

The Book Of

DEUTERONOMY



BIBLE STUDY COURSE BY
RUSTY RUTHERFORD

The Book of Deuteronomy

Moses Prepares the Book of the Lord's Covenant to Guide the Israelites as They Enter the Promised Land

Remember that the sky, the highest heaven, the earth and everything it contains belong to the LORD your God. The LORD set his heart on your ancestors and loved them. Because of this, today he chooses you, their descendants, out of all the people of the world. So circumcise your uncircumcised hearts, and don't be impossible to deal with any longer.
Deuteronomy 10:14-16

Written and taught by
Richard "Rusty" David Rutherford

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Introduction 5

Moses' First Message: A Review of God's Faithfulness

Pericope 1 Moses Speaks to the People 40 Years After
Deuteronomy 1:1 Leaving Egypt 7

Pericope 2 Moses Summarizes Israel's History with God
Deuteronomy 1:2-37 11

Pericope 3 The Defeat of Kings Sihon and King Og
Deuteronomy 2:1-3:29 16

Pericope 4 Moses Reminds Israel to Be Loyal to the Lord
Deuteronomy 4:1-43 23

Moses' Second Message: God's Ten Commandments and Their Application to Living in the Promised Land

Pericope 5 God's Ten Fundamental Moral Laws
Deuteronomy 4:44-5:12 30

Pericope 6 Moses Commands the Israelites to Love the Lord
Deuteronomy 6:1-25 36

Pericope 7 Destroy the Canaanites and Their Idols
Deuteronomy 7:1-25 40

Pericope 8 Remember God's Miracles in the Wilderness
Deuteronomy 8:1-9:6 44

Pericope 9 Moses Recalls Israel's Two Great Rebellions
Deuteronomy 9:7-10:22 48

Pericope 10 Moses Encourages Israel to Follow God's Guidance
Deuteronomy 10:23-11:32 53

Pericope 11 The Proper Place to Worship
Deuteronomy 12:1-13:18 58

Pericope 12	Foods Laws, Tithes, The Seventh Year Celebration	
Deuteronomy 14:1-15:23		64
Pericope 13	The Three Major Festivals to the Lord	
Deuteronomy 16:1-7		69
Pericope 14	Administer Justice: Rules for Kings, Levites, Prophets	
Deuteronomy 16:8-18:22		72
Pericope 15	Rules Involving Manslaughter Do Not Murder	
Deuteronomy 19:1-21:9		78
Pericope 16	Societal Laws about Marriage and Family	
Deuteronomy 21:10-22:30		84
Pericope 17	Miscellaneous Laws	
Deuteronomy 23:1-25:19		89
Pericope 18	Celebrating the Covenant with a Renewal Assembly	
Deuteronomy 26:1—28:68		96

Moses' Third Message: Israel's Past, Present, and Future

Pericope 19	Israel Is God's People and He Is Their God	
Deuteronomy 29:1-30:20		108
Pericope 20	Joshua Becomes Israel's to Replace Moses	
Deuteronomy 31:1-13		114
Pericope 21	God Formally Appoints Joshua Leader	
Deuteronomy 31:14-32:43-	Song of Testimony Against Israel	117
Pericope 22	Moses Blesses the Tribes Before He Dies	
Deuteronomy 32:44-34:10		126
EPILOGUE		134

Author's Preface



My favorite books of the Bible in order are: Gospel of John, Isaiah, Deuteronomy, Hebrews, 1 & 2 Peter, Revelation. Why Deuteronomy? Because it summarizes God's covenant with his Chosen People, explaining the intimate relationship that should exist between God and human beings. It is not only a statement of the covenant, but it is presented as preached law of the Lord our God.

Deuteronomy presents three speeches looking at the past, the present, and the future that Moses made over seven days around 1,300 BC as the Chosen People of God prepared to enter the Promised land, the land of Canaan, a place God had chosen for them to live as a witness to the world of his goodness.

Message 1 - God's Faithfulness to Israel These 40 Years

Message 2 - Explanation of the Ten Commandments

Message 3 - Moses' Appeal to Faithfulness and Obedience to God

The word *love* appears 16x in Deuteronomy. This demonstrates that this book is more than just a book of rules. Moses encourages his people to love God with everything they are.

Rusty

Introduction

This name Deuteronomy means *second law* and comes from a requirement for kings in Deuteronomy:

It shall be when the king sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book from the one that is before the priests, the Levites.

It shall be with him. He shall read it all the days of his life that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to be careful to observe all the words of this Law and these statutes.

This is so that his heart may not be lifted up above his brothers and that he does not turn aside from the commandments to the right hand or the left. In this way, he may prolong his days in his kingdom both he and his children in the midst of Israel. Deuteronomy 17:18-20. NKJV (gently modified)

Moses spoke the words of this book so that the people of Israel would act righteously as they lived in the Promised Land in the same way God wanted their king to act. But this book is more than simply law or teachings. It is *preached teaching* for Moses encourages the people to love the Lord your God with all your heart.

The Book of Deuteronomy is quoted at least 95 times in the New Testament by Jesus and his disciples.

Deuteronomy means *Second Law* for this book is a recap of the teachings of God presented in the first four books of the Torah or Teachings Moses wrote during the 40 years he had led this people through the wilderness. About 50% of the teaching in Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers is contained in Deuteronomy.

Moses wrote Deuteronomy in the form of a suzerain treaty or unilateral contract Egyptian kings made with other nations when those nations became their vassals. It was in this form:

1 - Prologue	Chapters
2 - Historical Background	1-4
3 - Fundamental Principles	5-11
4 - Detailed Laws	12-21
5 - Sanctions	27-28
6 - Witnesses	29-30
7 - Promises of Continuity	31-33

Moses had been raised in the Egyptian court for the first 40 years of his life and was trained in the Egyptian empire's way of dealing with other nations. For the next 40 years he lived in the wilderness of Mount Sinai herding sheep for his father-in-law. Then God called him to return to Egypt and lead God's Chosen People, the Hebrews to the Promised Land God had chosen for his people to live.

God wanted the Hebrews to be a unique people who lived in a wholesome way God wanted them to live. About 1,000 years before Moses, God had called Abraham to leave his home and move to Canaan to live there as God's man establishing a unique relationship with him.

During his life, Abraham was faithful to God obeying his commands. Abraham had a son Isaac, who had a son Jacob re-named Israel. The names of these three patriarchs appear seven times in Moses' book.

Jacob or Israel brought his family of 70 members from Canaan to Egypt where his son Joseph was the Prime Minister. After 400 years, Moses was born, and the story contained in Deuteronomy begins.

NOTE:

The words in ten point bold-face type are the transliterated Hebrew words spelled according to Strong's Concordance which is furnished by www.blueletterbible.org. I use this website to look up these words, to count the number of times they occur in the Bible, and for various meanings these words have. It is a free website. I don't use any other Bible software and highly recommend its use.

PERICOPE I

Moses Speaks to the People 40 Years after Leaving Egypt

1:1 This is the speech Moses gave in the desert east of the Jordan River, on the plains, near Suph, between Paran and Tophel, and near Laban, HazerOTH, and Di Zahab. He spoke to all the Israelites.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

In the forty years before Moses gave his last speeches to the Israelites, much had happened. Moses only will recall this history in portions. So I will relate the important events now.

Israel had left Egypt and then traveled for two months through the wilderness to Mount Sinai. **Exodus 19:1**. They met God at Mount Sinai where he had spoken his Ten Words or Ten Commandments to them. After this God wrote his Ten Words on two tablets of stone and had given them to Moses. They had built a Wilderness Tabernacle, called the tent of God's covenant, as a place to worship him.

On the twentieth day of the second month of the Second Year after they had left Egypt, the column of smoke of God left the Tent of the Words of God's covenant. The Israelites moved from the Desert of Sinai and traveled place to place as the smoke of God led them. **Exodus 10:11-12**

They arrived at the Desert of Paran. **Numbers 12:16**. Moses sent out spies to explore Canaan. Forty days later, the spies returned. **Numbers 13:25**. Two of the spies then wanted to enter the Promised Land of Canaan but ten of the spies

did not and convinced the people to not go in. The people said: Let's choose a leader and go back to Egypt. **Numbers 14:4**

God arrived when the community talked about stoning Moses and Aaron to death. **Numbers 14:10**. God wanted to kill the people, but Moses interceded. **Numbers 14:19**

God then decreed: All of you who are at least 20 years old, who were registered and listed in the census, and who complained about me will die. I raised my hand and swore an oath to give you this land to live in. But none of you will enter it, except for Caleb bar Jephunneh and Joshua bar Nun. **Numbers 14:29-30**

For 40 days you explored the land. So for 40 years –one year for each day– you will suffer for your sins and know what it means for me to be against you. **Numbers 14:24**

So the Israelites wandered in the desert for the next 40 years guided by God's pillar of smoke by day and his pillar of fire by night. So now on the first day of the eleventh month in the fortieth year after they had left Egypt, Moses told the new generation of Israelites everything the Lord had commanded him to tell them. **Deuteronomy 1:3**

These questions will explore the events at Mount Sinai for those first two years in more detail.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. When the Israelites first arrived at Mount Sinai after a two-month journey from Egypt, Moses went up the mountain and talked to God. God told Moses to tell the Israelites: If you carefully obey me and are faithful to the terms of my covenant, then out of all the nations you will be my special possession, even though the whole world is mine. You will be my kingdom of priests and my holy nation. These are the words you must speak to the Israelites. **Exodus 19:3-6**. What was God's plan for the people?

2. After Moses went up the mountain and received the Lord's Words. Moses told the people God's Words. The people then said: We will do everything the Lord has told us to do. Moses then wrote down the Lord's Words. **Exodus 19:7-8**. This is the first time Moses tells the people God's words. How much did the people understand?

3. God now spoke his Ten Words to the people from the mountain. **Exodus 20:17**. But, when the people heard the thunder of God's voice and saw the lightning and the mountain covered with smoke, they shook with fear and stood at a distance. Then they said to Moses: You speak to us, and we'll listen. But don't let God speak to us or we'll die. **Exodus 20:18-19**. What position then would Moses now hold between the people and God?

4. God told Moses: You, Aaron, and your sons, and 70 of Israel's leaders, may come up the mountain and worship me at a distance. Moses went and told the people God's words and legal decisions. Then all the people answered: We will do everything the Lord has told us to do. **Exodus 24:1-3**. How much did the people now understand?

5. The next morning Moses built an altar and sacrificed bulls as an offering. Then he again read the Lord's words from the Book of the Covenant. The people said: We will obey and do everything the Lord has said. Moses sprinkled the blood on the people. Moses, Aaron, his sons, and 70 of the leaders went up the mountain and had a covenant meal with God. **Exodus 24:4-6**.

6. For a third time, the people said they would obey God. What did Moses sprinkling blood on the people signify?

7. After the Wilderness Tabernacle had been constructed, Moses left the people and went up the mountain to receive the Ten Commandments written with the finger of God on two stone tablets. But in the camp below, the people forced Aaron to make a Golden Calf idol like those they had seen in Egypt. Moses was angry and broke the two stone tablets. God was angry and threatened to destroy the people, but Moses interceded, and God relented. **Exodus 32:1-17**. Had the relationship between God and the people changed? How do you know?

8. Now the Israelites were told to leave Mount Sinai. They had been at Mount Sinai in the Horeb range for two years. As they left, they were guided by God's pillar of smoke by day and pillar of fire by night. After eleven days, they arrived at Kadesh Barnea, just south of Canaan – the Promised Land. **Numbers 10:11-12:16**. What had the Israelites learned about God during those two years at Mount Sinai?

NOTE: The Events of the Forty Years

1. Israelites leave Egypt after the first Passover in Egypt.
2. Israelites travel for two months to Mount Sinai in the Horeb range.
3. Israelites hear God speak the Ten Commandments.
4. Israelites build the Wilderness Tabernacle.
5. Israelites convince Aaron to build a Golden Calf idol.
6. Israelites celebrate the 2d Passover at Mount Sinai
7. Israelites leave Sinai in the 2d month of the 2d year and arrive at Kadesh Barnea.
8. Israelites refuse to enter the Promised Land.
9. Moses distrusts God and brings water out of a rock.
10. King Sihon and King Og defeated.
11. Israel arrives in the Plains of Moab.
12. Israel spends one month at the Plains of Moab.
13. Moses gives his three Deuteronomy speeches.
14. Moses dies and Joshua leads Israel across the Jordan River into the Promised Land.

PERICOPE 2

Moses Summarizes Israel's History with God

Moses Gives Three Speeches in the Plains of Moab

1:2 It takes 11 days to go from Mount Horeb Sinai to Kadesh Barnea just south of Canaan by way of Mount Seir.

³On the first day of the eleventh month in the fortieth year after they had left Egypt Moses told the Israelites everything the LORD had commanded him to tell them.

⁴This was after he had defeated King Sihon of the Amorites, who ruled in Heshbon and King Og of Bashan, who ruled in Ashtaroth and in Edrei

⁵The Israelites were now east of the Jordan River in the Plains of Moab when Moses began to review God's Teachings.

Moses Reminds Israel of the Events at Mount Sinai 40 Years Earlier

This is what he said:

⁶At Mount Horeb Sinai the LORD our God said to us: You have stayed at this mountain long enough. ⁷Break camp, and get ready. Go to the mountain region of the Amorites Canaanites, and go to everyone living on the plains, in the mountains, in the foothills, in the Negev, on the whole Mediterranean coast (the land of the Canaanites) and into Lebanon as far as the Euphrates River.

⁸I'm giving you this land. Enter and take possession of the land the LORD swore to give to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and to you, their descendants.

Moses Tells the Tribes to Appoint Leaders

⁹At that time I Moses said to you: I'm not able to take care of you by myself.

¹⁰The LORD your God has made your population increase so that you are now as numerous as the stars in the sky. ¹¹May the LORD God of your ancestors make you a thousand times more numerous, and may he bless you as he has promised. ¹²How can I take care of your problems, your troubles, and your disagreements all by myself?

¹³From each of your tribes, choose some men who are wise, intelligent, and experienced and I'll appoint them to be your leaders.

¹⁴You agreed that this was a good idea.

¹⁵So I took the heads of your tribes who were wise and experienced men and made them officers for each of your tribes. I put them in charge of groups of 1,000, or 100, or 50, or 10 people.

¹⁶Also at that time I gave these instructions to your judges: Hear the cases that your people bring. Judge each case fairly, no matter whether it is a dispute between two Israelites or a dispute between an Israelite and a non-Israelite.

Remember that a mixed multitude of Gentiles left Egypt with the Israelites. **Exodus 12:38**

¹⁷Be impartial in your decisions. Listen to the least important people the same way you listen to the most important people. Never be afraid of anyone, since your decisions come from God. You may bring me any case that's too hard for you, and I will hear it.

¹⁸So I told you how to handle these situations.

Moses Reminds Israel Why God Forced Them to Wander 40 Years

¹⁹So we left Mount Horeb Sinai, forty years ago as the LORD our God had commanded. We traveled through all that vast and dangerous desert you saw

on the way to the mountain region of the Amorites ¹⁹Canaanites. At last in eleven days we came to Kadesh Barnea. ²⁰Then I said to you: We have come to the mountain region of the Amorites that the LORD our God is giving us. ²¹The LORD your God is giving you this land. Go ahead. Take possession of it as the LORD God of your ancestors told you. Don't be afraid or terrified.

²²All of you came to me and said: Let's send men ahead of us to gather information about the land for us. Have them report to us about the route we should take and the cities we'll come to.

The Spies Explore Canaan

²³It seemed like a good idea to me. So I chose 12 of your men, one from each tribe. ²⁴They left and went into the mountains. When they came to the Eshcol Valley, they explored it. ²⁵They took some of the region's fruit with them and brought it back to us. They reported: The land that the LORD our God is giving us is good.

The People Refuse to Enter the Promised land

²⁶But you rebelled against the command of the LORD your God and refused to go into the land. ²⁷You complained in your tents and said: The LORD hates us. That's why he brought us out of Egypt. He wanted to hand us over to the Amorites so that they could destroy us.

²⁸Where are we going anyway? Our own men have discouraged us by saying: The people there are taller and stronger than we are. The cities are big with sky-high walls. We even saw the people of Anak there.

²⁹Then I said to you: Don't tremble. Don't be afraid of them. ³⁰The LORD your God, who is going ahead of you, will fight for you as you saw him fight for you in Egypt ³¹and in the desert. There you saw how the LORD your God carried you, as parents carry their children. He carried you wherever you went until you came to this place.

³²In spite of this, you didn't trust the LORD your God, ³³who went ahead of you to find places for you to camp. He appeared in a column of fire at night and in a column of smoke during the day to show you which route to take.

God Took an Oath You Rebels Will Not Enter the Promised land

³⁴When the LORD heard what you said, he was angry and took this oath.

³⁵Not one of these evil people will ever see the Good land that I swore to give to your ancestors, ³⁶except Caleb, son of Jephunneh and Joshua. He will see it, and I will give the land that he set his feet on to him and his descendants because he wholeheartedly followed the LORD.

³⁷The LORD became angry with me because of you. He said: You won't go there either. ³⁸But your assistant Joshua, son of Nun, will go there. Encourage him, because he will help Israel take possession of the land.

God Promises that Only the Israelites' Children Will Enter the Promised Land

³⁹Although you thought the little children would be captured in war, your children, who are still too young to know the difference between good and evil, will enter that land. I will give it to them, and they will take possession of it.

God Commands the People to Leave and Go Back into the Desert but the Israelites Again Rebel Against God's Command

⁴⁰Turn around, go back into the desert, and follow the road that goes to the Red Sea. ⁴¹You responded: We have sinned against the LORD. We'll go and fight, as the LORD our God commanded us to do. Each of you armed yourself for war, thinking you could easily invade the mountain region.

⁴²But the LORD said to me: Tell them. Don't go and fight, because I won't be with you. You will be defeated by your enemies.

⁴³I told you, but you wouldn't listen. You defied the LORD's command and invaded the mountain region. ⁴⁴The Amorites who lived there came out and attacked you and chased you like a swarm of bees. They defeated you, chasing you from Seir all the way to Hormah.

⁴⁵When you came back, you cried to the LORD, but the LORD didn't listen to you or hear you. ⁴⁶That's why you stayed in Kadesh as long as you did.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Moses begins his history of Israel when the Israelites left Mount Sinai and set out for the Promised land. After 11 days of traveling, they reached Kadesh Barnea at the southern edge of the Promised Land of Canaan. They sent out spies to reconnoiter the land. Ten of the spies said there were giants in the land they should return to Egypt. But two of the spies trusted God and said they should enter the land.

God appeared at the Tent of Meeting. He was angry. First, he said he would simply destroy this people and create a new nation. But Moses interceded. God then said. This generation of warriors aged 20 and above would not enter the Promised Land. God would lead the people in the desert for 40 years. After these warriors who had left Egypt died, their children would enter the land.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. This was Israel's second great rebellion. What was the first rebellion?
2. Why did only Joshua and Caleb vote to enter the land?
3. Why was Moses able to successfully intercede for the people?
4. Were there really giants in the land?
5. Moses says God will not allow him to enter the land. Only Joshua will lead the people in. Why is this?

PERICOPE 3

Moses Reminds Israel of Their Defeat of King Sihon and King Og

2:I We went back into the desert, following the road that goes to the Red Sea as the LORD had told me. For a long time ⁴⁰ years we wandered around the region of Mount Seir. ²The LORD said to me: ³You've wandered around this region long enough. Now go north.

God Says: Don't Mess With the Edomites

⁴Give the people these instructions: You're going to pass through the territory of your relatives, the descendants of Esau, who live in Seir. They'll be afraid of you but be very careful. ⁵Don't start a fight with them because I'm not giving you any of their land — not even enough to stand on. I've given Esau's descendants the region of Mount Seir as their property. ⁶You must pay them in silver for the food you eat and the water you drink.

⁷The LORD your God has blessed you in everything you have done. He has watched over you as you traveled through this vast desert. For ⁴⁰ years now the LORD your God has been with you, and you haven't needed a thing.

⁸So we passed by our relatives, the descendants of Esau, who lived in Seir. We turned off the road that goes through the plains to Elath and Ezion Geber and took the road that goes through the desert of Moab.

God Says: Don't Mess With the Moabites

⁹The LORD said to me: Don't bother the people of Moab or start a war with them. I'm not giving you any of Ar as your property. I have given it to the descendants of Lot.

¹⁰The Emites used to live there. These people were as strong, as numerous and as tall as the people of Anak. ¹¹They were thought to be Rephaim, like the people of Anak, but the Moabites called them Emites. ¹²The Horites used to

live in Seir, but the descendants of Esau claimed their land, wiped them out, and took their place, as Israel later did in the land that the LORD gave them.

¹³Then the LORD said: Now cross the Zered River. So we crossed the Zered River.

¹⁴Thirty-eight years had passed from the time we left Kadesh Barnea until we crossed the Zered River. During that time all our soldiers from that first generation died, as the LORD had sworn they would. ¹⁵In fact, it was the LORD himself who got rid of all of them until none were left in the camp.

