

Jesus combined it with previous command in Leviticus 19:18 (after a section of specifics on how to act)

- *And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, "Which commandment is the most important of all?" Jesus answered, "The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these. Mark. 12:28-30*

Warning against false prophets

- If a prophet, or one who foretells by dreams, appears among you and announces to you a sign or wonder, and if the sign or wonder spoken of **takes place**, and the prophet says, "Let us follow other gods" (gods you have not known) "and let us worship them," you must not listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer. The Lord your God is testing you to find out whether you love him with all your heart and with all your soul. It is the Lord your God you must follow, and him you must revere. Keep his commands and obey him; serve him and hold fast to him. Deut. 13:1-4
- Emphasis then and now to trust God above all else, even what our senses tell us. Photoshop story....

Jesus quoted Deut. extensively

(Psalms more, Deut. 2nd)

- In his temptation:
- Matt. 4 after fasting 40 days, "he was hungry"
- Satan tempts him to turn stones into bread
- **Jesus replied from Deut. 8:3 Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the**

mouth of the Lord.

- Satan tempted him to throw himself from the temple and see if God would rescue him
- **Jesus replied from Deut. 6:26: Do not put the Lord your God to the test.**
- Satan final temptation to give him control over the earth if Jesus would worship him
- **Jesus replied from Deut. 6:13: Fear the Lord your God, serve him only and take your oaths in his name.**
- Application: if we want to be like Jesus.... a big part of that is to follow his example and know/memorize scripture
- You don't have time to look things up when you are in the middle of a trial
- Ps.119:11: Your word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against you.

3rd Sermon: What God will do for Israel in the future 27:1-28:68

- God's Covenant with His people
- A pattern of covenants at that time between a more powerful person and those dependent on him
- Based on God's redemption of people from Slavery in Egypt, given his laws and way to worship at Sinai
- Expectation of how they are to live

Curses for Disobedience

- Repeat, summary of the moral and civil laws (again, ceremonial not repeated—duties of the tribe of Levi)
- Severe punishment if not followed
- **All these curses will come on you. They will pursue you and overtake you until you are destroyed, because you did not obey the Lord your God and observe the commands and decrees he gave you. They will be a sign and a wonder to you and your descendants forever. Because you did not serve the Lord your God joyfully and gladly in the time of prosperity, ^{therefore} in hunger and thirst, in nakedness and dire poverty, you will serve the enemies the Lord sends against you. He will put an iron yoke on your neck until he has destroyed you. Deuteronomy 28:45-48**

But wonderful blessings for obedience

Challenge to choose life!

- **See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction. For I command you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in obedience to him, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess. But if your heart turns away and you are not obedient, and if you are drawn away to bow down to other gods and worship them, I declare to you this day that you will certainly be destroyed. You will not live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live.**

- Deuteronomy 30:15-19
- Book ends with Moses blessing the people and passing on the mantle of leadership to Joshua—which we will learn about in the coming lessons

Application of all the Laws, Deuteronomy summarizes

- The Law was God's gift to the nation
- Telling them how to live, what they were created for, how to please God
- Nothing worse than not knowing how to make a friend, spouse, boss happy
- God told them then
- This is specifically for THEM—it is the Old Covenant
- We can learn from it, but it does not apply to us (particularly not to Americans).
- What applies to us is what is repeated in the New Testament (the New Covenant after the death of Christ) and most important of all, let's end with

May we all obey and live as we follow Jesus

'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'
The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'
There is no other commandment greater than these. Mark. 12:28-30

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This is so important because if we truly want to show God we love him we need to obey his command as Jesus told us in John 14:15 "If ye love me, keep my commandments." We will only truly learn God's commandments (and not distorted ideas about them) when we read his Word. They can jump in at any time, but if they want a view of the entire Bible in Chronological order, which is the best way to read it to understand it fully.