



MONDAY 7 AUGUST 2017

SERIES: DEUTERONOMY – CHOOSE LIFE

Read: Deuteronomy 11:26-32 & Hebrews 8:7-13

Plug In...

[Deuteronomy 5:30-31](#) says Moses received the Ten Commandments on behalf of the people. Moses then stayed back to receive additional laws specific for life in the Land. These were to be preached upon entry, so the content has been a long time coming. Throughout Deuteronomy so far, Moses implores the people to obey the commandments pertaining to the Land, but hasn't really divulged them (apart from the extension to the 1st Commandment of the Ten, with the grand Shema – [Deuteronomy 6:4-5](#)). Instead, a massive history lesson and exhortation has carried chapters 1-11 along. The audience is still waiting to hear the content of the Land laws. [They commence from chapter 12.]

The end of this massive introduction to Moses' sermon to Israel is the mention of two mountains. When they enter, a group will go up one mountain and proclaim the blessing of the covenant. Another group scale the next mountain and proclaim the curse of the covenant. Within the land, these twin peaks of Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal should prompt an individual each time they see them stand in the sky to remember the covenant.

Chew It Over...

More of what is said from these mountains is itemised in chapters 27-28. Roughly 10% of these two chapters contain words of blessing, the rest is all the details of a curse. Moses' dominant worry is at the forefront. Tragically, Moses even declares the future is they will break the covenant and all these curses will come about. These curses are an unique feature to the covenants within the Bible.

Consider:

- The covenant with Noah would endure even if people violated it.
- The covenant with Abraham would most certainly be fulfilled even if violated.
- But, the Mosaic covenant with Israel has no promise of ultimate fulfillment, in fact, they are warned they will experience the curses upon violation.

This is important to grasp. For the Mosaic covenant has lots of helpful and wise laws, but as a covenant clearly has a built-in obsolescence ([Hebrews 8:7-13](#)). It was not intended to last forever. The covenant itself admits that it is limited by human nature.

Read to discover the purpose of this Mosaic covenant: [Romans 5:20](#); [8:1-4](#); [Galatians 3:7-14](#); [3:19](#). Keep this in mind as we delve into the laws from tomorrow.

Prayer Suggestion

Praise God that you are blessed along with Abraham – the man of faith – because Jesus fulfilled all we lack. Ask for God’s Holy Spirit to convict us of our need daily and that we are provided for daily as we read more of the Mosaic Covenant.



TUESDAY 8 AUGUST 2017

SERIES: DEUTERONOMY – CHOOSE LIFE

Read: Deuteronomy 12:1-14 & Hebrews 12:18-24

Plug In...

Chapters 12-26 share the long-awaited commands, statutes and ordinances to be followed once inside the Land. Over the coming weeks we cannot focus on them all, so will follow themes which show who God is, what He cares about, and see how the laws give examples of godly ethics in the time of Israel, which we can draw as principles to inform our wisdom to living the Christian life.

Moses says God is clear Israel is not to worship in any of the ways, manners, or through the practices of the Canaanites. Instead, they are to worship at the “place” God chooses (v.5). God’s presence is there (v.7).

Chew It Over...

The section of laws opens by talking about worship in the way and place God says. The end of the laws reiterates that worship must be in God’s way and place. Lots of themes occur in these laws (tithes; festivals; justice; rules for war; debts cancelled; how to treat the poor, slaves, foreigners) but all these themes keep getting linked back to the phrase, “The place which the LORD your God will choose for his name to dwell”. All the laws are not arbitrary or random, but hang together in worshipping God.

No actual location for the ‘place’ is given in Deuteronomy. So, what things from these verses strike you as characteristic of worship with God?

What is given here as the primary motive for going to the ‘place’ of worship?

What is being suggest will prohibit Israel from being close to God to worship?

The word 'worship' get used today in various ways. What from this passage would you say *defines* what worship at its core is?

Prayer Suggestion

Read Hebrews [12:18-28](#) and let it inform your prayer to God. Praising Him for drawing us into the most intimate place of dwelling.



WEDNESDAY 9 AUGUST 2017

SERIES: DEUTERONOMY – CHOOSE LIFE

Read: Deuteronomy 12:15-19 & John 6:25-59

Plug In...

There are sacrifices associated with the 'place' of worship, they are bound up with the Tabernacle. [Remember it is at the Tabernacle where a Holy God makes it possible to dwell with a sinful people – [Exodus 25:8-22](#).]

Outside of those regular rituals they can eat meat anytime for sheer enjoyment. There will be eating meat because of the blessing and abundance in the Land (a big contrast to the meals in the wilderness – [Numbers 11](#)). As they enjoy the meat, they do need to not eat the blood, rather take a moment to pour out the animal's blood on the ground.

Chew It Over...

While enjoying the spread, they made sure the blood of the animal was poured onto the ground. While not a sacrifice, what is being said by this action? What would an individual be acknowledging as they ate? As we eat everyday meals, is there anything symbolic about lunch and dinner that is worth noticing and allowing it to direct our attention to God?