God had decreed that all the Israelite warriors who were over 20 years old at this time would die in the next 40 years. **Numbers 32:11**

God Says: Don't Mess With the Ammonites

¹⁶When the last of these soldiers had died, ¹⁷the LORD said to me: ⁸Today you are going to pass by the border of Moab at Ar. ¹⁹When you come near the Ammonites, don't bother them or start a fight with them. I'm not giving you any of the land that I have already given to the descendants of Lot as their property.

Lot was Abraham's nephew. He escaped from Sodom. His two daughters got him drunk and had sex with him. The children became the Moabites and the Amorites. **Genesis 19:30-38**

²⁰This land was thought of as the land of the Rephaim who used to live there, but the Ammonites called them Zamzummim. ²¹These people were as strong, as numerous, and as tall as the people of Anak. But the LORD wiped them out before the Ammonites came so that the Ammonites claimed their land and took their place.

²²The LORD did the same thing for the descendants of Esau, who lived in Seir. Before the descendants of Esau came, he wiped out the Horites so that Esau's descendants claimed their land and took their place. Esau's descendants are still there today. ²³The same thing happened to the Avvites who lived in villages as far away as Gaza. The Caphtorites, who came from Crete, wiped them out and took their place

The Caphtorites are the Philistines who live in Canaan along the Mediterranean seacoast.

God Says: Battle King Sihon

²⁴ The LORD continued: NOW break camp. Cross the Arnon Valley. I'm going to hand King Sihon of Heshbon, the Amorite, over to you. Fight him, and take possession of his country. ²⁵ Today I will start to make all the people under heaven terrified of you. When they hear about you, they will tremble and shake because of you.

The Israelites Gave King Sihon an Offer of Peace

²⁶ From the desert of Kedemoth, I sent messengers to King Sihon of Heshbon with the following offer of peace: ²⁷ If you allow us to travel through your country, we'll go straight through and won't ever leave the road. ²⁸ We'll pay you in silver for the food we eat and the water we drink.

Please let us go through ²⁹ as the descendants of Esau, who live in Seir, and the Moabites, who live in Ar, did for us. We'll keep going until we cross the Jordan River into the land the LORD our God is giving us.

King Sihon Came Out to Battle Israel

³⁰ But King Sihon of Heshbon wouldn't allow us to pass through. The LORD your God made him stubborn and overconfident in order to hand him over to you, as he has now done. ³¹ The LORD said to me: I have begun to give you Sihon and his country. Go ahead. Take possession of his land.

³² Sihon and all his troops came out to meet us in battle at Jahaz. ³³ The LORD our God gave Sihon to us. We defeated him, his sons, and all his troops. ³⁴ At that time we captured all his cities and claimed them for God by destroying men, women, and children. There were no survivors. ³⁵ However, we did loot the cities that we captured, taking the cattle and goods.

³⁶ From Aroer on the edge of the Arnon Valley and the city in that valley as far as Gilead, no city had walls that could keep us out. The LORD our God gave us all of them. ³⁷ But the LORD our God had forbidden you to go anywhere near the land of the Ammonites. So you didn't enter the land along the bank of the Jabbok River or capture the cities in the mountains.

God Says: Battle King Og of Bashan

3:I Next we turned and followed the road that goes to Bashan. King Og of Bashan and all his troops came to fight us at Edrei. ² The LORD said to me: Don't be afraid of him. I'll hand him, all his troops, and his land over to you. Do to him what you did to King Sihon of the Amorites, who ruled in Heshbon.

³ So the LORD our God also handed King Og of Bashan and all his troops over to us. We defeated him leaving no survivors. ⁴ At that time we captured all of his cities. There wasn't a city we didn't take.

We captured a total of 60 cities—the whole territory of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan. ⁵ All of these cities were fortified with high walls and double-door gates with bars across the gates. We also captured a large number of unwallled villages. ⁶ We claimed them all for God, destroying every city, including men, women, and children—as we did to King Sihon of Heshbon. ⁷ However, we did loot the cities, taking all of the cattle and goods.

⁸ We took the land of the two Amorite kings east of the Jordan River, from the Arnon Valley to Mount Hermon. ⁹ The Sidonians call Mount Hermon by the name Sirion, and the Amorites call it Senir. ¹⁰ We took all of the cities of the plateau, all of Gilead, and all of Bashan as far as Salcah and Edrei, cities of Og's kingdom in Bashan.

¹¹ Of the Rephaim only King Og of Bashan was left. His bed was made of iron and was more than 13 feet long and 6 feet wide. It is still in the Ammonite city of Rabbah.

Moses Gives This Land East of the Jordan River to the Tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Half the Tribe of Manasseh.

¹² At that time we took possession of this land. I gave the tribes of Reuben and Gad the land north of Aroer near the Arnon Valley and half of the mountain region of Gilead with its cities. ¹³ I gave the rest of Gilead and all of Bashan ruled by Og to half of the tribe of Manasseh.

The whole territory of Argob in Bashan used to be called the land of the Rephaim. ¹⁴ Jair, a descendant of Manasseh, took the whole territory of Argob as far as the border of the Geshurites and the Maacathites. The settlements in Bashan he named Havvoth Jair after himself. This is still their name today.

¹⁵ I gave Gilead to Machir.

¹⁶ I gave the tribes of Reuben and Gad some of Gilead from the Arnon Valley (the middle of the valley is the border to the Jabbok River, which is the border) of Ammon. ¹⁷ Their land included the plains around the Jordan River. The western border was the river, from the Sea of Galilee to the Sea of the Plains, the Dead Sea, which is near Mount Pisgah on the east.

The Tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh Agree to Cross Ahead of the Other Warriors When They Entered the Land

¹⁸ I gave the tribes of Reuben and Gad and half of the tribe of Manasseh this command: The LORD your God has given you this land so that you can take possession of it. All your soldiers must be ready for battle when they cross the Jordan River ahead of the other Israelites.

¹⁹ I know you have a lot of livestock. Your wives, children, and livestock must stay here in the cities that I gave you. ²⁰ Your soldiers will go with the other Israelites until they take possession of the land the LORD your God is giving them on the other side of the Jordan River. Then they will have a place to rest as you have. After that each of you may go back to the land I gave you.

Moses Told Joshua to Understand God Was With the Army and They Will Be Successful

²¹I also gave Joshua this command: You have seen with your own eyes everything that the LORD your God has done to these two kings. The LORD will do the same to all of the kingdoms on the other side of the Jordan River where you're going. ²²Don't be afraid of them, because the LORD your God himself will fight for you.

Moses Reminds Israel Why He Will Not Enter Canaan

²³Then I pleaded with the LORD: ²⁴Almighty LORD, you have only begun to show me how great and powerful you are. What kind of god is there in heaven or on earth who can do the deeds and the mighty acts you have done? ²⁵Please let me go over and see the beautiful land on the other side of the Jordan River—those beautiful mountains in Lebanon.

²⁶The LORD was angry with me because of you so he wouldn't listen to me. He said: That's enough out of you. Don't talk to me anymore about this. ²⁷Go to the top of Mount Pisgah and look west, north, south, and east. You may look at the land, but you will never cross the Jordan River.

²⁸Give instructions to Joshua. Encourage and strengthen him, because he will lead these people across the Jordan River and he will help them take possession of the land you see.

²⁹So we stayed in the valley the Plains of Moab near Beth Peor.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Now that the Israelites have wandered in the desert for 40 years, they are ready to fight. God tells them to go north where they will battle King Sihon and King Og. On the way, God tells them not to bother the Edomites, the Moabites, or the Ammonites.

The Israelites come to the land of King Sihon and first offer him peace. But he refuses and they battle him and defeat him taking all his land. Then they went to Bashan where King Og and all his troops met them. They battled and won taking all the land from the Arnon Valley to Mount Hermon.

Moses now, apparently on his own initiative, gives this land to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and one-half the tribe of Manasseh. But they had to promise to help Israel conquer the land west of the Jordan River by placing their troops in front of the army.

After these brilliant victories, Moses reminds Joshua to remember how the Lord helped Israel to win these victories. Then Moses pleaded with God to allow him to cross the Jordan River. But the Lord forbade him to bring this matter up again. Instead, Moses was to go to the top of Mount Pisgah and look at the land. But he will never enter it.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why was it important for Joshua to see Israel defeat King Sihon and King Og?
2. Why did Moses give land on the east side of the Jordan –outside the Promised Land – to Reuben, Gad, and $\frac{1}{2}$ the tribe of Manasseh? Weren't all of God's people supposed to live in the Promised Land?
3. Did Moses ask God first before he gave the tribes this land?
4. Read **Numbers 20:1-13**. Now explain why God prevents Moses from entering the Promised Land.

PERICOPE 4

Moses Reminds Israel to Be Loyal to the LORD

4:1 Israel, listen to the laws and rules I am about to teach you. Obey them so that you will live and be able to enter and take possession of the land that the LORD God of your ancestors is giving you.

A Prohibition Never to Add or Subtract from Moses' Teachings

²Never add anything to what I command you, or take anything away from it. Then you will be able to obey the commands of the LORD your God that I give you.

Remember to Obey the Lord your God. He Punished Those Who Disobeyed Him at Baal Peor.

³With your own eyes you saw what the LORD did at Baal Peor. The LORD your God destroyed everyone among you who worshiped the god Baal while you were at Peor. ⁴But you were loyal to the LORD your God and are still alive today.

Faithfully Obey God's Laws

⁵I have taught you laws and rules as the LORD my God commanded me. You must obey them when you've entered the land and taken possession of it.

⁶Faithfully obey these laws. This will show the people of the world your wisdom and insight. When they hear about all these laws, they will say: What wise and insightful people there are in this great nation.

⁷What great nation ever had their gods as near to them as the LORD our God is near to us whenever we pray to him? ⁸Or what other great nation has such fair laws and rules as all these teachings I am giving you today?

⁹However, be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you don't forget the things which you have seen with your own eyes. Don't let them fade from

your memory as long as you live. Teach them to your children and grandchildren.

¹⁰Never forget the day you stood in front of the LORD your God at Mount Horeb Sinai. The LORD had said to me: Assemble the people in front of me, and I will let them hear my words. Then they will learn to fear me as long as they live on earth, and they will teach their children the same thing.

¹¹So you came and stood at the foot of the mountain, which was on fire with flames shooting into the sky. It was dark, cloudy, and gloomy. ¹²The LORD spoke to you from the fire. You heard a voice speaking but saw no one. There was only a voice.

¹³The LORD told you about the terms of his covenant, the Ten Commandments that he commanded you to do. Then he wrote them on two stone tablets. ¹⁴The LORD also commanded me to teach you the laws and rules you must obey after you cross the Jordan River and take possession of the land.

A Prohibition Against Graven Images

¹⁵You didn't see the LORD the day he spoke to you from the fire at Mount Horeb Sinai. So be very careful ¹⁶that you don't become corrupt and make your own carved idols.

Don't make statues that represent men or women, ¹⁷any animal on earth, any creature with wings that flies, ¹⁸any creature that crawls on the ground, or any fish in the water. ¹⁹Don't let yourselves be tempted to worship and serve what you see in the sky — the sun, the moon, the stars, or anything else. The LORD your God has given them to all people everywhere. ²⁰But you are the people the LORD brought out of Egypt, the iron smelter, in order to make you his own people as you still are today.

Moses Complains Again

²¹The LORD was angry with me because of you. So the LORD your God took an oath that I wouldn't cross the Jordan River and enter the good land he is giving you as your property. ²²I'm going to die in this land and not cross the Jordan River, but you're going to go across and take possession of that good land.

²³Be careful that you don't forget the covenant that the LORD your God made to you. Don't make your own carved idols or statues that represent anything the LORD your God has forbidden. ²⁴The LORD your God is a raging 'akal-consuming, devouring fire, a God who does not tolerate rivals qanna':jealous.

²⁵Even when you have children and grandchildren and have grown old in that land, don't become corrupt and make carved idols or statues that represent anything.

Moses Warns Israel Profoundly Against Worshiping Other Gods.

I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you today: If you do this thing that the LORD your God considers evil, making him furious, ²⁶you will quickly disappear from the land you're going to possess on the other side of the Jordan River. You won't live very long there. You'll be completely wiped out.

²⁷The LORD will scatter you among the people of the world and only a few of you will be left among the nations where the LORD will force you to live. ²⁸There you will worship wooden and stone gods made by human hands. These gods can't see, hear, eat, or smell.

However, If You're Exiled Out of the Land, God Will Restore You If You Repent

²⁹But if you look for the LORD your God when you are among those nations, you will find him whenever you search for him with all your heart and with all

your soul. ³⁰When you're in distress and all these things happen to you, then you will finally come back to the LORD your God and obey him.

³¹The LORD your God is a merciful God. He will not abandon you, destroy you, or forget the covenant to your ancestors that he swore he would keep.

Our God Is Unique. There Is No Other God Like Him.

³²Search the distant past, long before your time. Start from the very day God created people on earth. Search from one end of heaven to the other.

Has anything as great as this ever happened before, or has anything like it ever been heard of? ³³Have any other people ever heard God speak from a fire and lived? You did.

³⁴Or has any god ever tried to come and take one nation away from another for himself? The LORD your God used his mighty hand and powerful arm to do this for you in Egypt. He did this using plagues, miraculous signs, amazing things, and war. He did his great and awe-inspiring deeds in front of you.

³⁵You were shown these things so that you would know that the LORD is God. There is no other god.

³⁶He let you hear his voice from heaven so that he could instruct you. He showed you his great fire on earth and you heard him speak from the column of fire. ³⁷Because he loved your ancestors and chose their descendants, he was with you as he brought you out of Egypt by his great power.

³⁸He forced nations greater and stronger than you out of your way to bring you into their land and give it to you. This land is your own possession today.

³⁹Remember today, and never forget that the LORD is God in heaven above and here on earth. There is no other god. ⁴⁰Obey his laws and commands which I'm giving you today. Then things will go well for you and your descendants. You will live for a long time in the land. The LORD your God is giving you the land for as long as you live.

Three Cities of Refuge East of the Jordan River

⁴¹Then Moses set aside three cities on the east side of the Jordan River.

⁴²Those who unintentionally killed someone whom they had never hated could flee to one of these cities and save their lives. ⁴³The cities were Bezer on the desert plateau for the tribe of Reuben, Ramoth in Gilead for the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan for the tribe of Manasseh.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

We are now coming to the end of Moses' First Speech. After recounting the history of Israel for the last 40 years, Moses comes to the application. What should Israel have learned from their 40 years with God at Mount Sinai and in the wilderness wanderings?

It appears that with Moses remembering how he dishonored God by striking the rock to get water instead of speaking to it as God desired **Numbers 20:1-13**, both he and Aaron are not permitted by God to enter the Promised Land. So Moses will encourage Israel to do *'asah* 163x what God commands and obey *shama'* -listen 91x him.

Then Moses recalls the recent past when the men of Israel were seduced by Moabite women and worshiped the god Baal Peor. **Numbers 25:1-17**. God was so angry he sent a plague and killed 24,000 men, the last of the warriors from the first generation.

Moses goes on to recall God telling him why he appeared in fire, thunder, and smoke on the top of Mount Sinai as he spoke his Ten Words to the people. I did this so they would fear *yare'*-36x me, he said. **Deuteronomy 4:10**. Yet God appeared to the people only as a voice, not as an image.

This reminds Moses of God's strong prohibition against worshiping other gods especially in the form of images. Don't be corrupt and form gods in the shape you desire. The Lord your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God that will tolerate no rivals.

Then Moses attempts to make this prohibition as strong as he can. I take an oath on heaven and earth that if you worship other gods, the Lord will throw you out of the Promised Land. You'll be completely wiped out **shamad shamad** - utterly destroyed 29x. **Deuteronomy 4:26**. But then Moses modifies this by saying: The Lord your God is a merciful **rachuw** 1x God. He will not abandon you, destroy you, or forget the covenant **beriyth** 27x to your ancestors he swore he would keep. **Deuteronomy 4:31**

In the past, God did many miraculous things. You were shown these things so that you would know that the Lord is God. There is no other God.

Moses finishes by saying: Obey his laws and commands that I'm giving you today. Then things will go well for you and your descendants. You will live for a long time in the land the Lord your God is giving you for as long as you live. **Deuteronomy 4:40**

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. In this first message, Moses will make many points he will repeat again and again in his book. I have attempted to indicate this by indicating the original Hebrew words in 10-point print. I have also indicated the number of times these words appear in Deuteronomy. List some of the phrases Moses emphasized.
2. Moses mentions the covenant or solemn agreement God made with the Hebrews 27x. We call this the Mosaic covenant. The word covenant **beriyth** appears 27x in Genesis, 24x in Jeremiah, 22x in Joshua, and 21x in Psalms. Many believe the Book of Deuteronomy was lost until King Josiah found it buried in a wall of the Jerusalem Temple in 622BC. **2 Kings 22:8**

In the covenant God made, he gave title to the land to the Hebrews, but he did not promise they would always live in the land. For what reason would God throw them out of the land? How could they get back into the land?
HINT: **Deuteronomy 30:2**.

3. Define what *the fear of the Lord* means. It appears in Psalms 3x, Proverbs 14x, and Isaiah 6x.

4. Moses allowed 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ tribes to live outside the Promised Land east of the Jordan River. Why did Moses do that? These tribes lived more precariously than people did inside the Promised Land. Moses set up three cities of refuge just for this small territory and only three more cities of refuge in the entire Promised Land. Define a city of refuge. HINT: Numbers 35:9-34.

5. The word love 'ahab appears for the first time in Deuteronomy 4:37. In this verse: Because he loved 'ahab your ancestors and chose bachar their descendants he was with you when he brought you out of Egypt with his great power. This is not only the first time God says he loves someone, it is also the first time in Deuteronomy God says he chose Israel and why. Constable, Notes, p.37. The word 'ahab will appear 22x in Deuteronomy. But the word for God's lovingkindness checed will also appear 3x in Deuteronomy 5:10; 7:9, 12. The GWT usually translates this word mercy while the KJV translates it lovingkindness.

Trace the verses where the word *love* appears in Deuteronomy.

6. State the three main points Moses makes in his first message.

7. When Moses says: Remember today and never forget that the Lord is God in heaven above and here on earth. There is no other God. Deuteronomy 4:39. He is saying God is both transcendent far away and immanent near. The darkness in which God dwells is his transcendence and his fire is his immanence. What attributes of God is Moses describing?

PERICOPE 5

Moses' Second Message: God's Ten Fundamental Moral Laws

This long address will extend through Chapter 28

4:44 This is what Moses taught the people of Israel. ⁴⁵These are the commandments, laws, and rules Moses gave the Israelites after they had left Egypt.

⁴⁶ He gave these to the people when they were east of the Jordan River in the valley near Beth Peor,

The people were camped in the Plains of Moab on the east side of the Jordan River near Baal Peor opposite the city of Jericho.

[in the land of King Sihon of the Amorites, who ruled in Heshbon. Moses and Israel defeated him after they left Egypt.] ⁴⁷They took possession of his land and the land of King Og of Bashan, the two kings of the Amorites who were east of the Jordan River. ⁸This land went from Aroer on the edge of the Arnon Valley to Mount Siyon, that is, Mount Hermon. ⁴⁹It included all the plains on the east side of the Jordan River as far as the Dead Sea at the foot of the slopes of Mount Pisgah.

The Ten Commandments

5:1 Moses summoned all Israel and said to them: Israel, listen to the laws and rules I'm telling you today. Learn them and faithfully obey them.

The LORD our God made a covenant to us at Mount Horeb Sinai. ³He didn't make this covenant to our ancestors, but to all of us who are alive here today. The LORD spoke to you face to face without a mediator from the fire on the mountain.

⁵I stood between the LORD and you to tell you the LORD's Word, because you were afraid of the fire and didn't go up on the mountain. The LORD said:

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT

⁶ I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of slavery in Egypt.

⁷ Never have any other gods.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT

⁸ Never make your own carved idols or statues that represent any creature in the sky, on the earth, or in the water. ⁹ Never worship them or serve them, because I, the LORD your God, am a God who does not tolerate rivals.

I punish children for their parents' sins to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me. ¹⁰ But I show mercy to thousands of generations of those who love me and obey my commandments.

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT

¹¹ Never use the name of the LORD your God carelessly. The LORD will make sure that anyone who uses his name carelessly will be punished.

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

¹² Observe the day of worship as a holy day. This is what the LORD your God has commanded you.

¹³ You have six days to do all your work. ¹⁴ The seventh day is the day of worship dedicated to the LORD your God. You, your sons, your daughters, your male and female slaves, your oxen, your donkeys—all of your animals—even the foreigners living in your city must never do any work on that day. In this way your male and female slaves can rest as you do.

¹⁵ Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the LORD our God used his mighty hand and powerful arm to bring you out of there. This is why the LORD your God has commanded you to observe the day of worship.

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

¹⁶ Honor your father and your mother as the LORD your God has commanded you. Then you will live for a long time, and things will go well for you in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT

¹⁷ Never murder.

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

¹⁸ Never commit adultery.

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT

¹⁹ Never steal.

THE NINTH COMMANDMENT

²⁰ Never avoid the truth when you testify about your neighbor.¹

THE TENTH COMMANDMENT

²¹ Never desire to take your neighbor's wife away from him. Never long for your neighbor's household, his field, his male or female slave, his ox, his donkey, or anything else that belongs to him.

²² These are the commandments the LORD spoke to your whole assembly on the mountain. He spoke in a loud voice from the fire, the cloud, and the gloomy darkness. Then he stopped speaking. He wrote the commandments on two stone tablets and gave them to me.

Moses Describes the Peoples' Request for Him to Be Their Mediator Between God and Themselves.

²³ But when you heard the voice coming from the darkness and saw the mountain blazing with fire, all the leaders and heads of your tribes came to me.

²⁴ You said: The LORD our God has let us see how great and glorious he is. We've heard his voice come from the fire. Today we've seen that people can live even if God speaks to them.

²⁵ Why should we die? This great fire will consume us. If we continue to hear the voice of the LORD our God, we'll die. ²⁶ Who has ever heard the voice of the living God speak from a fire, as we did, and lived?

²⁷ Moses, go and listen to everything that the LORD our God says. Then tell us whatever the LORD our God tells you. We'll listen and obey.

²⁸ When the LORD heard the words that you spoke to me, he said: I have heard what these people said to you. Everything they said was good. ²⁹ If only they would fear *yare'* me and obey all my commandments as long as they live. Then things would go well for them and their children forever.

³⁰ Tell the people to go back to their tents. ³¹ But you stay here with me. I will give you all the commands, laws, and rules that you must teach them to obey in the land which I'm giving them to possess.

³² So be careful to do what the LORD your God has commanded you. Never stop living this way. ³³ Follow all the directions the LORD your God has given you. Then you will continue to live, life will go well for you, and you will live for a long time in the land that you are going to possess.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Moses now gives the people the Ten Words of God – the ten moral laws God wants all of his human creatures to obey. Moses is repeating the Ten Commandments he described in **Exodus 20: 1-17**.

God spoke these words directly to the people out of a dark cloud and fire on top of Mount Sinai. Although God spoke to them directly—face to face— they only heard a voice. All they saw was a dark cloud and fire. This should have convinced them that God did not want them to make any imagined pictures of God.

This voice of God that the Bible usually describes as thunder or the noise of rushing water was too terrible for the people to hear. So they asked Moses to speak to God and then tell them what God said. This repeats **Exodus 20:18-21**.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. King David in Psalm 18 described God in a theophany:

Smoke went up from his nostrils
and a raging fire came out of his mouth.
Glowing coals flared up from it.

He spread apart the heavens
and came down with a dark cloud under his feet.
He rode on one of the cherubim as he flew
and he soared on the wings of the wind.

He made the darkness his hiding place,
the dark rain clouds his covering.
Out of the brightness in front of him,
those rain clouds passed by with hailstones and lightning.

The Lord thundered in the heavens.
The Most High made his voice heard
with hailstones and lightning.
He shot his arrows and scattered them.
His flashed streaks of lightning and threw them into
confusion. **Psalm 18:8-14**

Compare King David's description of God to that seen by the people at Mount Sinai.

2. Why does God appear in such a frightening picture?
3. Notice that the Fifth Commandment has more words than any other commandment. Why is this?
4. Which of these Ten Commandments that are violated will cause the Hebrew people to be thrown out of the Promised Land?

PERICOPE 6

Moses Commands the Israelites to Love the LORD: The Greatest Commandment

6:1 These are the commands **mitsvah**, laws **choq**, and rules **mishpat** the LORD your God commanded me to teach **lamad** you. Obey **'asah**-do them after you enter **'abar** the land and take possession **yarash** of it.

The word **yarash** appears in Deuteronomy 71x, more than any other Bible book.

²As long as you live, you, your children, and your grandchildren must fear **yare'** the LORD your God. All of you must obey **shamar**-keep all his laws and commands that I'm giving you, and you will live a long time **yowm**-days **'arak**-prolonged.

³Listen, Israel, and be careful to obey these laws. Then things will go well for you and your population will increase in a land flowing with milk and honey, as the LORD God of your ancestors promised you.

The Greatest Commandment

⁴Listen **shama'**, Israel: The LORD is our God. The LORD is the only **'echad**-one God. ⁵Love **'ahab** the LORD your God with all your heart **lebab**, with all your soul **nephesh**, and with all your strength. **me'od**

The only person the Bible says turned to the Lord with all his heart and soul and might was good King Josiah. **2 Kings 23:25**. Jesus said this was the greatest commandment. **Matthew 22:37-38; Mark 12:28-30; Luke 10:27**

⁶Take to heart these words that I give you today. Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you're at home or away, when you lie down or get up. ⁸Write them down, and tie them around your wrist, and wear them as headbands as a reminder. ⁹Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

¹⁰The LORD your God will bring you into the land and give it to you, as he swore to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This land will have large, prosperous cities that you didn't build. ¹¹Your houses will be filled with all kinds of things that you didn't put there. You will have cisterns that you didn't dig and vineyards and olive trees that you didn't plant.

After you have eaten all that you want, ¹²be careful that you don't forget the LORD, who brought you out of slavery in Egypt. ¹³You must fear *yare'* the LORD your God, serve him, and take your oaths only in his name.

¹⁴Never worship *yalak-go 'achar*-after any of the gods worshiped by the people around you. ¹⁵If you do, the LORD your God will become very angry *'aph charah*-kindled with you and will wipe *shamad*-destroy you off the face of the earth, because the LORD your God, who is with you, is a God who does not tolerate rivals *qanna'*-jealous.

¹⁶Never test the LORD your God as you did at Massah.

Remember that it was at Massah that Moses struck the rock instead of speaking to it that caused God not to allow him to enter the Promised Land. **Numbers 20:12-13**

¹⁷Be sure to obey the commands of the LORD your God and the regulations and laws he has given you. ¹⁸Do what the LORD considers right and good. Then things will go well for you, and you will enter and take possession of that good land which the LORD promised to your ancestors with an oath. ¹⁹You will see the LORD expel your enemies as he said he would.

Tell Your Children What God Has Done for You

²⁰In the future your children will ask you: What do these regulations, laws, and rules that the LORD our God commanded you mean to you?

²¹Tell them: We were Pharaoh's slaves in Egypt, but the LORD used his mighty hand to bring us out of there. ²²Right before our eyes the LORD did miraculous signs and amazing things that were spectacular but terrible for

Egypt, Pharaoh, and his whole family. ²³The LORD led us out of there to bring us here and give us this land he promised to our ancestors with an oath.

²⁴The LORD our God commanded us to obey all these laws and to fear *yare'* him. These laws are for our own good as long as we live so that he will preserve our lives. It's still true today. ²⁵This is how we'll have the LORD's approval *tsedaqah*-righteousness: If we faithfully obey all these laws in the presence of the LORD our God, as he has commanded us.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Moses instructs the people to love God whole-heartedly without any reservation. He also instructs them to teach God's Words to their children. In Judaism there are no secret teachings.

Children from the age of five attend Torah school until age 12. At this point they become *bar mitzahed* or sons of the covenant and are able to read and discuss the Torah in the synagogue. They are also responsible for knowing right and wrong. Before that, their parents were responsible for them.

Allegiance to **YHWH** as the only God is primary. To lose the right to live in the Promised Land is to worship another god than **YHWH**. While physically doing the works of the Torah is important, it is still a person's love for God that is primary. Works only come second.

God spoke the Ten Commandments to the Israelites on Mount Sinai. This was followed by a covenant ceremony.

Moses wrote down on a scroll these Words of the covenant. Then he read them to the people. Three times the people said they would do all the Lord said. Then Moses sprinkled blood on the people. Then Moses, Aaron and his sons, and seventy of Israel's leaders went up the mountain and ate and drank with God.

This would be the basis of subsequent covenant renewal ceremonies at Shiloh and at Shechem in the Promised Land. God then wrote his Ten

Commandments on two stone tablets and Moses put them inside the Ark of the Covenant.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. One scholar said Chapter 6 of Deuteronomy is a commentary on the First Commandment. Is this true?
2. What does it mean to love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength?
3. What does it mean when something is said three times? Remember that in Hebrew literature to emphasize something, is to repeat the word.
4. Why is it important that children be made aware of the covenant when they are very young?

PERICOPE 7

Israel Is Commanded to Destroy the Canaanites and Their Idols

7:1 The LORD your God will bring you to the land you're about to enter and take possession of. He will force many nations out of your way: the Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites—seven nations larger and more powerful than you.

²When the LORD your God gives them to you and you defeat them, destroy every one of them because they have been claimed by the LORD.

Don't make any treaties with them or show them any mercy. ³Never marry any of them. Never let your daughters marry their sons or your sons marry their daughters. ⁴These people will turn your children away from me to worship other gods. Then the LORD will get very angry with you and will quickly destroy you.

⁵But this is what you must do to these people: Tear down their altars, smash their sacred stones, cut down their poles dedicated to the goddess Asherah, and burn their idols. ⁶You are a holy people, who belong to the LORD your God. He chose you to be his own special possession **cegullah**-treasure out of all the nations on earth. **Exodus 19:5**

⁷The LORD set his heart **chashaq**-desire, love _{3x} on you and chose **bachar** you even though you didn't outnumber all the other people. You were the smallest of all nations. ⁸You were chosen **bachar** because the LORD loved **'ahaba** you and kept **shamar** the oath **shebuw'ah** he swore to your ancestors.

So he used his mighty hand to bring you out. He freed you from slavery under Pharaoh, the king of Egypt.

⁹Keep in mind that the LORD your God is the only God. He is a faithful **'aman** God, who keeps **shamar** his covenant and is merciful **checced** to thousands of generations of those who love him and obey his commands. ¹⁰But he sends

destruction to pay back everyone who hates him. He never takes long to pay back anyone who hates him. **Exodus 34:5-7**

¹¹ So obey the commands, laws, and rules I'm giving you today.

¹² If you listen *shama'* to these rules and faithfully obey *'asah*-do them, the LORD your God will keep his covenant to you and be merciful *cheeced* to you, as he swore to your ancestors.

The Promises of God –His Blessings

¹³ He will love *'ahab* you, bless *barak* you, and increase the number of your descendants. He will bless *barak* you with children. He will bless your land with produce: grain, new wine, and olive oil. He will bless *barak* your herds with calves, and your flocks with lambs and kids.

This will all happen in the land the LORD will give you, as he swore to your ancestors. ¹⁴ You will be blessed *barak* more than any other people. Your men and women will be able to have children, and your animals will be able to have offspring.

¹⁵ The LORD will keep you from having any kind of illness. He will not strike you with any of the terrible diseases you experienced in Egypt. Instead, he will strike all those who hate you.

How Israel Is to Treat the Canaanites

¹⁶ You must destroy *'akal*-consume all the people the LORD your God hands over to you. Have no pity on them, and never worship their gods because they will be a trap for you.

¹⁷ You may say to yourselves: These nations outnumber us. How can we force them out? ¹⁸ Don't be afraid of them. Remember what the LORD your God did to Pharaoh and all of Egypt. ⁹ You saw with your own eyes the terrible plagues, the miraculous signs, and the amazing things the LORD did. He

used his mighty hand and powerful arm to bring you out. He will do the same thing to all the people you're afraid of.

²⁰The LORD your God will spread panic **tris'ah-hornet** ^{ix} among them until they all die. There will be no one left — not even those who were hiding from you.

²¹Don't be afraid of them, because the LORD your God is with you. He is a great and awe-inspiring God. ²²Little by little he will force these nations out of your way. You won't be able to wipe them out quickly. Otherwise, you would be overrun with wild animals.

²³The LORD your God will hand these people over to you and will throw them into a great **gadowl** panic **mehuwmah** ^{2x} until they're destroyed **hamam**. ²⁴He will hand their kings over to you, and no one on earth will even remember their names. No one will be able to stop you. You will destroy them all.

²⁵Burn their idols. Don't ever long for the silver and gold on these idols or take any of it for yourselves. It might be a trap for you. Besides, these idols are disgusting to the LORD your God. ⁶Never bring a disgusting idol into your house. If you do, you and the idol will be destroyed. Consider it detestable and disgusting. It must be destroyed.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

God tells Israel that there are already people from seven nations living in Canaan. However, they are living wickedly. So God wants Israel to destroy all of them. God will assist the Israelites by spreading a panic among them. Tear down their sacred stones dedicated to Baal and their wooden poles dedicated to Asherah.

You Israelites are a holy people dedicated to the Lord your God. God set his heart on your ancestors, he loved them so he brought them out of Egypt to the land he promised the descendants of Abraham.

God made a covenant with Abraham that although his descendants would live in a land that is not their own, after 400 years, in the fourth generation, they would return to Canaan. **Genesis 15:16**

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. God promised to assist the Israelites to destroy the Canaanites. First, he said he would send the hornet. **Deuteronomy 7:20**. Then he would send great panic. **Deuteronomy 7:23**. In the time of Joshua, God sent hailstones. **Joshua 10:11**. Later in the time of the judges, God sent a panic that made the warriors fight among themselves. **Judges 7:22**. Most of the time, God did things that allowed the Israelites to destroy the Canaanites as he desired even if the Canaanites outnumbered the Israelites. Why did the Israelites often forget they were fighting a holy war?
2. The Canaanites set up sacred stones to the thunderstorm god Baal on the high places and worshiped the goddess Asherah in the groves setting up poles or worshipping evergreen trees. Why were these Canaanite gods so attractive to the Israelites?
3. Three times Moses said God set his heart on the Israelite ancestors and loved them. That is the reason God chose their descendants as his holy people. What was the other reason God did this?
4. Read **Exodus 34:5-7**. What is God's greatest attribute? It appears three times in **Deuteronomy 5:10; 7:9, 12**.
5. Israel was to be different from the nations as they were God's particular treasure or special possession *segullah*. Read **Deuteronomy 7:6; 14:2; 26:18**. Why were the Israelites God's special possession. How were they to be different from the peoples around them?

PERICOPE 8

Remember God's Mercies in the Wilderness

8:1 Be careful to obey every command I give you today. Then you will live, and your population will increase. You will enter and take possession of the land that the LORD promised to your ancestors with an oath.

²Remember that for 40 years the LORD your God led you on your journey in the desert. He did this in order to humble you and test you. He wanted to know whether or not you would wholeheartedly obey his commands.

³So he made you suffer from hunger and then fed you with manna, that neither you nor your ancestors had seen before. He did this to teach you that a person cannot live on bread alone but on every word that the LORD speaks. ⁴Your clothes didn't wear out and your feet didn't swell these past 40 years.

⁵Learn this lesson by heart: The LORD your God was disciplining *yacar* you as parents discipline *yacar* their children. ⁶Obey the commands of the LORD your God. Follow his directions, and fear *yare'* him.

⁷The LORD your God is bringing you into a good land. It is a land with rivers that don't dry up. There are springs and underground streams flowing through the valleys and hills.

⁸The land has wheat and barley, grapevines, fig trees, and pomegranates. The land has honey and olive trees for olive oil. ⁹The land will have enough food for you, and you will have everything you need. The land has rocks with iron ore and you will be able to mine copper ore in the hills. ¹⁰When you have eaten all you want, thank the LORD your God for the good land he has given you.

¹¹Be careful that you don't forget *shakach* the LORD your God. Don't fail to obey his commands, rules, and laws that I'm giving you today. ¹²You will eat all you want. You will build nice houses and live in them. ¹³Your herds and flocks, silver and gold, and everything else you have will increase.

¹⁴When this happens, be careful that you don't become arrogant **lebab**-heart **ruwm**-lifted up and forget **shakach** the LORD your God, who brought you out of slavery in Egypt.

¹⁵He was the one who led you through that vast and dangerous desert—a thirsty and arid land, with poisonous snakes and scorpions. He was the one who made water come out of solid rock for you. ¹⁶He was the one who fed you in the desert with manna, which your ancestors had never seen. He did this in order to humble you and test you.

But he also did this so that things would go well for you in the end.

¹⁷You may say to yourselves: I became wealthy because of my own ability and strength. ¹⁸But remember the LORD your God is the one who makes you wealthy. He's confirming the covenant that he swore to your ancestors. It's still in effect today.

¹⁹I warn you today that if you forget **shakach** the LORD your God and follow other gods, and if you serve them and bow down to them, you will certainly be destroyed **'abad**. ²⁰The LORD is going to destroy **'abad** other nations as you enter the land. You will be destroyed **'abad** like them if you don't obey the LORD your God.

Israel Has Been Given Canaan because of God's Mercy

9:I Listen, Israel, you're about to cross the Jordan River. You'll be forcing out nations that are larger and stronger than you, with big cities that have sky-high walls. ²Their people are tall and strong. They're descendants of Anak. You know all about them. You've also heard it said: Who can oppose the descendants of Anak?

³Realize today that the LORD your God is the one who is going ahead of you like a raging fire. He will wipe them out and will use you to crush their power. You will take possession of their land and will quickly destroy them as the LORD promised you.

⁴When the LORD your God expels these people in front of you, don't say to yourselves: Because we've been living right **tsedaqah**-righteously, the LORD brought us here to take possession of this land. No, it's because these nations are so wicked **rish'ah** that the LORD is forcing them out of your way.

⁵It's not because you've been living right or because you're so honest that you're entering to take possession of their land. It's because these people are so wicked that the LORD your God is forcing them out of your way. It's also because the LORD wants to confirm the covenant he swore to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

⁶So understand this: It's not because you've been living right **tsedaqah** that the LORD your God is giving you this good land to possess. You are impossible to deal with **qasheh**-stiff-**'oreph** necked.

Notice that God has said this three times: It's not because of your righteousness that I'm giving you this land.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

God has been very good to his Chosen People during their 40 years of wandering with him in the desert. He gave them manna and quails for food. He gave them water. He allowed their clothes to survive for 40 years. In all this he was disciplining his people to listen to him and then do what he says.

The Promised Land God is bringing them to is a good land – a beautiful land with rivers and springs. There will be a great amount of good things to grow, wheat, barley, grapevines, fig trees and pomegranates, honey, and olive trees. There is also iron and copper in the hills.

Moses warns them not to forget to thank the Lord for his good provision for them as he does this out of love and mercy for the people are far from being righteous. They are stiff-necked and rebellious. But the Lord made a covenant with their ancestors. He will not forget his oath.

Moses tells his Chosen People the land they're entering is inhabited by people, some of whom are giants. But God will wipe them out for you. Yet do not

forget the Lord is doing this to keep his covenant, not because you're righteous. You're not. You are a stiff-necked people.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Moses uses the words *qasheh 'oreph* stiff-necked or stubborn to describe the Chosen People. These words appear 4x in Exodus and 3x in Deuteronomy. What does he mean?
2. Moses warns the people their success and prosperity is a gift from God, not because they are righteous. Why is this so important for the people to remember?
3. What is difference between discipline and punishment? How do we know what reason God is doing what he is doing?
4. We often forget that God allowed the clothes and shoes of the people to last 40 years. Why is this important?

PERICOPE 9

Moses Recalls the Two Great Rebellions of Israel

The First Great Rebellion: The People Make a Golden Calf Idol

9:7 Never forget **shakach** how you made the LORD your God angry **qatsaph**-wrath in the desert. You've rebelled **marah** against the LORD from the day you left Egypt until you came here.

⁸ Even at Mount Horeb Sinai you made the LORD so angry **qatsaph**-wrath that he wanted to destroy **shamad** you. ⁹ When I went up on the mountain to get the stone tablets, the tablets of the covenant that the LORD made to you, I stayed on the mountain 40 days and 40 nights without food or water.

¹⁰ Then the LORD gave me the two stone tablets inscribed by God himself. On them were written all the words that the LORD spoke to you from the fire on the mountain on the day of the assembly.

¹¹ At the end of the 40 days and 40 nights, the LORD gave me the two stone tablets with his covenant on them. ¹² He told me: Leave right away. Your people whom you brought out of Egypt have ruined everything. They've quickly turned from the way I commanded them to live. They've made an idol **maccekah** for themselves.

¹³ The LORD also said to me: I've seen these people and they are impossible to deal with. ¹⁴ Leave me alone. I'll destroy them and wipe their name off the earth. Then I'll make you into a nation larger and stronger than they are.

¹⁵ So I turned and went down the mountain while it was still burning with fire. I was carrying the two tablets with the covenant on them. ¹⁶ Then I saw that you had sinned against the LORD your God. You had made a statue of a calf for yourselves. You had quickly turned from the way the LORD commanded you to live. ¹⁷ I took the two tablets, threw them down and smashed them in front of you.

¹⁸ Once again I threw myself down in front of the LORD. I went without food and water for 40 days and 40 nights because of the sin you committed. You did what the LORD considered evil and made him furious. ¹⁹ I was terrified *yagor* of the LORD's anger *'aph* and fury *chemah*. He was so angry *qatsaph*-wrath he wanted to destroy *shamad* you. But once more the LORD listened to me.