Take in these astonishing statements by Jesus in this conversation: [John 6:25-59](#).

Prayer Suggestion

Thank God that we do not exist by meals alone. Praise Jesus for providing life-giving sustenance through the eternal meal enabled by Him.



THURSDAY 10 AUGUST 2017

SERIES: DEUTERONOMY – CHOOSE LIFE

Read: Deuteronomy 12:20-32 & Proverbs 4:10-19

Plug In...

Verse 31 has a phrase that is only found in the book of Deuteronomy and the book of Proverbs: “The *abomination* to the LORD.” It is an *emotional* word. It conveys repulsive and repugnant *feelings*. The idea is something so obnoxious and revolting that it nauseates God (*cf.* [Leviticus 18:28](#) speaks of the Land vomiting the people out if they defile it). What is it that sickens God? People who worship idols. What they worship is seen in the actions they take.

We’ll see that Deuteronomy’s laws match all the prominent wisdom themes in Proverbs: teaching of children; justice; mercy for the poor and needy; having right character so goodness and longevity in the Land comes to you. Like Proverbs 4, Deuteronomy presents a ‘two paths’ teaching ([Deuteronomy 30:15-20](#)).

Chew It Over...

Deuteronomy 30:19: “Choose life!” All the laws in Deuteronomy are good, beautiful, wise. All the truisms from Proverbs issue in reward and life. So indeed, *choose* life. Ah, but the message of Deuteronomy is actually designed to get us admitting we are fools. We’re born into this world as fools with no ability to free ourselves. We stupidly, yet wilfully, choose death – that’s how foolish we are. At first, it seems like all the actions of cleaning up the Land (e.g. smashing sacred Canaanite pillars and altars) is to stop temptation outside of you getting into you. That’s true, but Deuteronomy also says that the foolishness inside of us is actually *more* dangerous than the temptation outside of us.

Prayer Suggestion

Only God's grace has the power to rescue fools from their own hearts ([Deuteronomy 30:6](#)). Surely we see this and give Jesus all the praise for our new hearts.



FRIDAY 11 AUGUST 2017

SERIES: DEUTERONOMY – CHOOSE LIFE

Read: Deuteronomy 13:1-5 & 1 Timothy 4

Plug In...

One threat to Israel staying true to God is the Canaanite religion. Now, Moses warns this threat might come in the form of someone within the covenant community.

Chew It Over...

The problem is not that people have visions or dreams. They may do. How can you or I adjudicate? We're just not privy to another person's experience. However, one must not let the dream/vision interpret the Bible, but the Bible interprets the dream/vision.

Even if an event predicted in one's dream/vision comes about, what does this passage say is God's purpose in it?

How does this help us respond wisely to a person that shares a 'supernatural' experience? What do you not want to necessarily deny? What would you want to affirm?

[1 Timothy 4](#) suggests we should not rest on our laurels over this temptation. What wisdom does the passage give to protect yourself this year, and the next, and the next?

Prayer Suggestion

Lord help us to be saturated in your Word so we are wise and discerning. We can always test things against your Word. Help us to be vigilant in our life and doctrine. We want to be found saved on the day of Jesus' return by maintaining faith alone. We want others to be secure in this too.



The Lakes

WEEKEND 12-13 AUGUST 2017

SERIES: DEUTERONOMY – CHOOSE LIFE

Read: Deuteronomy 13:5-18 & 1 Corinthians 5

Plug In...

Deliberate teaching from within the ranks of Israel is to be punished immediately and without mercy. Doesn't matter the charisma of the leader, the connection to the family; to those that preach idolatry, action must be swift.

Chew It Over...

Why such drastic measures?

Notice protecting the teaching of God's people is not just the role of leaders, but functions at the grass roots level. How do you become a wise gatekeeper in this matter?

Application today: Israel is a political nation in their Land at the time of Moses. So, all sin is criminal and can be judged by the government – which is a theocracy. The church is not a political force, and does not hold government (nor should it). So, while something may be a sin, it is not therefore a crime. That is for governments to work out.

Can you think of things Christians hold as sin, but would not ask a secular society to call it a crime? For theological reasons, can you think of things you would on the one hand hold as sinful (according to the Bible), yet on the other hand advocate for it to be decriminalised? We work this out by thinking about the church's role in mission and sharing the gospel.

A helpful passage to sort out how justice is to be served within the church and what would be political overreach is [1 Corinthians 5](#). The final verse maintains the guiding

principle from Deuteronomy 13:5 even as its shape is different because Christians are not called to adjudicate crimes.

Prayer Suggestion

Lord help us to promote love and the better life amongst our community, even as we are called to be citizens in a democracy. Yet, Lord help us to remember that church and state are not merged until you return. Until then, as individuals in the church but also in Australia as citizens in a democracy, help us to make wise advocacy so as not to use government power to coerce people to believe. May we protect the gospel message so as people truly have something to repent from, yet promote the flourishing of society. Lord protect your church internally so that we truly are ambassadors for Christ in our community.