²⁰ The LORD also became very angry with Aaron and wanted to destroy him. But at that time I prayed for Aaron, too.

²¹ I took that sinful calf you made and burned it. I crushed it, grinding it thoroughly until it was as fine as powder. Then I threw the powder into the river that flowed down the mountain.

²² You also made the LORD angry at Taberah, Massah, and Kibroth Hattaavah.

The Second Great Rebellion: The People Refuse to Enter Canaan

²³ When the LORD sent you from Kadesh Barnea, he said: Go and take possession of the land I'm giving you. But you rebelled *marah* against the word of the Lord God. You didn't believe him or obey him. ²⁴ You've rebelled *marah* against the LORD as long as I've known you.

²⁵ I threw myself down in front of the LORD for 40 days and 40 nights because the LORD said he would destroy *shamad* you. ²⁶ I prayed to the LORD and said: Almighty LORD, don't destroy your people. They belong to you. You saved them by your great power and used your mighty hand to bring them out of Egypt.

²⁷ Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Disregard the stubbornness, wickedness, and sin of these people. ²⁸ Otherwise, the country we left will say: The LORD wasn't able to bring them to the land he promised them. He hated them. That's why he brought them out—to let them die in the desert.

²⁹They are your people. They belong to you. You used your great strength and powerful arm to bring them out of Egypt.

10:1 At that time the LORD said to me: Cut two more stone tablets like the first ones, and come up to me on the mountain. Also make an ark out of wood. ²I will write on the tablets the same words that were on the first tablets, which you smashed. Then you will put them in the ark.

³I made an ark out of acacia wood. I cut two more stone tablets like the first ones. I carried the two tablets up the mountain. ⁴The LORD wrote on these tablets the same words as before, the Ten Commandments. He had spoken these words to you from the fire on the mountain on the day of the assembly. Then the LORD gave them to me.

⁵I came back down the mountain and put the tablets in the ark I had made. They are still there, where the LORD commanded me to put them.

⁶The Israelites moved from the wells of the Jaakanites to Moserah. Aaron died there and was buried. His son Eleazar succeeded him as High Priest.

⁷They moved from there to Gudgodah, and from Gudgodah to Jotbathah, a land with rivers that don't dry up.

⁸At that time the LORD set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the ark of the LORD's covenant, to stand in the LORD's presence when they serve him as priests, and to praise his name, as they still do today. ⁹This is why the tribe of Levi has no land of their own as the other tribes have. The LORD your God is their only possession, as he promised them.

¹⁰I stayed on the mountain 40 days and 40 nights as I did the first time. Once again the LORD listened to me and agreed not to destroy you. ¹¹The LORD said to me: Lead the people on their journey. They will enter and take possession of the land I will give them, as I swore to their ancestors.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

We tend to forget that twice God threatened to destroy the Chosen People. Twice the people caused God to erupt in wrath. But Moses never forgot it. He realized how angry God was at the people breaking the covenant.

While Moses was up Mount Sinai learning the specifics of the covenant God had made with the people, below the mountain in the camp, the people had forced Aaron, their High Priest, to make a Golden Calf Idol like they had seen and perhaps worshiped in Egypt.

God saw it and told Moses to leave him carrying the words of the Ten Commandments on two tablets – one for God and one for the people. This sacred covenant described the relationship between God and his people. When Moses saw the idol that Aaron had made, he smashed the two tablets. The people had broken the covenant.

Then Moses smashed the Golden Calf Idol, ground it into a powder and made the people drink it. Then Moses went back up the mountain. In this account, Moses left out some important details he included in his book of Exodus. Then Moses went back up the mountain to God.

For 40 days and nights Moses pleaded with God not to destroy the people. Finally, God relented. Moses cut two new tablets and God wrote his words on them. God said to make an ark and put the two tablets in it.

Likewise *shalach*, God told Moses to lead the people to the Promised Land. The Israelites then left Mount Sinai and eleven days later arrived at Kadesh Barnea, just south of Canaan. But then they refused to enter the Promised Land.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Moses gets very emotional telling this story of the peoples' rebellion against the Lord their God. Some of the details are not consistent with the way Moses tells the story in **Exodus 32:1-33**. List the differences. HINT: Who made the ark of the covenant? Verse seems out of place.

2. List the strong words Moses uses to describe God's wrath.
3. How terrified was Moses that God would actually destroy the Chosen People?
4. Why does Moses describe God's provisions for the Levites here. Deuteronomy 10:6-9
5. Some verses seem to be out of place. Deuteronomy 9:27; 10::10
6. Moses has already told of this Second Great Rebellion at Kadesh Barnea in Deuteronomy 1:19-46. Is that why he only summarized it in Deuteronomy 9:23-24.?
7. In Exodus 19:5, God said he wanted the whole nation to be a Kingdom of Priests. When then, did God authorize only the descendants of Aaron to be priests?

PERICOPE 10

Moses Encourages Israel to Follow God's Guidance

10:12 Israel, what does the LORD your God want you to do? He wants you to fear him, follow all his directions, love him, and worship him with all your heart and with all your soul. ³The LORD wants you to obey his commands and laws that I'm giving you today for your own good.

⁴Remember that the sky, the highest heaven, the earth and everything it contains belong to the LORD your God. ⁵The LORD set his heart **chashaq**-delight on your ancestors and loved **'ahab** them. Because of this, today he chooses **bachar** you, their descendants, out of all the people of the world. ⁶So circumcise your uncircumcised hearts and don't be impossible to deal with any longer.

⁷The LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, powerful, and awe-inspiring God. He never plays favorites and never takes a bribe. ⁸He makes sure orphans and widows receive justice. He loves foreigners and gives them food and clothes. ⁹So you should love foreigners, because you were foreigners living in Egypt.

²⁰Fear **yare'** the LORD your God, worship **'abad**-serve him, be loyal **dabaq**-cling to him, and take your oaths **shaba'**-swear in his name.

²¹He is your glory **tehillah**-praise. He is your God, who did for you these spectacular and awe-inspiring deeds you saw with your own eyes.

²²When your ancestors went to Egypt, there were 70 of them. **Exodus 1:5**. Now the LORD your God has made you as numerous as the stars in the sky.

11:1 Love **'ahab** the LORD your God and do what he wants you to do. Always obey his laws, rules, and commands. ²Remember today the discipline you learned from the LORD your God. I'm not talking to your children. They didn't see or experience any of this.

You saw and experienced his great power—his mighty hand and powerful arm. ³You saw the miraculous signs and deeds he did in Egypt to Pharaoh (the King of Egypt) and to his whole country. ⁴You saw what he did to the Egyptian army, its horses and chariots. He drowned them in the Red Sea when they pursued you. So the LORD destroyed them forever.

⁵You saw what he did for you in the desert until you came here. ⁶You also saw what he did to Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, from the tribe of Reuben. In the middle of all the Israelites the ground opened up and swallowed them, their families, their tents, and every living creature with them. **Numbers 16:1.** ⁷You saw with your own eyes all these spectacular things that the LORD did.

⁸Obey all the commands I'm giving you today. Then you will have the strength to enter and take possession of the land once you've crossed the Jordan River. ⁹Then you will also live for a long time in the land the LORD swore to give your ancestors and their descendants—a land flowing with milk and honey.

The Lord Will Give You Water from Heaven

¹⁰The land you're about to enter and take possession of isn't like the land you left in Egypt. There you used to plant your seed, and you had to water it like a vegetable garden. ¹¹The land you're about to enter is a land with hills and valleys, watered by rain from the sky. ¹²It is a land the LORD your God cares about. He watches over it all year long.

¹³If you faithfully obey the commands that I'm giving you today, love **ʾahab** the LORD your God, and serve **ʾabad** him with all your heart and with all your soul, ¹⁴I will send rain on your land at the right time, both in the fall and in the spring. Then you will gather your own grain, new wine, and olive oil. ¹⁵I will provide grass in the fields for your animals, and you will be able to eat all you want.

¹⁶ Be careful, or you'll be tempted to turn away and worship other gods and bow down to them. ¹⁷ The LORD will become angry with you. He'll shut the sky so that there'll be no rain. Then the ground won't grow any crops and you'll quickly disappear from this good land the LORD is giving you.

¹⁸ Take these words of mine to heart and keep them in mind. Write them down, tie them around your wrist, and wear them as headbands as a reminder. ¹⁹ Teach them to your children, and talk about them when you're at home or away, when you lie down or get up. ²⁰ Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

²¹ Then you and your children will live for a long time in this land that the LORD swore to give to your ancestors — as long as there's a sky above the earth.

²² Faithfully obey all these commands I'm giving you. Love **'ahab** the LORD your God, follow all his directions **yalak**-walk **kol**-all **derek**-ways, and be loyal **chazaq**-cling to him. ²³ Then the LORD will force all these people out of your way. Then you will take possession of the land belonging to people taller and stronger than you.

²⁴ I will give you every place on which you set foot. Your borders will be from the desert to Lebanon, from the Euphrates River to the Mediterranean Sea.

²⁵ No one will be able to stop you. As the LORD your God promised, he will make people terrified of you wherever you go in this land.

You Choose the Blessing or the Curse

II:26 Today I'm giving you the choice of a blessing **berakah** or a curse **qelahah**.

²⁷ You'll be blessed if you obey the commands of the LORD your God that I'm giving you today.

²⁸ You'll be cursed if you disobey the commands of the LORD your God, if you turn from the way I'm commanding you to live today, and if you worship other gods you never knew.

When You Enter the Land, Conduct a Covenant Renewal Ceremony

²⁹When the LORD your God brings you into the land you're about to enter, recite the blessing from Mount Gerizim and the curse from Mount Ebal.

³⁰These mountains are on the west side of the Jordan, beyond the road that goes west, in the region of the Canaanites who live on the plains facing Gilgal, next to the oak trees of Moreh.

³¹You're about to cross the Jordan River to enter and take possession of the land the LORD your God is giving you. When you take possession of it and live there ³²be careful to obey all the laws and rules I'm giving you today.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Moses now emphasizes the obedience God desires. He wants the Israelites to love him, walk in his ways, and serve him with all their heart and soul. He wants them to keep his commands and do them. This will be repeated again and again in Deuteronomy.

Moses again says that God loved the Israelite's ancestors and chose them. Because of this, he loves their descendants and choose them to be his particular people – his treasure. So you should circumcise your hearts of evil and don't be stiff-necked and rebellious any longer.

Fear the Lord, serve him, cling to him, and take oaths in his name. Always love the Lord and obey him. Learn how the Lord disciplines and punish those who are disobedient to him.

The land your entering isn't like Egypt that has the Nile River. The land of Canaan is watered by rain. God controls the rain. So if you disobey the Lord your God and worship other gods, he will withhold the rain from the sky. But if you obey him you will receive adequate rain for your crops.

Remember God's Words. Write them down, wear them, teach them to your children, and talk about them constantly. Then you will prolong your days in

the land the Lord is giving you. God will force the current inhabitants of the land out of your way. Your land will be bordered by the desert in the south to Lebanon in the north, from the Euphrates River to the Mediterranean Sea.

God offers you a blessing or a curse. Choose the blessing. When you enter the land go to Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal. Recite the blessings from Mount Gerizim and the curses from Mount Ebal.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Read **Micah 6:8**. Compare this to **Deuteronomy 10:12-13**. How are these verses the same? How are they different?
2. What does it mean to circumcise your uncircumcised hearts? The Bible says it is to lay aside insensibility of heart to impressions from the love of God. **Leviticus 26:41**. What does this mean?
3. How many times has Moses said to *love the Lord* so far in Deuteronomy? What does this mean?
4. What does it mean to cling **dabaq** to God?
5. How many times has Moses said to fear the Lord so far in Deuteronomy?
6. When there is a drought in Israel, what does that mean?
7. When God gives boundaries to the land he gives to the Israelites, he doesn't give a southern boundary. What is it?

EXTRA CREDIT

What is the purpose of a covenant renewal ceremony? Did the Israelites do this? When?

PERICOPE II

The Proper Place to Worship

12:I Here are the laws and rules you must faithfully obey in the land that the LORD God of your ancestors is giving you as your own. You must obey them as long as you live in the Land.

² Completely destroy all the worship sites of the Canaanites on the high mountains, on the hills, and under every large tree. The people you're forcing out worship their gods in these places. ³ Tear down their altars, crush their sacred stones dedicated to Baal, burn their poles dedicated to the goddess Asherah, cut down their idols, and wipe out the names of their gods from those places.

⁴ Never worship the LORD your God in the way they worship their gods. The LORD your God will choose a place out of all your tribes to live and put his name. Go there and worship him.

This place appears to be at first Shechem, where the covenant renewal ceremony is to be held.

⁶ Bring him your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, one-tenth of your income, your contributions, the offerings you vow to bring, your freewill offerings, and the firstborn of your cattle, sheep, and goats. ⁷ There, in the presence of the LORD your God, you and your families will eat and enjoy everything you've worked for, because the LORD your God has blessed you.

⁸ Never worship in the way that it's being done here today, where everyone does whatever he considers right. ⁹ Up until now you haven't come to your place of rest, the property the LORD your God is giving you. ¹⁰ But you will cross the Jordan River and settle in the land the LORD your God is giving you as your own property. He will give you peace from all your enemies around you so that you will live securely.

¹¹ Then the LORD your God will choose a place where his name will live. You must bring everything I command you to that place. Bring your burnt

offerings, your sacrifices, one-tenth of your income, your contributions, and all the best offerings you vow to bring to the LORD.

¹² Enjoy yourselves in the presence of the LORD your God along with your sons, daughters, male and female slaves, and the Levites. The Levites live in your cities because they have no land of their own as you have. ¹³ Be careful that you don't sacrifice your burnt offerings wherever you want. ⁴ Instead, sacrifice them only at the place that the LORD will choose in one of your tribes. There you must do everything I command you.

¹⁵ In whatever city you live, you may slaughter and eat as much meat as you want from what the LORD your God has blessed you with. Clean and unclean people may eat it as if they were eating a gazelle or a deer.

¹⁶ But never eat the blood. Pour it on the ground like water.

⁷ You may not eat the LORD's offerings in your cities. Those offerings are: one-tenth of your grain, new wine, and olive oil; the firstborn of your cattle, sheep, or goats; the offerings you vow to bring; your freewill offerings; and your contributions. ¹⁸ Instead, you, your sons and daughters, male and female slaves, and the Levites who live in your cities must eat these in the presence of the LORD your God at the place he will choose. There in the presence of the LORD your God enjoy everything you've worked for ¹⁹ Don't forget to take care of the Levites as long as you live in your land.

²⁰ The LORD your God will expand your country's borders as he promised. You will say: I'm hungry for meat. Then eat as much meat as you want. ²¹ If the place the LORD our God chooses to put his name is too far away from you, you may slaughter an animal from the herds or flocks that the LORD has given you. Eat as much as you want in your city. I have commanded you to do this. ²² Eat it as you would eat a gazelle or a deer: Clean and unclean people may eat it together.

²³ However, be sure you never eat blood because blood contains life. Never eat the life with the meat. ²⁴ Never eat blood. Pour it on the ground like water.

²⁵ If you don't eat blood, things will go well for you and your descendants. You will be doing what the LORD considers right.

²⁶ Take the holy things and the offerings you have vowed to bring, and go to the place the LORD will choose. ²⁷ Sacrifice the meat and the blood of your burnt offerings on the altar of the LORD your God. The blood of your sacrifices is to be poured out beside the altar of the LORD your God, but you may eat the meat.

²⁸ Be sure you obey all these instructions I'm giving you. Then things will always go well for you and your descendants because you will be doing what the LORD your God considers good and right.

²⁹ The LORD your God will destroy the nations where you're going and force them out of your way. You will take possession of their land and live there.

³⁰ After they've been destroyed, be careful you aren't tempted to follow their customs. Don't even ask about their gods and say: How did these people worship their gods? We want to do what they did.

³¹ Never worship the LORD your God in the way they worship their gods, because everything they do for their gods is disgusting to the LORD. He hates it. They even burn their sons and daughters as sacrifices to their gods.

³² Be sure to do everything I command you. Never add anything to it or take anything away from it.

How Israel Is to Deal with False Prophets

13:I One of your people, claiming to be a prophet or to have prophetic dreams, may predict a miraculous sign or an amazing thing. ² What he predicts may even take place. But don't listen to that prophet or dreamer if he says: Let's worship and serve other gods. Those gods may be gods you've never heard

of. ³The LORD your God is testing you to find out if you really love him with all your heart and with all your soul.

⁴Worship the LORD your God, fear him, obey his commands, listen to what he says, serve him, and be loyal to him. ⁵That prophet or dreamer must be put to death because he preached rebellion against the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt and freed you from slavery. He was trying to lead you away from following the directions the LORD your God gave you. You must get rid of this evil.

⁶Your own brother, son, or daughter, the wife you love, or your best friend may secretly tempt you, saying: Let's go worship other gods. Those gods may be gods that you and your ancestors never knew. ⁷They may be the gods of the people around you, who live near or far, from one end of the land to the other. ⁸Don't be influenced by any of these people or listen to them. Have no pity on them. Don't feel sorry for them or protect them.

⁹You must put them to death. You must start the execution. Then all the other people will join you in putting them to death. ¹⁰Stone them to death because they were trying to lead you away from the LORD your God, who brought you out of slavery in Egypt. ¹¹All Israel will hear about it and be afraid. Then no one among you will ever do such a wicked thing again.

¹²You may hear that the residents in one of the cities which the LORD your God is giving you to live in ¹³have been led away from the LORD your God by worthless people. You may hear that these people have been saying: Let's worship other gods. Those gods may be gods you've never heard of.

¹⁴Then make a thorough investigation. If it is true and you can prove that this disgusting thing has been done among you, ¹⁵you must kill the residents of that city with swords and destroy that city and everyone in it, including the animals, because they are claimed by God.

¹⁶Gather their goods into the middle of the city square. Then burn their city and all their goods as a burnt offering to the LORD your God. It must remain a mound of ruins and never be rebuilt. ¹⁷Don't ever take any of the things claimed for destruction. Then the LORD will stop being angry and will show you mercy. In his mercy he will make your population increase, as he swore to your ancestors. ¹⁸The LORD your God will do this if you listen to him, obey all the commands that I'm giving you today, and do what he considers right.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Moses in chapters 12-25 will preach an explanation for the covenant law that arose from the Ten Commandments. These are specific laws that help the Israelites keep the Ten Commandments. Following these laws help the Israelites live a holy life as God desires it.

Where is the place where the Lord will choose to place his name? The first place was Shechem near the oaks of Moreh where Abraham received God's promise of the land. **Genesis 12:6-7**. This place was later called Shiloh where the Israelites set up the Tent of Meeting with the ark of the covenant.

Later the Philistines destroyed this worship site at Shiloh, although the Wilderness Tabernacle and the ark of the covenant were preserved. David later brought the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem and the tabernacle was erected at nearby Gihon.

The point was to have a central worship center for all the Israelites. The Canaanites worshiped on many high places and in groves. The temple in Jerusalem became the one main worship site, although many Israelites still worshiped the Canaanite gods on the high places and in the groves.

False prophets were a constant problem for Israel. God says that they must be put to death, even if that false prophet is a member of your immediate family. God says that an entire city worshiping false gods must be destroyed including all of its inhabitants.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Israel is not that big a place. It is about 50 miles wide and 150 miles long. Why did God want only one central worship site.
2. God first prohibited eating of blood in the time of Noah. Genesis 9:4. Why is God so insistent on this?
3. God commanded that any false prophet who attempted to lead people to worship other gods must be killed even if it was a member of one's own family. They must stone them to death. Did Israel do this?
4. Words translated *holy* appear 9x in Deuteronomy, 45x in Exodus, 77x in Leviticus, 27x in Numbers. The word *holy* never appears in Genesis. Why don't words translated *holy* appear more in Deuteronomy?
5. One scholar says that Chapters 12-13 of Deuteronomy explain the first and second commandments. Do you agree?
6. In Israel, places became religious sites because God appeared to people there. Name the person who God appeared to at: Shechem, Bethel, Beersheba, Hebron, Jerusalem (Mount Moriah).
7. Moses speaks of *a place of rest*. Deuteronomy 12:9. Define what this means.
HINT: Numbers 10:33; Psalm 95:11; Hebrews 4:1-11
8. Moses says a false prophet is *one who preaches rebellion against the Lord*. Define this.

PERICOPE 12

Food Laws, the Tithe, and the Seventh Year Celebration

14:I You are the children of the LORD your God. So when someone dies, don't mourn by cutting yourselves or shaving bald spots on your head. ²You are people who are holy **qadowsh** to the LORD your God. Out of all the people who live on earth, the LORD has chosen you to be his own special possession **cegullah-treasure**.

³Never eat anything that is disgusting to the LORD. ⁴Here are the kinds of animals you may eat: oxen, sheep, goats,⁵deer, gazelles, fallow deer, wild goats, mountain goats, antelope, and mountain sheep.

⁶You may eat all animals that have completely divided hoofs and that also chew their cud. ⁷But some animals chew their cud, while others have completely divided hoofs. You may not eat these animals. They include camels, rabbits, and rock badgers. Although they chew their cud, they don't have divided hoofs. They are unclean for you. ⁸Also, you may not eat pigs. Although their hoofs are divided, they don't chew their cud. Never eat their meat or touch their dead bodies.

⁹Here's what you may eat of every creature that lives in the water: You may eat any creature that has fins and scales. ¹⁰But never eat anything that doesn't have fins and scales. It is unclean for you.

¹¹You may eat any clean bird. ¹²But here are the birds that you should never eat: eagles, bearded vultures, black vultures ¹³buzzards, all types of kites, ¹⁴all types of crows, ¹⁵ostriches, nighthawks, seagulls, all types of falcons, ¹⁶little owls, great owls, barn owls, ¹⁷pelicans, ospreys, cormorants, ¹⁸storks, all types of herons, hoopoes, and bats.

¹⁹Every swarming, winged insect is also unclean for you. They must never be eaten. ²⁰However, you may eat any other kind of flying creature that is clean.

²¹Never eat any creature that dies naturally. You may give it to the foreigners who live in your cities and they may eat it. You may also sell it to foreigners who are visiting. But you are people who are holy to the LORD your God.

Never cook a young goat in its mother's milk.

Giving God One-Tenth of Everything

²²Every year be sure to save a tenth of the crops harvested from whatever you plant in your fields. ²³Eat the tenth of your grain, new wine, and olive oil, and eat the firstborn of your cattle, sheep, and goats in the presence of the LORD your God in the place he will choose to put his name. Then you will learn to fear the LORD your God as long as you live.

²⁴But the place the LORD your God will choose to put his name may be too far away. He may bless you with so much that you can't carry a tenth of your income that far. ²⁵If so, exchange the tenth part of your income for silver. Take the silver with you and go to the place the LORD your God will choose.

²⁶Use the silver to buy whatever you want: cattle, sheep, goats, wine, liquor—whatever you choose. Then you and your family will eat and enjoy yourselves there in the presence of the LORD your God. ²⁷Never forget to take care of the Levites who live in your cities. They have no land of their own as you have.

²⁸At the end of every third year bring a tenth of that year's crop and store it in your cities. ²⁹Foreigners, orphans, and widows who live in your cities may come to eat all they want. The Levites may also come because they have no land of their own as you have. Then the LORD your God will bless you in whatever work you do.

The Seventh-Year Celebration

15:I At the end of every seven years, you must cancel debts. ²This is what you will do: If you've made a loan, don't collect payment on the debt your neighbor still owes you. Don't demand that your neighbor or relative pay you, because

the time for suspending payments on debts has been proclaimed in the LORD's honor. ³You may demand that a foreigner pay, but don't collect payment on the debt another Israelite still owes you.

⁴In any case, there shouldn't be any poor people among you, because the LORD your God will certainly bless you in the land he is giving you as your own possession. ⁵He will bless you only if you listen carefully to the LORD your God and faithfully obey all these commands I'm giving you today. ⁶The LORD your God will bless you, as he promised. You will make loans to many nations, but you will not have to borrow from any of them. You will rule many nations, but no nation will ever rule you.

⁷This is what you must do whenever there are poor Israelites in one of your cities in the land that the LORD your God is giving you. ⁸Be generous to these poor people, and freely lend them as much as they need. Never be hard-hearted and tight-fisted with them.

⁹When the seventh year—the year when payments on debts are canceled—is near, you might be stingy toward poor Israelites and give them nothing. Be careful not to think these worthless thoughts. The poor will complain to the LORD about you, and you will be condemned for your sin. ¹⁰Be sure to give to them without any hesitation. When you do this, the LORD your God will bless you in everything you work for and set out to do. ¹¹There will always be poor people in the land. That's why I command you to be generous to other Israelites who are poor and needy.

¹²Whenever Hebrew men or women are sold to you as slaves, they will be your slaves for six years. In the seventh year you must let them go free. ¹³But when you let them go, don't send them away empty-handed. ¹⁴Generously give them provisions—sheep from your flocks, grain from your threshing floor and wine from your winepress. Be as generous to them as the LORD your God has been to you. ¹⁵Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and the LORD your God freed you. That's why I'm giving you this command today.

¹⁶ But suppose a male slave says to you: I don't want to leave you, because he loves you and your family and is happy with you. ¹⁷ Then take an awl and pierce it through his ear lobe into a door, and he will be your slave for life. Do the same to a female slave if she doesn't want to leave.

¹⁸ If you have to let your slave go free, it won't be a hardship for you. It would have cost you twice as much to hire someone to do the same work for those six years. Besides, the LORD your God will bless you in everything you do.

Setting Aside Firstborn Males for God

¹⁹ You must dedicate every firstborn male from your herds and flocks to the LORD your God. Never use a firstborn ox for work and never shear a firstborn sheep. ²⁰ Every year you and your family must eat these animals in the presence of the LORD your God in the place the LORD will choose. ²¹ But if an animal is lame or blind or has any other serious defect—never sacrifice it to the LORD your God. ²² Eat it in your city. Clean and unclean people may eat them together as if they were eating a gazelle or a deer. ²³ But never eat the blood. Pour it on the ground like water.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Great stress is placed on eating the right kind of food. It appears that any animal that eats carrion is prohibited. Christians are not prohibited from eating any food. Jesus declared all foods are clean. **Mark 7:19**

People were encouraged to worship God on a regular basis. The fourth commandment set aside the seventh day of each week as a time to honor God and to thank him for all his blessings. Moses commanded the people set aside a tenth of all their crops for God. But if the place of worship is too far away, the crops may be converted to silver and the silver used to buy food needed to eat and worship at the Holy Place.

At the end of every third year, that is, on the third and sixth years, this tithe is to be shared with foreigners, orphans, widows, and Levites where you live. At the end of every seventh year, all debts must be cancelled.

When Hebrew men and women are sold to you as slaves, they must work for you for six years. In the seventh year, they are to be set free. Don't send them away empty-handed. Be generous to them. If a slave wants to stay with you for life, pierce his or her ear.

Dedicate each first-born male from your herds and flocks to the Lord. Don't use them for work. Each year eat these animals in the Holy Place as a dedication to the Lord. Defective animals are not to be so dedicated.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. What is the purpose of the seven day week in a person's life with the seventh day being set apart for God?
2. What is the purpose of the tithe to God of one-tenth of everything?
3. How does having a set period of time and times help to remind a person of God as Creator?
4. Why does God want people with surplus to lend to poor people generously?
5. Why does God want all debts forgiven in the seventh year?
6. How does the practice of being a slave for six years help a person to begin over without any debts?
7. Why does God want first born male animals dedicated to him?

PERICOPE 13

The Three Major Festivals to Honor God

Passover

16:1 Honor the LORD your God by celebrating Passover in the month of Abib. In the month of Abib, the LORD your God brought you out of Egypt at night. ²Slaughter an animal from your flock or herd as the Passover sacrifice to the LORD your God. Do this at the place where the LORD will choose for his name to live

³Never eat leavened bread with the meat from this sacrifice. Instead, for seven days you must eat unleavened bread at this festival. It is the bread of misery because you left Egypt in a hurry. Eat this bread so that, as long as you live, you will remember the day you left Egypt. ⁴There should be no yeast anywhere in your land for seven days. Never leave until morning any of the meat you slaughter on the evening of the first day.

⁵You're not allowed to slaughter the animals for Passover in any of the cities the LORD your God is giving you. ⁶Instead, slaughter your animals for Passover in the place where the LORD your God will choose for his name to live. Do this in the evening as the sun goes down. This is the same time you did it when you left Egypt.

⁷Cook the meat, and eat it at the place the LORD your God will choose. In the morning you may go back to your tents. ⁸For six days eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day hold a religious assembly dedicated to the LORD your God. Don't do any work that day.

Feast of Weeks or Pentecost

⁹Count seven weeks from the time you start harvesting grain. ¹⁰Then celebrate the Festival of Weeks to the LORD your God. Bring a freewill offering in proportion to the blessings the LORD your God has given you.

¹¹ Enjoy yourselves in the presence of the LORD your God along with your sons, daughters, male and female slaves, the Levites who live in your cities, the foreigners, orphans, and widows who live among you. Enjoy yourselves at the place the LORD your God will choose for his name to live. ¹² Remember that you were slaves in Egypt, and obey these laws carefully.

Festival of Booths or Tabernacles

¹³ After you have gathered the grain from your threshing floor and made your wine, celebrate the Festival of Booths for seven days. ¹⁴ Enjoy yourselves at the festival along with your sons, daughters, male and female slaves, the Levites, foreigners, orphans, and widows who live in your cities. ¹⁵ For seven days you will celebrate this festival dedicated to the LORD your God in the place he will choose. You will enjoy yourselves, because the LORD your God will bless all your harvest and all your work.

¹⁶ Three times a year all your men must come into the presence of the LORD your God at the place he will choose: at the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the Festival of Weeks, and the Festival of Booths. But no one may come into the presence of the LORD without an offering. ¹⁷ Each man must bring a gift in proportion to the blessings the LORD your God has given him.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

God has developed a calendar year with three major festivals. These festivals were originally based on the agricultural year but then developed into times of celebrating important events in Israel's history.

Passover was celebrated as the time that the Israelites left their bondage in Egypt. Before God brought the 10th plague on Egypt, Israelites were to sacrifice a lamb or goat and place its blood on the doorposts of their homes. Then God's death angel would pass over their homes but stop at the homes of the Egyptians to kill their first-born sons. **Exodus 12:1-30**

Seven weeks from the time grain was harvested or fifty days after Passover was the Feast of Weeks or Pentecost. This was later associated with God giving the Ten Commandments or making his covenant with Israel at Mount Sinai.

After grain was gathered from the threshing floor and wine was made from the grape harvest, the Festival of Booths or Tabernacles was celebrated. For seven days, people lived in temporary shelters as they did during the 40-year wandering in the wilderness where God protected them giving them manna and quails.

Three times a year, all male adults are to go to the central worship site to honor God.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why is their history as a people very important to the Israelites?
2. Why does the Passover begin the religious year in Israel? What is its significance?
3. The Festival of Weeks celebrates God's covenant made with Israel. What do Israelites remember most at this time?
4. The Festival of Booths or Shelters comes at the end of the religious year. Why is this the most festive festival?
5. The time of the High Holy days or Yom Kippur is not mentioned here. Why not?
6. Are there any other memorable events in Israel's history that might be celebrated?

PERICOPE 14

Administering Justice: Rules for a King, Levites, and Prophets

16:8 Appoint judges and officers for your tribes in every city that the LORD your God is giving you. They are to judge the people fairly. ¹⁹ Never pervert justice. Instead, be impartial. Never take a bribe, because bribes blind wise people and deny justice to those who are in the right. ²⁰ Strive for nothing but justice so that you will live and take possession of the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

²¹ When you build the altar for the LORD your God, never plant beside it any tree dedicated to the goddess Asherah. ²² Never set up a sacred stone. These are things the LORD your God hates.

17:1 Never offer an ox or a sheep that has a defect or anything seriously wrong with it as a sacrifice to the LORD your God. That would be disgusting to him.

Idolators Must Be Stoned to Death

² In one of the cities the LORD your God is giving you, there may be a man or woman among you who is doing what the LORD considers evil. This person may be disregarding the conditions of the LORD's covenant by worshiping and bowing down to other gods, the sun, the moon, or the whole army of heaven. I have forbidden this.

⁴ When you are told about it, investigate it thoroughly. If it's true and it can be proven that this disgusting thing has been done in Israel, ⁵ then bring the man or woman who did this evil thing to the gates of your city, and stone that person to death

Two Witnesses Are Always Required

⁶ The person can only be sentenced to death on the testimony of two or three witnesses, but no one should ever be sentenced to death on the testimony of

only one witness. ⁷The witnesses must start the execution, then all the other people will join them in putting the person to death. You must get rid of this evil.

The Supreme Court

⁸There may be a case that is too hard for you to decide. It may involve murder, assault, or a dispute—any case which may be brought to court in your cities. Take this case to the place that the LORD your God will choose.

⁹Go to the Levitical priests and the judge who is serving at that time. Ask for their opinion, and they will give you their verdict ¹⁰at the place that the LORD will choose. Do what they tell you. Follow all their instructions carefully, ¹¹and do what they tell you to do in their verdict. Do exactly what they tell you to do in their decision.

¹²If anyone deliberately disobeys the priest who serves the LORD your God or the judge, that person must die. You must get rid of this evil in Israel. ¹³When all the people hear about it, they will be afraid and will never defy God's law again.

Rules for a King

¹⁴You will enter the land that the LORD your God is giving you. You will take possession of it and live there. You will say: Let's have our own king like all the other nations around us. ¹⁵Be sure to appoint the king the LORD your God will choose. He must be one of your own people. Never let a foreigner be king because he's not one of your own people.

¹⁶The king must never own a large number of horses or make the people return to Egypt to get more horses. The LORD has told you: You will never go back there again. ¹⁷The king must never have a large number of wives, or he will turn away from God. And he must never own a lot of gold and silver.

¹⁸When he becomes king, he should have the Levitical priests make him a copy of these teachings on a scroll.

[And it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levities. **Deuteronomy 17:18 KJV**]

¹⁹ He must keep it with him and read it his entire life. He will learn to fear the LORD his God and faithfully obey everything found in these teachings and laws. ²⁰ Then he won't think he's better than the rest of his people and he won't disobey these commands in any way. So he and his sons will rule for a long time in Israel.

Laws for the Levites

18:1 The Levitical priests—in fact, the whole tribe of Levi—will receive no land or property of their own like the rest of the Israelites. They will eat what has been sacrificed to the LORD. These sacrifices will be what they receive. ² So the Levites will have no land of their own like the other Israelites. The LORD will be their inheritance, as he promised them.

³ This is what the people owe the priests whenever they sacrifice an ox, a sheep, or a goat: the shoulder, jaws, and stomach. ⁴ Also, give them the first produce harvested: grain, new wine, olive oil, and the first wool you shear from your sheep. ⁵ Out of all your tribes, the LORD your God has chosen the Levites and their descendants to do the work of serving in the name of the LORD forever.

⁶ A Levite from any of your cities in Israel may come from where he has been living to the place the LORD will choose. He may come as often as he wants ⁷ and may serve in the name of the LORD his God like all the other Levites who do their work in the LORD's presence. ⁸ If he does, he'll get the same amount of food as they do, in addition to what he gets from selling his family's goods.

Laws about Prophets

⁹When you come to the land that the LORD your God is giving you, never learn the disgusting practices of those nations. ¹⁰You must never sacrifice your sons or daughters by burning them alive, practice black magic, be a fortuneteller, witch, or sorcerer, ¹¹cast spells, ask ghosts or spirits for help, or consult the dead. ¹²Whoever does these things is disgusting to the LORD. The LORD your God is forcing these nations out of your way because of their disgusting practices.

¹³You must have integrity in dealing with the LORD your God. ¹⁴These nations you are forcing out listen to fortunetellers and to those who practice black magic. But the LORD your God won't let you do anything like that.

A Prophet Like Moses Who Is to Come

¹⁵The LORD your God will send you a prophet, an Israelite like me. You must listen to him.

¹⁶This is what you asked the LORD your God to give you on the day of the assembly at Mount Horeb. You said: We never want to hear the voice of the LORD our God or see this raging fire again. If we do, we'll die. **Exodus 20:18-19; Deuteronomy 5:23-29**

¹⁷The LORD told me: What they've said is good.

¹⁸So I will send them a prophet, an Israelite like you. I will put my words in his mouth. He will tell them everything I command him. ¹⁹Whoever refuses to listen to the words that prophet speaks in my name will answer to me. ²⁰But any prophet who dares to say something in my name that I didn't command him to say or who speaks in the name of other gods must die.

The Test of a True Prophet

²¹You may be wondering: How can we recognize that the LORD didn't speak this message? ²²If a prophet speaks in the LORD's name and what he says doesn't happen or come true, then it didn't come from the LORD. That prophet has spoken on his own authority. Never be afraid of him.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Judges and officers for each tribe should be appointed in each city. Justice for each person should be the goal in the land. When a person who worships other gods is found, the man or woman should be brought to the gates of the city and sentenced to death on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

Cases too hard to solve are brought to the Supreme Court at the central worship place. There the priest and judge will decide the case. Anyone who deliberately disobeys their ruling must die.

If you choose a king, the king must be one of your own people, never a foreigner. He must never own a large number of horses or gold or silver. He must never have a large number of wives. When he becomes king, he must himself write out a copy of the law of Lord's covenant. He must keep it with him always and read it his entire life. Then that king will learn to fear the Lord.

Levites receive no property of their own. They will eat what has been sacrificed to the Lord. When animals are sacrificed, the shoulder, jaws, and stomach of the animal belong to the priests. Also, the first produce of the harvest is given to the priests. Any Levite may come to the central worship site to serve.

Do not employ false prophets such as those performing black magic, fortune-telling, witches, sorcery, or consulting the dead. Never sacrifice your sons or daughters. God will send you prophets and a prophet like Moses. God will put his words in their mouth and you must listen to him. If what a prophet speaks in the Lord's name comes true, he is a true prophet.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. How are judges and officers to be chosen for each tribe? HINT: Deuteronomy 1:9-15
2. The word translated justice *mishpat* appears 37x in Deuteronomy. How does justice differ from righteousness *tsedaqah* that appears 6x in Deuteronomy? God said that Abraham exhibited these qualities. Genesis 18:19.
3. Did the Bible ever record Israel judging an Israelite guilty of being an idolator who they put to death?
4. Moses says the king should personally copy the book of the covenant and stay close to it all the days of his life. Did any king of Israel ever do this?
5. King Solomon broke all the laws for a king. He owned horses and a great deal of silver and gold. Is that why Solomon didn't fear God and became an idolator? What happened to David's kingdom after Solomon died in 925 BC?
6. Why did Israel have such a hard time defining false prophets? How did they tell if a prophet came from God?
7. Where did God tell the people to go if they wanted to know the future?

EXTRA CREDIT

Was the prophecy in Deuteronomy 18:15-20 referring to one prophet or many prophets to come?

PERICOPE 15

Law Involving Manslaughter. Do Not Murder.

Three Cities of Refuge in the land

19:1 The LORD your God will destroy all the nations that are living in the Land that he's giving you. You will force them out and live in their cities and houses. ²When all this is done, set aside three cities in the land that the LORD your God is giving you. ³Provide a route to each of these cities and divide the land that the LORD your God is giving you into three regions. Whoever kills someone may run to one of these cities.

⁴A person who unintentionally kills someone he never hated in the past may run to one of these cities to save his life. ⁵Suppose two people go into the woods to cut wood. As one of them swings the ax to cut down a tree, the head flies off the handle, hits, and kills the other person. The one who accidentally killed the other person may run to one of these cities and save his life

Otherwise, in a rage the relative who has the authority to avenge the death will pursue him. If the place is too far away, the relative may catch up with him and take his life even though he didn't deserve the death penalty, because in the past he never hated the person he killed. ⁷This is why I'm commanding you to set aside three cities for yourselves.

⁸The LORD your God may expand your country's borders as he promised your ancestors with an oath. He may give you the whole land he promised to give them. ⁹He may do this because you faithfully obey all these commands I am now giving you—to love the LORD your God and follow his directions as long as you live. If this happens, you may add three more cities of refuge to these three. ¹⁰That way, innocent people won't be killed in the land that the LORD your God is giving you, and you won't be guilty of murder.

¹¹ Suppose someone hates another person, waits in ambush for him, attacks him, takes his life, and runs to one of these cities. ¹² If someone does this, the leaders of your city must send for that person. They must take him from that city and hand him over to the relative who has the authority to avenge the death. He must die. ¹³ They must have no pity on him. The guilt of murdering an innocent person must be removed from Israel. Then things will go well for Israel.

Boundary Markers Must Not Be Removed

¹⁴ Never move your neighbor's original boundary marker on any property in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

Two Witnesses Are Required

¹⁵ One witness is never enough to convict someone of a crime, offense, or sin he may have committed. Cases must be settled based on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

¹⁶ This is what you must do whenever a witness takes the stand to accuse a person falsely of a crime. ¹⁷ The two people involved must stand in the LORD's presence, in front of the priests and judges who are serving at that time. ¹⁸ The judges must make a thorough investigation. If it is found that the witness lied when he testified against the other Israelite, ¹⁹ then do to him what he planned to do to the other person. You must get rid of this evil. ²⁰ When the rest of the people hear about this, they will be afraid. Never again will such an evil thing be done among you.

Lex Talionis

²¹ Have no pity on him. Take a life for a life, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a hand for a hand, and a foot for a foot.

Laws for Warfare

20:I When you go to war against your enemies, you may see horses, chariots, and armies larger than yours. Don't be afraid of them, because the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, will be with you.

²Before the battle starts, a priest must come and speak to the troops. ³He should tell them: Listen, Israel, today you're going into battle against your enemies. Don't lose your courage. Don't be afraid or alarmed or tremble because of them. ⁴The LORD your God is going with you. He will fight for you against your enemies and give you victory."

⁵The officers should tell the troops, If you have built a new house but not dedicated it, you may go home. Otherwise, you might die in battle, and someone else will dedicate it. ⁶If you have planted a vineyard and not enjoyed the grapes, you may go home. Otherwise, you might die in battle, and someone else will enjoy the grapes. ⁷If you are engaged to a woman but have not married her, you may go home. Otherwise, you might die in battle and someone else will marry her.

⁸The officers should also tell the troops: If you are afraid or have lost your courage, you may go home. Then you won't ruin the morale of the other Israelites. ⁹When the officers finish speaking to the troops, they should appoint commanders to lead them.

¹⁰When you approach a city to attack it, offer its people a peaceful way to surrender. ¹¹If they accept it and open their gates to you, then all the people there will be made to do forced labor and serve you.

¹²If they won't accept your offer of peace but declare war on you, set up a blockade around the city. ¹³When the LORD your God hands the city over to you, kill every man in that city with your swords. ¹⁴But take the women and children, the cattle and everything else in the city, including all its goods, as your loot. You may enjoy your enemies' goods that the LORD your God has

given you. ¹⁵This is what you must do to all the cities that are far away which don't belong to the nations nearby.

¹⁶However, you must not spare anyone's life in the cities of these nations that the LORD your God is giving you as your property. ¹⁷You must claim the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites for the LORD and completely destroy them, as the LORD your God has commanded you. ¹⁸Otherwise, they will teach you to do all the disgusting things they do for their gods, and you will sin against the LORD your God.

¹⁹This is what you must do whenever you blockade a city for a long time in order to capture it in war. Don't harm any of its fruit trees with an ax. You can eat the fruit. Never cut those trees down, because the trees of the field are not people you have come to blockade. ²⁰You may destroy trees that you know are not fruit trees. You may cut them down and use them in your blockade until you capture the city.

When a Murder Is Committed, but the Murderer Can't Be Found

21:1 This is what you must do if you find a murder victim lying in a field in the land that the LORD your God is giving you. If no one knows who committed the murder, ²your leaders and judges must go and measure the distance from the body to each of the neighboring cities.

³When it has been determined which city is nearest the body, the leaders from that city must choose a heifer that has never been put to work and never worn a yoke. ⁴The leaders of that city will bring the heifer down to a river, to a location where the land hasn't been plowed or planted. At the river they must break the heifer's neck.

⁵The priests, the descendants of Levi, must come forward. The LORD your God has chosen them to serve him as priests and to bless people in the LORD's name. Their decision is final in all cases involving a disagreement or an assault.

⁶All the leaders from the city which was nearest the murder victim must wash their hands over the dead heifer. ⁷Then they must make this formal statement: We didn't commit this murder, and we didn't witness it. ⁸LORD, make peace with your people Israel, whom you freed. Don't let the guilt of this unsolved murder remain among your people Israel.

Then there will be peace with the LORD despite the murder. ⁹This is how you will get rid of the guilt of an unsolved murder by doing what the LORD considers right.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Murder in Israel was a family affair rather than a civil affair unless the family could not handle it. If a person involuntarily killed someone accidentally, that person would run to a City of Refuge and claim asylum from the person's relative who was chasing him to avenge the murder. In that city, the officials who learn of it must take that person and decide his guilt or innocence. The avenging relatives will be the witness. There must be two or three witnesses. If he is guilty of deliberate murder, he must die.

There were three Cities of Refuge in Israel in Levitical cities. There were also three Cities of Refuge in those Israelite territories east of the Jordan River.

War in Israel must be holy war and defensive war. Borders of the land in Israel were prescribed by God. Any nation attempting to seize this land was subject to Israel going to war to retrieve it. Before a battle started, a priest must address the troops asking questions to determine if a man was eligible for battles. If not, he was released.

Before going to battle, Israel must offer the enemy an opportunity to surrender. If they did, all the people in the enemy territory must be made to do forced labor. If they refused to surrender, Israel must kill all the men and take the women and children as captives. They may also take booty – all the goods of the enemy.

When a murderer in the land of Israel can't be found, the leaders and judges must measure the distance to the nearest city. The leaders and judges of that city must then obtain a heifer that has never worked and take it down to a river. There they must break the heifer's neck and their priests must wash their hands over the dead heifer stating an oath that they do not know who the murderer is. Then there will be peace with the Lord despite the murder.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Murder is a serious crime. In the time of Noah, God said:

Whoever sheds human blood, by humans his blood will be shed because in the image of God, God made humans. **Genesis 9:6**

Why did God leave it up to relatives to avenge the murder?

2. How did the leaders and judges in a city find out about the murder?

3. Why were the leaders and judges of the nearest geographical distance to the dead body to be the judges?

4. What if only one relative was a witness to the murder?

5. Why was a heifer killed? What did the heifer represent?

6. What does the expression: We must *put away the guilt of innocent blood* mean? **Deuteronomy 21:9**

7. What happened if Israel fought a war that was not a holy war?

PERICOPE 16

Societal Laws about Marriage and Family

Marrying a Woman Taken in Combat

21:10 When you go to war with your enemies and the LORD your God hands them over to you, you may take them captive. ¹¹ If you see a beautiful woman among the captives and have your heart set on her, you may marry her. ¹² Bring her into your home. She must shave her head, cut her nails, ¹³ and no longer wear the clothes she was wearing when you captured her. Then she may live in your house and mourn the loss of her father and mother for one month. After that, you may sleep with her. Then you will become husband and wife.

¹⁴ But if it happens that you are no longer pleased with her, let her go wherever she wants. You must never sell her or mistreat her as if she were a slave since you've already had sex with her.

The Oldest Son Must Always Receive a Double Inheritance

¹⁵ A man might have two wives and love one but not the other. Both wives might have children and the firstborn son might belong to the wife that the man doesn't love. ¹⁶ When the day comes for the father to give his sons their inheritance, he can't treat the son of the wife he loves as if that son were the firstborn. This would show a total disregard for the real firstborn, the son of the wife he doesn't love.

¹⁷ Instead, he must recognize the son of the wife he doesn't love as the firstborn. He must give that son a double portion of whatever he owns. That son is the very first son he had. The rights of the firstborn son are his.

Punishment for a Rebellious Son

¹⁸ Parents might have a stubborn and rebellious son who doesn't obey them. Even though they punish him, he still won't listen to them. ¹⁹ His father and

mother must take him to the leaders of the city at the city gate. ²⁰They will say to the leaders of the city: This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious. He won't obey us. He eats too much and is a drunk. ²¹All the men of the city should stone him to death. You must get rid of this evil. When all Israel hears about it, they will be afraid.

Various Laws

²²When a convicted person is put to death,²³ never leave his dead body hung on a pole overnight. Be sure to bury him that same day because anyone whose body is hung on a pole is cursed by God. The land that the LORD your God is giving you must never become unclean.

22:I If you see another Israelite's ox or sheep out where it doesn't belong, don't pretend that you don't see it. Make sure you take it back. ² If the owner doesn't live near you or you don't know who owns it, take the animal home with you. Keep it until the owner comes looking for it. Then give it back. ³ Do the same if you find a donkey, some clothes, or anything else that another Israelite may have lost. Don't pretend that you don't know what to do.

⁴ If you see another Israelite's donkey or ox lying on the road, don't pretend that you don't see it. Make sure you help him get it back on its feet.

⁵ A woman must never wear anything men would wear, and a man must never wear women's clothes. Whoever does this is disgusting to the LORD your God.

⁶ Whenever you're traveling and find a nest containing chicks or eggs, this is what you must do. If the mother bird is sitting on the nest, never take her with the chicks. ⁷ You may take the chicks, but make sure you let the mother go. Then things will go well for you, and you will live for a long time.

⁸ Whenever you build a new house, put a railing around the edge of the roof. Then you won't be responsible for a death at your home if someone falls off the roof.

⁹Never plant anything between the rows in your vineyard. Otherwise, you will have to give everything that grows there to the Holy Place. This includes the crop you planted and the grapes from the vineyard.

¹⁰Never plow with an ox and a donkey harnessed together.

¹¹Never wear clothes made of wool and linen woven together.

¹²Make tassels on the four corners of the shawl you wear over your clothes.

Laws about Sex and Marriage

¹³A man might marry a woman, sleep with her, and decide he doesn't like her.

¹⁴Then he might make up charges against her and ruin her reputation by saying: I married this woman. But when I slept with her, I found out she wasn't a virgin. ¹⁵The girl's father and mother must go to the city gate where the leaders of the city are and submit the evidence that their daughter was a virgin.

¹⁶The girl's father will tell the leaders: I gave my daughter in marriage to this man, but he doesn't like her. ¹⁷Now he has made up charges against her. He says he found out that my daughter wasn't a virgin. But here's the evidence. Then the girl's parents must spread out the cloth in front of the leaders of the city.

¹⁸The leaders of that city must take the man and punish him. ⁹They will fine him $2\frac{1}{4}$ pounds of silver and give it to the girl's father. The husband ruined the reputation of an Israelite virgin. She will continue to be his wife, and he can never divorce her as long as he lives.

²⁰But if the charge is true, and no evidence that the girl was a virgin can be found, ²¹they must take the girl to the entrance of her father's house. The men of her city must stone her to death because she has committed such a godless act in Israel: She had sex before marriage, while she was still living in her father's house. You must get rid of this evil.

²² If a man is caught having sexual intercourse with a married woman, both that man and the woman must die. You must get rid of this evil in Israel.

²³ This is what you must do when a man has sexual intercourse with a virgin who is engaged to another man. If this happens in a city, ²⁴ take them to the gate of the city and stone them to death. The girl must die because she was in a city and didn't scream for help. The man must die because he had sex with another man's wife. You must get rid of this evil.

²⁵ But if a man rapes an engaged girl out in the country, then only the man must die. ²⁶ Don't do anything to the girl. She has not committed a sin for which she deserves to die. This is like the case of someone who attacks and murders another person. ²⁷ The man found the girl out in the country. She may have screamed for help, but no one was there to rescue her.

²⁸ This is what you must do when a man rapes a virgin who isn't engaged. When the crime is discovered, ²⁹ the man who had sexual intercourse with her must give the girl's father $1\frac{1}{4}$ pounds of silver and she will become his wife. Since he raped her, he can never divorce her as long as he lives.

³⁰ A man must never marry his father's wife because this would disgrace his father.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

This is a mixture of laws. We begin with the treatment of a woman captured in a war. She must shave her head and cut her nails and wear new clothes. For one month, she may mourn the loss of her mother and father. Then she may be married. If you desire to divorce her, you must not sell or mistreat her.

If a man has two wives and loves one but not the other. He must not give preference to the son of the wife he loves. Instead, the eldest of the two sons must receive a double portion of the inheritance.

Never leave a dead body on a pole. It is to be buried that same day.

Never avoid helping a helpless animal. Trans dressing is prohibited. Put a railing around the roof of your house. Never plant anything between the rows of your vineyard. Never plow with an ox and a donkey harnessed together. Never wear clothes of linen and wool woven together. Make tassels on the four corners of your robe.

If a man charges a woman he married with not being a virgin, the parents must bring the bloody cloth of the wedding night. If the evidence proves she was a virgin, the man must pay $2 \frac{1}{4}$ pounds of silver to the wife's father. She will continue to be his wife forever.

If the man was correct, the woman must be taken to the gate and stoned to death.

If a man is caught having sexual intercourse with a married woman, both he and the woman must be stoned to death.

If a man has sexual intercourse with an engaged virgin, and this happens in a city, both parties must be stoned to death. If this happens in the country, then only the man must be stoned.

If a man rapes a virgin who isn't engaged, the man must give the father $1 \frac{1}{4}$ pounds of silver and she will become his wife. He can never divorce her.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Men are given more rights than women in this society. Describe each instance where women are not given equal rights as they are today.
2. Why would parents bring a rebellious son to the city gate where he would be stoned to death? How old must he be?
3. Why does God not want different things mixed?
4. What is the purpose of the tassels on the clothes?
5. Is sex outside marriage permitted for both men and women?

PERICOPE 17

Miscellaneous Laws

Who May Join the Assembly of the Lord

23:1 A man whose testicles are crushed or whose penis is cut off may never join the assembly of the LORD.

²A man born from an illicit union may not join the assembly of the LORD. No descendant of his may join the assembly of the LORD for ten generations.

³Ammonites or Moabites may not join the assembly of the LORD. Not one descendant of theirs may join the assembly of the LORD for ten generations. They cannot join because they didn't greet you with food and water on your trip from Egypt.

They even hired Balaam, son of Beor, from Pethor in Aram Naharaim, to curse you. ⁵But the LORD your God refused to listen to Balaam. Instead, he turned Balaam's curse into a blessing for you because the LORD your God loves you. **Numbers 22-24.** ⁶Never offer them peace or friendship as long as you live.

⁷Never consider the Edomites disgusting. They're your relatives. Never consider the Egyptians disgusting. You once were foreigners living in their country. ⁸Their grandchildren may join the assembly of the LORD.

⁹When you're at war and have set up camp to fight your enemies, stay away from anything that will make you unclean. ¹⁰If one of your men becomes unclean from a nocturnal emission, he must go outside the camp and stay there. ¹¹Toward evening he must wash, and at sunset he may come back to camp.

¹²Choose a place outside the camp where you can go to relieve yourself. ¹³You must carry a pointed stick as part of your equipment. When you go outside to squat,

dig a hole with it. When you're done, cover up your excrement. ¹⁴The LORD your God moves around in your camp to protect you and hand your enemies over to you. So your camp must always be holy. This way, the LORD will never see anything offensive among you and turn away from you.

¹⁵If a slave escapes from his master and comes to you, don't return him to his master. ¹⁶Let him stay with you and live among your people wherever he chooses, in any of your cities that seems best to him. Never mistreat him.

¹⁷No Israelite man or woman should ever become a temple prostitute. ¹⁸Never bring gifts or money earned by prostitution into the house of the LORD your God as an offering you vowed to give. These earnings are disgusting to the LORD your God.

¹⁹Never charge another Israelite any interest on money, food, or anything else that is borrowed. ²⁰You may charge a foreigner interest, but not an Israelite. Then the LORD your God will bless you in everything you do once you've entered the land and taken possession of it.

²¹If you make a vow to the LORD your God, don't avoid keeping it. The LORD your God expects you to keep it. You would be guilty of a sin if you didn't. ²²If you didn't make a vow, you would not be guilty. ²³Make sure you do what you said you would do in your vow. You freely chose to make your vow to the LORD your God.

²⁴If you go into your neighbor's vineyard, you may eat as many grapes as you like until you're full. But never put any in your basket. ²⁵If you go into your neighbor's grain field, you may pick grain by hand. But never use a sickle to cut your neighbor's grain.

Various Laws

24:1 This is what you must do if a husband writes out a certificate of divorce, gives it to his wife, and makes her leave his house. He divorced her because

he found out something indecent about her and she no longer pleased him.
²She might marry another man after she leaves his house. ³If her second husband doesn't love her and divorces her, or if he dies, ⁴her first husband is not allowed to marry her again. She has become unclean. This would be disgusting in the LORD's presence. Don't pollute with sin the land that the LORD your God is giving you as your property.

⁵A man who has recently been married will be free from military duty or any other public service. For one year he is free to stay at home and make his new wife happy.

⁶Never let a family's hand mill for grinding flour—or even part of a hand mill—be taken to guarantee a loan. The family wouldn't be able to prepare food in order to stay alive.

⁷Whoever kidnaps another Israelite must die. The kidnapper must die whether he treated the other person like a slave or sold him. You must get rid of this evil.

⁸Guard against outbreaks of serious skin diseases. Be very careful to do exactly as the Levitical priests instruct you. Make sure you do what I commanded them. ⁹Remember what the LORD your God did to Miriam on your trip from Egypt. **Numbers 12:10**

¹⁰When you make a loan to your neighbor, don't go into his house to take a security deposit. ¹¹Wait outside, and the person to whom you're making the loan will bring the deposit out to you. ¹²If the person is poor, don't keep the coat you took as a deposit overnight. ¹³Make sure you bring it back to him at sunset. When he wears his coat to bed that night he'll bless you. You will have done the right thing in the presence of the LORD your God.

¹⁴Don't withhold pay from hired workers who are poor and needy, whether they are Israelites or foreigners living in one of your cities. ¹⁵Pay them each day

before sunset because they are poor and need their pay. Otherwise, they will complain to the LORD about you, and you will be condemned for your sin.

¹⁶Parents must never be put to death for the crimes of their children, and children must never be put to death for the crimes of their parents. Each person must be put to death for his own crime.

¹⁷Never deprive foreigners and orphans of justice. And never take widows' clothes to guarantee a loan. ¹⁸Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and the LORD your God freed you from slavery. So I'm commanding you to do this.

¹⁹This is what you must do when you're harvesting wheat in your field. If you forget to bring in one of the bundles of wheat, don't go back to get it. Leave it there for foreigners, orphans, and widows. Then the LORD your God will bless you in everything you do.

²⁰When you harvest olives from your trees, never knock down all of them. Leave some for foreigners, orphans, and widows.

²¹When you pick the grapes in your vineyard, don't pick all of them. Leave some for foreigners, orphans, and widows. ²²Remember that you were slaves in Egypt. So I'm commanding you to do this.

25:I This is what you must do whenever two people have a disagreement that is brought into court. The judges will hear the case and decide who's right and who's wrong. ²If the person who's in the wrong deserves to be beaten, the judge will order him to lie down. Then the judge will have him beaten with as many lashes as the crime deserves. ³Forty lashes may be given, but no more. If an Israelite were given more than that, he would be publicly humiliated.

⁴Never muzzle an ox when it's threshing grain.

Levirate Marriage

⁵When brothers live together and one of them dies without having a son, his widow must not marry outside the family. Her husband's brother must marry her and sleep with her. He must do his duty as her brother-in-law. ⁶Then the first son she has will carry the dead brother's name so that his name won't die out in Israel.

⁷But if the man doesn't want to marry his brother's widow, she must go to the leaders of the city at the city gate. She must say: My brother-in-law refuses to let his brother's name continue in Israel. He doesn't want to do his duty as my brother-in-law. ⁸Then the leaders of the city must summon him and talk to him.

If he persists in saying that he doesn't want to marry her, ⁹his brother's widow must go up to him in the presence of the leaders. She must take off one of his sandals and spit in his face. She must make this formal statement: This is what happens to a man who refuses to continue his brother's family line. ¹⁰Then in Israel his family will be called the Family of the Man Without a Sandal.

¹¹This is what you must do when two men are fighting and the wife of one of them comes to rescue her husband from the man who is beating him. If she tries to stop the fight by grabbing the other man's genitals¹² cut off her hand. Have no pity on her.

Use Correct Weights and Measures

¹³Never carry two sets of weights, a heavier one and a lighter one. ¹⁴Never have two kinds of measures in your house, a larger one and a smaller one.

¹⁵Use accurate and honest weights and measures. Then you will live for a long time in the land that the LORD your God is giving you. ¹⁶Everyone who uses dishonest weights and measures is disgusting to the LORD.

¹⁷Remember what the Amalekites did to you on your trip from Egypt. ¹⁸They attacked you when you were tired and exhausted and killed all those who were lagging behind. They weren't afraid of God. ¹⁹So when the LORD your God gives you peace from all your enemies around you in the land that he is giving you as your own property, don't forget to erase every memory of the Amalekites from the earth.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Who may join the assembly of the Lord? The Torah prohibits Ammonites or Moabites but allows the grandchildren of Edomites and all people of other nations to join.

Then follow rules for keeping a camp unclean for the Lord is within the camp with the army.

Escaped slaves are not to be returned to the owners and are not to be mistreated. The rules in the Torah about kindness to strangers apply to them.

Never charge interest on debts owed.

If you make a vow to God, you must keep it.

You are allowed to eat grapes and grain in a neighbors vineyard or field, but you can't harvest with a basket or a sickle.

If a husband divorces his wife, his wife can marry another man. But if that second husband doesn't love her or dies, she can't return to her first husband.

Never take a family's hand mill as security for a loan.

Kidnappers must be put to death.

Never go into a neighbor's house to get security for a loan. Wait outside. Don't keep a coat as a deposit unless you return it to him each day at sunset.

Don't withhold pay from workers. Pay them every day.

Parents must never be put to death for the crimes of their children and children must not be put to death for the crimes of their parents. This is a change from previous practice described in the Torah in **Exodus 34:7**. When the Judeans went into exile in Babylon many years later, both Jeremiah and Ezekiel were told this new practice applied to them. The Judeans were being exiled for their own sins, not the sins of their parents.

If the penalty for a crime is whipping, the penalty must not be over 40 lashes. Anything more than this humiliates a person.

If brothers live together and one of them dies without bearing a son, the widow must not marry outside the family. Her husband's brother must marry her and must sleep with her. The son she bears will then carry on the brother's name.

Always use accurate and honest weights and measures.

This pericope ends with the edict of Moses to erase every memory of the Amalekites from the earth. See **Exodus 17:8-15**.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why are Ammonites and Moabites prevented from joining the assembly while Edomites, the Israelites most hated enemy, are allowed to join as grandchildren?
2. Why are escaped slaves not to be returned?
3. Why did God say that he would never let the guilty go unpunished, punishing children and grandchildren for their parent's sins to the third and fourth generations **Exodus 34:7** and now change his mind. **Deuteronomy 24:16**
4. What did the Amalekites do to Israel that made God so angry with them that they were beyond redemption?
5. Was the limit of 40 lashes derived from **Genesis 7:17** where the flood continued to 40 days on the earth or from some other event?

PERICOPE 18

Celebrating God's Covenant with a Covenant Renewal Ceremony

The Ceremony of First Fruits

26:¹ Soon you will enter and take possession of the land that the LORD your God is giving you as your property. When you have settled there, ²take some of the first produce harvested from the fields in the land that the LORD your God is giving you, and put it in a basket. Then go to the place where the LORD your God will choose for his name to live.

³Go to the priest who is serving at that time, and tell him: I declare today to the LORD your God that I have come to the land that the LORD is giving us, as he swore to our ancestors. ⁴Then the priest will take the basket from you and set it down in front of the altar of the LORD your God. ⁵You will make this formal statement in the presence of the LORD your God:

My ancestors were wandering Arameans. There were only a few of them when they went to Egypt and lived as foreigners. But then they became a great, powerful, and large nation. ⁶So the Egyptians treated us cruelly, oppressed us, and made us do back-breaking work for them. ⁷We cried out to the LORD God of our ancestors, and he heard us. He saw our misery, suffering, and oppression.

⁸Then the LORD used his mighty hand and powerful arm to bring us out of Egypt. He used spectacular and awe-inspiring deeds, miraculous signs, and amazing things. ⁹He brought us to this place and gave us this land flowing with milk and honey. ¹⁰So now I've brought the first produce harvested from the fields you gave me, LORD.

You will place the basket in the presence of the LORD your God and bow down in front of him. ¹¹Then you, the Levites, and the foreigners who live

among you can enjoy all the good things which the LORD your God has given you and your family.

¹²Every third year is the year when you will store a tenth of that year's crops in your houses. During that year distribute what you have stored to the Levites, foreigners, orphans, and widows in your cities, and they may eat all they want.

¹³When you have distributed all that was stored, say to the LORD your God:

Nothing is left of the holy offering stored in my house. I distributed it to the Levites, foreigners, orphans, and widows as you commanded me. I disobeyed none of your commands and I didn't forget to do what you commanded.

¹⁴I didn't eat any of this holy offering while I was in mourning. I didn't distribute any of it while I was unclean. I didn't offer any of it to the dead. I have obeyed the LORD my God. I have done everything you commanded me

⁵Look down from your holy place in heaven. Bless your people Israel and the land flowing with milk and honey that you have given us, as you promised with an oath to our ancestors.

¹⁶Today the LORD your God is commanding you to obey these laws and rules. You must faithfully obey them with all your heart and with all your soul.

⁷Today you have declared that the LORD is your God and that you will follow his directions, obey his laws, commands, and rules, and listen to him.

⁸Today the LORD has declared that you are his people, his own special possession **cegullah**-treasure, as he told you.

[Then Moses went up to the mountain to God and the Lord called to him from the mountain: You have seen for yourself what I did to Egypt and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to my mountain. If you carefully obey me and are faithful to the terms of my covenant, then out of all the nations you will be my own special possession, even though

the whole world is mine. You will be my kingdom of priests and my holy nation. These are the words you must speak to the Israelites. **Exodus 19:3-6]**

But you must be sure to obey his commands. ¹⁹Then he will place you high above all the other nations he has made. He will give you praise, fame, and honor, and you will be a people holy to the LORD your God, as he promised.

Conduct a Covenant Renewal Ceremony at Shechem

27:1 Moses and the leaders of Israel told the people: Obey every command I'm giving you today.

²The day you cross the Jordan River and enter the land that the LORD your God is giving you, set up some large stones and cover them with plaster. ³The LORD God of your ancestors is giving you a land flowing with milk and honey, as he promised you.

After you're in that land, write all the words of these teachings on the stones. ⁴After you cross the Jordan River, set up these stones on Mount Ebal. Cover them with plaster following the command I'm giving you today.

⁵Build an altar of stones there dedicated to the LORD your God. Don't use an iron chisel on the stones. ⁶You must use uncut stones to build the altar of the LORD your God. Sacrifice burnt offerings on it to the LORD your God. ⁷Sacrifice fellowship offerings, eat them there, and enjoy yourselves in the presence of the LORD your God.

⁸Write clearly and carefully all the words of these teachings on the stones you set up.

⁹Then Moses and the Levitical priests said to all Israel: Be quiet and listen, Israel. Today you have become the people of the LORD your God. ¹⁰Obey the LORD your God and follow his commands and laws which I'm giving you today.

¹¹That same day Moses gave the people this command: ¹²After you cross the Jordan River, these are the tribes that will stand on Mount Gerizim to bless the people: Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph [Ephraim and Manasseh], and Benjamin. ¹³These are the tribes that will stand on Mount Ebal to announce the curses: Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali.

Twelve Curses That Are to be Recited

¹⁴The Levites will declare to all the people of Israel in a loud voice:

¹⁵Whoever has a carved or metal statue, anything disgusting to the LORD that was made by a craftsman, and sets it up in secret will be cursed. Then all the people will say: Amen.

¹⁶Whoever curses his father or mother will himself be cursed. Then all the people will say: Amen.

¹⁷Whoever moves his neighbor's boundary marker will be cursed. Then all the people will say: Amen.

¹⁸Whoever leads blind people in the wrong direction will be cursed. Then all the people will say: Amen.

¹⁹Whoever deprives foreigners, orphans, or widows of justice will be cursed. Then all the people will say: Amen.

²⁰Whoever has sexual intercourse with his father's wife will be cursed. He has disgraced his father. Then all the people will say: Amen.

²¹Whoever has sexual intercourse with any animal will be cursed. Then all the people will say: Amen.

²²Whoever has sexual intercourse with his sister, his father's daughter, or his mother's daughter will be cursed. Then all the people will say: Amen.

²³Whoever has sexual intercourse with his mother-in-law will be cursed. Then all the people will say: Amen.

²⁴Whoever kills another person secretly will be cursed. Then all the people will say: Amen.

²⁵Whoever accepts money to kill an innocent person will be cursed. Then all the people will say: Amen.

²⁶Whoever doesn't obey every word of these teachings will be cursed. Then all the people will say: Amen.

Blessings from the LORD

28:I Carefully obey the LORD your God, and faithfully follow all his commands that I'm giving you today. If you do, the LORD your God will place you high above all the other nations in the world.

²These are all the blessings that will come to you and stay close to you because you obey the LORD your God:

³You will be blessed in the city and blessed in the country.

⁴You will be blessed. You will have children. Your land will have crops. Your animals will have offspring. Your cattle will have calves, and your flocks will have lambs and kids.

⁵The grain you harvest and the bread you bake will be blessed.

⁶You will be blessed when you come and blessed when you go.

⁷The LORD will defeat your enemies when they attack you. They will attack you from one direction but run away from you in seven directions.

⁸The LORD will bless your barns and everything you do. The LORD your God will bless you in the land that he is giving you.

⁹You will be the LORD's holy people as he promised you with an oath. He will do this if you obey the commands of the LORD your God and follow his directions. ¹⁰Then all the people in the world will see that you are the LORD's people, and they will be afraid of you.

¹¹The LORD will give you plenty of blessings: You will have many children. Your animals will have many offspring. Your soil will produce many crops in the land the LORD will give you, as he swore to your ancestors.

¹²The LORD will open the heavens, his rich storehouse, for you. He will send rain on your land at the right time and bless everything you do. You will be able to make loans to many nations but won't need to borrow from any. ¹³The LORD will make you the head, not the tail. You will always be at the top, never at the bottom, if you faithfully obey the commands of the LORD your God that I am giving you today. ¹⁴Do everything I'm commanding you today. Never worship other gods or serve them.

Curses from the LORD

28:15 Obey the LORD your God, and faithfully follow all his commands and laws that I am giving you today. If you don't, all these curses will come to you and stay close to you:

¹⁶You will be cursed in the city and cursed in the country.

¹⁷The grain you harvest and the bread you bake will be cursed.

¹⁸You will be cursed. You will have few children. Your land will have few crops. Your cattle will be cursed with few calves and your flocks will have few lambs and kids.

¹⁹You will be cursed when you come and cursed when you go.

²⁰The LORD will send you curses, panic, and frustration in everything you do until you're destroyed and quickly disappear for the evil you will do by abandoning the LORD.

²¹The LORD will send one plague after another on you until he wipes you out of the land you're about to enter and take possession of.

²²The LORD will strike you with disease, fever, and inflammation; heat waves, drought, scorching winds, and ruined crops. They will pursue you until you die. ²³The sky above will look like bronze, and the ground below will be as hard as iron.

²⁴The LORD will send dust storms and sandstorms on you from the sky until you're destroyed.

²⁵The LORD will let your enemies defeat you. You will attack them from one direction but run away from them in seven directions. You will become a thing of horror to all the kingdoms in the world. ²⁶Your dead bodies will be food for all the birds and wild animals. There will be no one to scare them away.

²⁷The LORD will strike you with the same boils that plagued the Egyptians. He will strike you with hemorrhoids, sores, and itching that won't go away.

²⁸The LORD will strike you with madness, blindness, and panic. ²⁹You will grope in broad daylight as blind people grope in their blindness. You won't be successful in anything you do. As long as you live, you will be oppressed and robbed with no one to rescue you.

³⁰You will be engaged to a woman, but another man will have sex with her. You will build a house, but you won't live in it. You will plant a vineyard, but you won't enjoy the grapes.

³¹Your ox will be butchered as you watch, but you won't eat any of its meat. You will watch as your donkey is stolen from you, but you'll never get it back. Your flock will be given to your enemies, and no one will rescue it.

³² You will watch with your own eyes as your sons and daughters are given to another nation. You will strain your eyes looking for them all day long, but there will be nothing you can do.

³³ People you never knew will eat what your land and your hard work have produced. As long as you live, you will know nothing but oppression and abuse

³⁴ The things you see will drive you mad.

³⁵ The LORD will afflict your knees and legs with severe boils that can't be cured. The boils will cover your whole body from the soles of your feet to the top of your head.

³⁶ The LORD will lead you and the king you choose to a nation that you and your ancestors never knew. There you will worship gods made of wood and stone.

³⁷ You will become a thing of horror. All the nations where the LORD will send you will make an example of you and ridicule you.

³⁸ You will plant many crops in your fields but harvest little because locusts will destroy your crops.

³⁹ You will plant vineyards and take care of them, but you won't drink any wine or gather any grapes, because worms will eat them.

⁴⁰ You will have olive trees everywhere in your country but no olive oil to rub on your skin, because the olives will fall off the trees.

⁴¹ You will have sons and daughters, but you won't be able to keep them because they will be taken as prisoners of war.

⁴² Crickets will swarm all over your trees and the crops in your fields.

⁴³The standard of living for the foreigners who live among you will rise higher and higher, while your standard of living will sink lower and lower. ⁴⁴They will be able to make loans to you, but you won't be able to make loans to them. They will be the head and you will be the tail.

⁴⁵All these curses will come to you. They will pursue you and stay close to you until you're destroyed, because you didn't obey the LORD your God or follow his commands and laws, which I'm giving you.

⁴⁶These curses will be a sign and an amazing thing to warn you and your descendants forever. ⁴⁷You didn't serve the LORD your God with a joyful and happy heart when you had so much.

⁴⁸So you will serve your enemies, whom the LORD will send against you. You will serve them even though you are already hungry, thirsty, naked, and in need of everything. The LORD will put a heavy burden of hard work on you until he destroys you.

The Enemy God Will Bring Against You

28:49 The LORD will bring against you a nation from far away, from the ends of the earth. The nation will swoop down on you like an eagle. It will be a nation whose language you won't understand. ⁵⁰Its people will be fierce-looking. They will show no respect for the old and no pity for the young.

⁵¹They'll eat the offspring of your animals and the crops from your fields until you're destroyed. They'll leave you no grain, no new wine, no olive oil, no calves from your herds, and no lambs or kids from your flocks. They'll continue to do this until they've completely ruined you.

⁵²They will blockade all your cities until the high, fortified walls in which you trust come down everywhere in your land. They'll blockade all the cities everywhere in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

⁵³ Because of the hardships your enemies will make you suffer during the blockade, you will eat the flesh of your own children, the sons and daughters, whom the LORD your God has given you. ⁵⁴ Even the most tender and sensitive man among you will become stingy toward his brother, the wife he loves, and the children he still has left

⁵⁵ He will give none of them any of the flesh of his children that he is eating. It will be all that he has left because of the hardships your enemies will make you suffer during the blockade of all your cities.

⁵⁶ The most tender and sensitive woman among you—so sensitive and tender that she wouldn't even step on an ant—will become stingy toward the husband she loves or toward her own son or daughter. ⁵⁷ She won't share with them the afterbirth from her body and the children she gives birth to. She will secretly eat them out of dire necessity, because of the hardships your enemies will make you suffer during the blockade of your cities.

⁵⁸ You might not faithfully obey every word of the teachings that are written in this book. You might not fear this glorious and awe-inspiring name: the LORD your God. ⁵⁹ If so, the LORD will strike you and your descendants with unimaginable plagues. They will be terrible and continuing plagues and severe and lingering diseases.

⁶⁰ He will again bring all the diseases of Egypt that you dreaded, and they will cling to you. ⁶¹ The LORD will also bring you every kind of sickness and plague not written in this Book of Teachings. They will continue until you're dead.

⁶² At one time you were as numerous as the stars in the sky. But only a few of you will be left because you didn't obey the LORD your God. ⁶³ At one time the LORD was more than glad to make you prosperous and numerous. Now the LORD will be more than glad to destroy you and wipe you out. You will be torn out of the land you're about to enter and take possession of.

⁶⁴Then the LORD will scatter you among all the people of the world, from one end of the earth to the other. There you will serve gods made of wood and stone that neither you nor your ancestors ever knew.

⁶⁵Among those nations you will find no peace, no place to call your own. There the LORD will give you an unsettled mind, failing eyesight, and despair.

⁶⁶Your life will always be hanging by a thread. You will live in terror day and night. You will never feel sure of your life.

⁶⁷In the morning you'll say: If only it were evening. And in the evening you'll say: If only it were morning. You'll talk this way because of the things that will terrify you and because of the things you'll see.

⁶⁸The LORD will bring you back to Egypt in ships on a journey that I said you would never take again. There you will try to sell yourselves as slaves to your enemies, but no one will buy you.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Moses says that after the Israelites have entered the land and conquered it, they will plant crops and make vineyards. When the first harvest is done, they will go to the central sanctuary at Shiloh, and conduct a First Fruits Ceremony to thank the Lord for all he has done.

But before this, on the day they cross the Jordan River and before they conquer all of the land, the people are to go to the middle of the land, to Shiloh near Shechem. There they are to conduct a Covenant Renewal Ceremony.

First, they are to set up some large stones and cover them with plaster. On these stones, they are to write the words of Moses' Book of the Covenant.

Second, they are to build an altar of uncut stones. They are to sacrifice burnt offerings and fellowship offerings on it.

Then six tribes will stand on Mount Gerizim to bless the people. The six other tribes will stand on Mount Ebal and announce twelve curses. Moses

then gives them the curses to say. Then Moses gives them the blessings to say.

But then Moses expands the curses and details an enemy that will come as a curse to punish Israel if they do not obey the Lord their God.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. What is the purpose of a Covenant Renewal Ceremony?
2. What was the purpose of writing the words of Moses teachings on large stones covered with plaster?
3. Why must an altar be made of uncut stones?
4. Why were 12 curses uttered first and then many more stated later?
5. Read **Deuteronomy 26:16-19**. Doesn't this sound like our Pledge of Allegiance? Is anything missing?
6. This was the place (Shechem) where Abraham built his first altar to the Lord. **Genesis 12:6-7**. Why is this significant?
7. Why were the blessings on Mount Gerizim to the north and curses on Mount Ebal to the south?

PERICOPE 19

Moses' Third Speech: Israel's Past, Present, and Future

29:1 These are the terms of the covenant that the LORD commanded Moses to give to the Israelites in the plains of Moab. This was in addition to the covenant the LORD gave them at Mount Horeb (Sinai).

²Moses summoned all the people of Israel and said to them:

You've seen with your own eyes everything that the LORD did in Egypt to Pharaoh, to all his officials, and to his whole country. ³You also saw those terrible plagues, those miraculous signs, and those spectacular, amazing things.

⁴But to this day the LORD hasn't given you a mind that understands, eyes that see, or ears that hear. ⁵For 40 years I led you through the desert. During that time your clothes and shoes never wore out. ⁶You ate no bread and drank no wine or liquor. I did this so that you would know that I am the LORD your God.

⁷When you came to this place, King Sihon of Heshbon and King Og of Bashan came out to fight us, but we defeated them. ⁸We took their land and gave it to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh as their property. ⁹Faithfully obey the terms of this covenant. Then you will be successful in everything you do.

¹⁰All of you are standing here today in the presence of the LORD your God. The heads of your tribes, your leaders, your officers, and all the men of Israel are here. ¹¹Your children, your wives, and the foreigners who cut wood and carry water in your camp are also here

¹²You are ready to accept the terms and conditions of the covenant that the LORD your God is giving you today. ¹³With this covenant the LORD will confirm today that *you are his people and that he is your God*. This is what

he told you and this is what he promised your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob with an oath. ¹⁴You aren't the only people to receive this covenant and its conditions. ¹⁵It is for those of you who are standing here with us today in the presence of the LORD our God and also for those who are not here today.

¹⁶You know how we lived in Egypt and how we passed through other countries on our way here. ¹⁷You saw their disgusting gods and idols made of wood, stone, silver, and gold. ¹⁸Make sure there is no man, woman, family, or tribe among you today who turns from the LORD our God to worship the gods of those nations. Make sure that no one among you is the source of this kind of bitter poison.

¹⁹Someone may hear the conditions of this covenant. He may think that he is so blessed that he can say: I'll be safe even if I go my own stubborn way. After all, the LORD would never SWEEP away well-watered ground along with dry ground.

²⁰The LORD will never be willing to forgive that person because the LORD's burning anger will smolder against him. All the curses described in this book will happen to him. The LORD will erase every memory of that person's name from the earth. ²¹And the LORD will single him out from all the tribes of Israel for disaster based on all the conditions of the covenant written in this Book of the Teachings.

²²Then the next generation of your children and foreigners who come from distant countries will see the plagues that have happened in this land and the diseases the LORD sent here. ²³They will see all the soil poisoned with sulfur and salt. Nothing will be planted. Nothing will be growing. There will be no plants in sight. It will be as desolate as Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, cities the LORD destroyed in fierce anger.

²⁴Then all the other nations in the world will ask: Why has the LORD done this to their land? Why is he so angry?

²⁵The answer will be: Because they abandoned the covenant of the LORD God of their ancestors. He made this covenant to them when he brought them out of Egypt.

²⁶They worshiped other gods and bowed down to them. These were gods they never heard of, gods the LORD didn't permit them to have. ²⁷So the LORD became angry with this land and brought on it all the curses described in this book.

God Threw His Chosen People Out of the Land and into Exile

²⁸In his fierce anger and fury the LORD uprooted these people from their land and deported them to another country, where they still are today.

²⁹Some things are hidden. They belong to the LORD our God. But the things that have been revealed in these teachings belong to us and to our children forever. We must obey every word of these teachings.

30:I All these blessings and curses I have spoken about will happen to you. Take them to heart when you are among all the nations where the LORD your God will scatter you.

God Will Restore Your Fortunes When You Return to Him

²If you and your children return to the LORD your God and obey him with all your heart and with all your soul, doing everything I command you today, ³he will restore your fortunes. He will have mercy on you and gather you from all the nations of the world where he will scatter you. ⁴Even if you are scattered to the most distant country in the world, the LORD your God will gather you and bring you back from there. ⁵The LORD your God will bring you to the Land your ancestors owned. You will take possession of it, and the LORD will make you more prosperous and numerous than your ancestors were.

God Will Circumcise Your Uncircumcised Hearts

⁶The LORD your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants. You will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and you will live.

⁷Then the LORD your God will put all these curses on your enemies, those who hate you and persecute you.

⁸You will again obey the LORD and follow all his commands that I'm giving you today. ⁹The LORD your God will give you many blessings in everything you do: You will have many children. Your animals will have many offspring. Your soil will produce many crops.

The LORD will again delight in making you as prosperous as he made your ancestors. ¹⁰He will do this if you obey him and follow his commands and laws that are written in this Book of Teachings and return to the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

¹¹This command I'm giving you today isn't too hard for you or beyond your reach. ¹²It's not in heaven. You don't have to ask: Who will go to heaven to get this command for us so that we can hear it and obey it?

¹³This command isn't on the other side of the sea. You don't have to ask: Who will cross the sea to get it for us so that we can hear it and obey it? ¹⁴No, these words are very near you. They're in your mouth and in your heart so that you will obey them.

Choose between Life and Death

30:15 Today I offer you life and prosperity or death and destruction. ¹⁶This is what I'm commanding you today: Love the LORD your God, follow his directions, and obey his commands, laws, and rules. Then you will live, your population will increase, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you're about to enter and take possession of.

¹⁷But your hearts might turn away, and you might not listen. You might be tempted to bow down to other gods and worship them. ¹⁸If you do, I tell you today that you will certainly be destroyed. You will not live for a long time in the land that you're going to take possession of when you cross the Jordan River.

¹⁹I call on heaven and earth as witnesses today that I have offered you life or death, blessings or curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants will live. ²⁰Love the LORD your God, obey him, and be loyal to him. This will be your way of life and it will mean a long life for you in the land that the LORD swore to give to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Moses now speaks of a renewed covenant with God, different in some ways from that God gave to Israel on Mount Sinai. It speaks of Israel's past, present and future. It goes more into detail of what Israel's disobedience will mean. Disobedience will mean being thrown out of the land for following other gods. But it also means restoration to the land when there is whole-hearted repentance.

Moses first appeals to this new generation of warriors of Israel to be faithful to their God. Then he again reveals their history with the Lord their God. God had provided food and water in the wilderness wanderings and had brought them again back to the edge of the Promised Land.

Future generations however would see this good land devastated because of their disobedience to God. These things are now secret but will be revealed in the future as God chooses. Now Moses calls on the people to make a commitment to obey the terms of God's covenant. Today choose spiritual life with God or spiritual death without God.

When Israel broke the covenant with God, they could repent and again choose to live life with God. God himself would circumcise their unfaithful hearts. Here Moses seemed to anticipate a new covenant later anticipated by

the prophet **Jeremiah 31:31-34** and **Ezekiel 36:22-28**. Ezekiel says God will reveal his holiness among his people and replace the peoples' stubborn hearts with obedient hearts. He will put his Holy Spirit in them.

God will give his people a heart to obey him and love him with all their heart, soul, and strength. His mercy ~~cheer~~ triumphs over rebellion and sin. God does what people cannot do for themselves. **Deuteronomy 10:14**; **Jeremiah 4:4**. Only by God's Spirit can people do God's will.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. How is the covenant God made with the people of Israel at Mount Sinai different from this covenant God is making with the people perched on the banks of the Jordan River?
2. Moses says: You aren't the only people to receive this covenant and its conditions. It's for those of you who are standing with us today in the presence of the Lord our God and also for those who are not with us today. **Deuteronomy 29:15**. Who are they?
3. Moses says some things are hidden. **Deuteronomy 29:29**. Why doesn't God reveal everything to us now? What are we supposed to do with incomplete knowledge of God and his ways?
4. How will God circumcise the hearts of his people? Why did he tell the people earlier to circumcise their own hearts? **Deuteronomy 10:16**
5. Why do many verses of the prophet Jeremiah seem to echo Deuteronomy, such as **Jeremiah 4:4**; **31-31-34**? HINT: **2 Kings 22:8-13**; **23:1-15**.
6. How was God's covenant with Abraham 1,300 years before **Genesis 12:1-3** being fulfilled in this covenant of God with Israel?
7. How does keeping God's covenant today help a person to prolong their days? **Deuteronomy 4:40**

PERICOPE 20

Joshua Becomes Israel's Leader to Replace Moses

31:1 Moses continued to speak to all the Israelites:

² I'm 120 years old now, and I'm not able to lead you anymore. Besides, the LORD has told me that I cannot cross the Jordan River. ³The LORD your God is the one who will cross the river ahead of you. He will destroy those nations as you arrive, and you will take possession of their land.

Joshua will also cross the river ahead of you, as the LORD told you. ⁴The LORD will do to those nations what he did to King Sihon and King Og of the Amorites and to their lands when he destroyed them. ⁵The LORD will hand them over to you and you must do to them everything that I commanded you.

Moses Commissions Joshua as Leader

⁶Be strong *chazaq* and courageous *'amats*. Don't tremble. Don't be afraid of them. The LORD your God is the one who is going with you. He won't abandon you or leave you.

⁷Then Moses called for Joshua and said to him in the presence of all Israel: Be strong *chazaq* and courageous *'amats*. You will go with these people into the land that the LORD will give them, as he swore to their ancestors. You will help them take possession of the land.

⁸The LORD is the one who is going ahead of you. He will be with you. He won't abandon you or leave you. So don't be afraid or terrified.

⁹Moses wrote down these teachings *torah* and gave them to the Levitical priests who carried the ark of the LORD's covenant and to all the leaders of Israel.

At the End of Every Seventh Year, Read These Teachings to the People

31:10 Then Moses commanded them: At the end of every seventh year, you must cancel debts. At that time, during the Festival of Booths, ¹¹all the Israelites will come into the presence of the LORD your God at the place he will choose. Read these teachings **torah** so that they can hear them.

¹²Assemble the men, women, and children, as well as the foreigners **ger**-strangers who live in your cities. Have them listen and learn to fear the LORD your God and faithfully obey every word of these teachings **torah**.

¹³Their children, who don't know these teachings, must hear them and learn to fear the LORD your God as long as you live in the land that you are going to take possession of when you cross the Jordan River.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Moses now commissions Joshua as leader before the Tent of Meeting where God is present in the column of smoke. However, Israel is still a theocracy. The Lord is the King. Joshua is only God's servant as Moses was. **Deuteronomy 3:24; 34:5**. Moses reminds the people that God will accompany them across the Jordan River and into the Promised Land and God will also be with Joshua as he leads them. So Joshua and the people must be strong and courageous.

Again, Moses says he has written down the Torah and given it to the Levitical priests. The scrolls are placed in the chest of the ark of the covenant. Every seven years from now on, the scroll is to be taken out of the chest and read to all the people, men, women, and children at the Feast of Booths or Tabernacles. This is how they are to fear the Lord. Both the adults and the children must learn to fear the Lord.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. God's pillar of smoke and fire accompanies the Israelites to the edge of the Promised Land. But the column of smoke and fire does not accompany them into the Promised Land. Why not? What did the pillar of smoke and fire symbolize?
2. Deuteronomy emphasizes that God has written down **kathab** the Torah. It says this several times. The word **kathab** appears 22x in Deuteronomy. Why is this emphasized?
3. Two of the three annual festivals celebrate the Torah. Pentecost remembers the giving of the Law at Mount Sinai and the Law is read at the Feast of Booths. Why is the Torah considered so important?
4. How did Moses incorporate Passover into a remembrance of the covenant God makes with his people. HINT: **Exodus 24:8**.

PERICOPE 21

God Formally Appoints Joshua Leader

31:14 The LORD said to Moses: The time of your death is coming soon. Call for Joshua. Both of you come to the Tent of Meeting, and I will give him his instructions. Moses and Joshua came to the Tent of Meeting. ¹⁵Then the LORD appeared in a column of smoke at the entrance to the Tent.

God Foretells the Israelites Will Abandon Their God

¹⁶The LORD said to Moses: Soon you are going to lie down in death with your ancestors. When these people enter the land and are living among the foreigners there, they will chase after foreign gods as though they were prostitutes. They will abandon me and reject the covenant I made to them.

¹⁷On that day I will become angry with them. I will abandon them and turn away from them. They will be destroyed, and many terrible disasters will happen to them. On that day they will ask: Haven't these disasters happened to us because our God isn't with us? ¹⁸On that day I will certainly turn away from them because of all the evil they've done in turning to other gods.

¹⁹Write down this song *shiyr*, teach it to the Israelites, and have them sing it. This song will be a witness for me against the Israelites.

²⁰I will bring them into the land that I swore to give to their ancestors, a land flowing with milk and honey. When they have eaten all they want and have become fat, they will turn to other gods and worship them. They will despise me and reject my covenant.

²¹When many terrible disasters happen to them, this song will testify against them, because it will never be forgotten by their descendants.

I know what their hearts are set on doing, even now before I bring them into the land that I swore to give them.

²²That day Moses wrote down this song and taught it to the Israelites.

²³The LORD gave this command to Joshua, son of Nun: Be strong and courageous because you will bring the Israelites into the land that I swore to give them. I will be with you.

²⁴Finally, Moses finished writing all the words of these teachings in a book.

²⁵He gave this command to the Levites who carried the ark of the LORD's covenant. ²⁶Take this Book of Teachings and put it next to the ark of the covenant of our God where it will be a witness against you.

²⁷I know how rebellious you are. You are impossible to deal with *qasheh*-stiff *'oreph*-necked. While I am alive and still with you, you are rebelling against the LORD. How much more rebellious will you be after I die?

²⁸Assemble all the leaders of your tribes and your officers in front of me. As they listen, I will speak these words and call on heaven and earth to testify against them. ²⁹I know that after I die you will become thoroughly corrupt *shachath shachath* and turn from the way I have commanded you to live.

In the days to come disasters will happen to you because you will make the LORD furious by doing what he considers evil.

Moses' Song of Testimony Against Israel

³⁰Then, as the whole congregation of Israel listened, Moses recited all the words of this song:

32:I Listen, heaven, and I will speak.

Earth, hear the words from my mouth.

²Let my teachings come down like raindrops.

Let my words drip like dew,
like gentle rain on grass,
like showers on green plants.

³I will proclaim the name of the LORD.
Give our God the greatness he deserves.

⁴He is a rock.
What he does is perfect.

All his ways are fair.
He is a faithful God, who does no wrong.
He is honorable and reliable.

⁵He recognizes that his people are corrupt **shachath**.
To their shame they are no longer his children.
They are devious **iqqesh**-perverse and scheming **pethaltol**-crooked.

⁶Is this how you repay the LORD,
you foolish and silly people?
Isn't he your Father and Owner,
who made you and formed you?

⁷Remember a time long ago.
Think about all the past generations.
Ask your fathers to remind you,
and your leaders to tell you.

⁸When the Most High gave nations their land,
when he divided the descendants of Adam,
he set up borders for the tribes
corresponding to the number of the sons of Israel.

⁹But the LORD's people were his property.
Jacob was his own possession.

¹⁰He found his people in a desert land,
in a barren place where animals howl.
He guarded them, took care of them,
and protected them because they were helpless.

¹¹ Like an eagle that stirs up its nest,
hovers over its young,
spreads its wings to catch them,
and carries them on its feathers, **Exodus 19:4**

¹² so the LORD alone led his people.
No foreign god was with him.

¹³ He made them ride on the heights of the earth
and fed them with the produce of the fields.
He gave them honey from rocks
and olive oil from solid rock.

¹⁴ They ate cheese from cows
and drank milk from sheep and goats.

He gave them fat from lambs,
rams from the stock of Bashan,
male goats, and the best wheat.
They drank the blood-red wine of grapes.

¹⁵ Jeshurun got fat and disrespectful.
You got fat. You were stuffed. You were gorged.
They abandoned the God who made them
and treated the rock of their salvation like a fool.

¹⁶ They made him furious because they worshiped foreign gods
and angered him because they worshiped worthless idols.

¹⁷ They sacrificed to demons that are not God,
to gods they never heard of.
These were new gods, who came from nearby,
gods your ancestors never worshiped.

¹⁸ You ignored the rock who fathered you
and forgot the God who gave you life.

¹⁹The LORD saw this and rejected them,
because his own sons and daughters had made him angry.

²⁰He said: I will turn away from them
and find out what will happen to them.
They are devious people,
children who can't be trusted.

²¹They made him furious because they worshiped foreign gods
and angered him because they worshiped worthless idols.
So I will use those who are not my people to make them jealous
and a nation of godless fools to make them angry.

²²My anger has started a fire
that will burn to the depths ~~tachtiy~~ of hell ~~She'owl~~.
It will consume the earth and its crops
and set the foundations of the mountains on fire.

²³I will bring one disaster after another on them.
I will use up all my arrows on them.

²⁴They will be starved by famines
and ravaged by pestilence and deadly epidemics.
I will send vicious animals against them
along with poisonous animals that crawl on the ground.

²⁵Foreign wars will kill off their children,
and even at home there will be horrors.
Young men and young women alike will die
as well as nursing babies and gray-haired men.

²⁶I said that I would cut them in pieces
and erase everyone's memory of them.

²⁷But I didn't want their enemies to make me angry.
I didn't want their opponents to misunderstand and say

We won this victory!

It wasn't the LORD who did all this.

²⁸ My people have lost their good sense.

They are not able to understand.

²⁹ If only they were wise enough to understand this
and realize what will happen to them.

³⁰ How could one person chase a thousand
or two people make ten thousand flee?
Their rock used these people to defeat them
and the LORD gave them no help.

³¹ Their rock isn't like our rock.
Even our enemies will agree with this.

³² Their grapevines come from the vineyards of Sodom
and from the fields of Gomorrah.
Their grapes are poisonous,
and their clusters are bitter.

³³ Their wine is snake venom,
the deadly poison of cobras.

³⁴ Isn't this what I've stored
under lock and key in my storehouses?

³⁵ I will take revenge and be satisfied.
In due time their foot will slip,
because their day of disaster is near.
Their doom is coming quickly.

³⁶ The LORD will judge his people
and have compassion on his servants

when he sees that their strength is gone
and that no one is left, neither slaves nor free people.

³⁷ Then he will ask: Where are their gods?

Where is the rock they took refuge in?

³⁸ Where are the gods who ate the fat from their sacrifices
and drank the wine from their wine offerings?

Let them come to help you.

Let them be your refuge.

³⁹ See, I am the only God.

There are no others.

I kill, and I make alive.

I wound, and I heal,

and no one can rescue you from my power.

⁴⁰ I raise my hand toward heaven and solemnly swear:

As surely as I live forever,

⁴¹ I will sharpen my flashing sword

and take justice into my own hands.

Then I will take revenge on my enemies
and pay back those who hate me.

⁴² My arrows will drip with blood

from those who were killed and taken captive.

My sword will cut off the heads
of the enemy who vowed to fight.

⁴³ Joyfully sing with the LORD's people, you nations,

because he will take revenge for the death of his servants.

He will get even with his enemies

and make peace **kaphar**-atonement for his people's land.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Now the formal commissioning ceremony takes place. In front of the Wilderness Tabernacle where the smoke of God is above it, the Lord tells Moses: Soon you are going to die. The people will enter the land, but they will chase after the gods of Canaan. They will abandon me and reject my covenant.

On that day, I will become angry and abandon them. Many horrible disasters will happen to them. On that day, I will turn against them because of the evil they've done turning to idols instead of to me.

Moses, teach this song to my people. It will be a witness against them. Joshua, be strong and courageous. Lead these people into the land I promised them. I will be with you.

Moses has now finished writing all the words of the Torah. He told the Levites to put this book inside the ark of the covenant. Only the Ten Commandments were in the ark.

Then Moses said: I know how rebellious you are. While I am alive, you are still rebelling against the Lord. How much more will you rebel when I die? Assemble all the leaders of your tribes. Listen to these words. In the days to come the Lord will bring disasters on you.

The Song of Testimony Against Israel is a song of a faithful God and an unfaithful people. One writer called it The Key to All Prophecy.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why did God have to tell both Moses and Joshua that Israel would apostatize in the future? Wouldn't this have demoralized both of these leaders?
2. Moses wrote the Song of the Sea **Exodus 15** after God had delivered the Israelites from the Egyptians. Now he writes a second song. The first was a song of praise to God. What does this song say?

3. The characterization of God as a rock appears five times. What does this mean?
4. Israelites rarely call God their Father. **Isaiah 63:16; 64:8**. Instead, God calls himself their Father. **Deuteronomy 32:6**. Why don't the Israelites call God their Father?
5. God calls Israel Jeshurun, his pet name for his people. Jeshurun means Upright One. **Deuteronomy 32:15; 33:5, 26**. Why does God call them this? Israel is usually rebellious toward God.
6. The last verse of the song says that God will get revenge on his enemies. Is this teaching Israel that rebellion against God will always be punished?
HINT: Isaiah 66:6
7. How will God make atonement for his people's land?

PEFRICOPE 22

Moses Blesses the Tribes Before He Dies

32:44 Moses came with Hoshea Joshua son of Nun, and recited all the words of this song as the people listened.

⁴⁵When Moses had finished reciting all these words to Israel, ⁴⁶he said to them: Pay attention to all these warnings I've given you today. Then you will command your children to faithfully obey every word of these teachings.

⁴⁷Don't think these words are idle talk. They are your life. By these words you will be able to live for a long time in the land that you are going to take possession of when you cross the Jordan River.

⁴⁸That same day the LORD said to Moses: ⁴⁹Go into the Abarim Mountains, to Mount Nebo in Moab, across from Jericho. Take a look at the land of Canaan that I'm giving the Israelites as their own property.

⁵⁰On this mountain where you're going, you will die and join your ancestors in death, as your brother Aaron died on Mount Hor. ⁵¹This is because both of you were unfaithful to me at the oasis of Meribah at Kadesh in the Desert of Zin. You didn't show the Israelites how holy I am. **Numbers 20:12**

⁵²You may see the land from a distance, but you may not enter the land I'm giving the Israelites.

Moses Blesses the Twelve Tribes

33:1 Moses, the man of God, blessed the Israelites with this blessing before he died.

²He said:

The LORD came from Sinai.

For his people he rose from Seir like the sun.

He appeared like sunshine from Mount Paran.
He came with tens of thousands of holy ones.
On his right was a raging fire for them.

³You certainly love your people.
All your holy ones are in your hands.
They bow at your feet
to receive your instructions.

⁴Moses gave us these Teachings. **torah**
They belong to the assembly of Jacob.

⁵The LORD was King of Jeshurun
when the leaders of the people assembled
together with all the tribes of Israel.

⁶May the tribe of **Reuben** live and not die out,
though their people are few in number.

⁷This is what he said about the tribe of **Judah**:

Hear the cry of Judah, O LORD,
and bring them to their people.
They must defend themselves.
Help them against their enemies.

⁸About the tribe of **Levi** he said:

Your Thummim and Urim belong to your faithful people.
You tested your people at Massah.
You quarreled with them at the oasis of Meribah.

⁹They said that they didn't know their father and mother.
They didn't recognize their own brothers.
They didn't acknowledge their own children.

But they obeyed your word
and were faithful to the terms of your covenant.

¹⁰ They teach Jacob your rules
and give Israel your Teachings.
They burn incense for you to smell
and sacrifice burnt offerings on your altar.

¹¹ LORD, bless them with strength
and be pleased with the work they do.
Break the backs of those who attack them and hate them
so that they can never get up again.

¹² About the tribe of **Benjamin** he said:

“The LORD’s beloved people will live securely with him.
The LORD will shelter them all day long,
since he, too, lives on the mountain slopes.

¹³ About the tribes of **Joseph** he said:

“May the LORD bless their land with water,
the best gift heaven can send,
with dew and deep springs below the ground.

¹⁴ May the LORD bless their land with crops,
the best gift the sun can give,
the best produce of each month,

¹⁵ the finest fruits from the oldest mountains,
the best from the ancient hills,

¹⁶ and the most plentiful crops of the earth.

May the LORD bless their land with the favor
of the one who was in the burning bush. **Exodus 3:4**
May these blessings come to the tribes of Joseph.
May they crown the people who are like princes in Israel.

¹⁷They will be as majestic as a firstborn bull.
Their horns will be like the horns of a wild ox.
They will use them to push away nations
including those at the ends of the earth.

The tens of thousands from the tribe of Ephraim
and the thousands from the tribe of Manasseh will be like this.

¹⁸About the tribe of **Zebulun** he said,

People of Zebulun, enjoy yourselves when you go to war,
and you people of **Issachar**, enjoy yourselves when you stay at home.

¹⁹They will invite nations to their mountain,
and there they will offer the proper sacrifices.
They will be nourished by the abundance from the seas
and the treasures hidden in the sand.

²⁰About the tribe of **Gad** he said:

Blessed is the one who gives the people of Gad more land.
They wait there like a lion.
They can tear off an arm or a head.

²¹They chose the best land for themselves.
Indeed, a commander's piece of land was reserved for them.
They were leaders of the people
and did for Israel what the LORD considers fair and honorable.

²²About the tribe of **Dan** he said:

"The people of Dan are a lion cub.
Out of Bashan they pounce on their enemies.

²³About the tribe of **Naphtali** he said:

The people of Naphtali enjoy the LORD's favor
and are filled with the LORD's blessings.
They will take possession of the lake and the land south of it.

²⁴ About the tribe of **Asher** he said:

The people of Asher are the most blessed of the sons of Israel.
May they be the Israelites' favorite tribe
and wash their feet in olive oil.

²⁵ May the locks and bolts of your gates be made of iron and copper.
May your strength last as long as you live.

²⁶ There's no one like your God, Jeshurun.

He rides through the heavens to help you.
In majesty he rides through the clouds.

²⁷ The eternal God is your shelter,
and his everlasting arms support you.
He will force your enemies out of your way
and tell you to destroy them.

²⁸ So Israel will live securely.

Jacob's spring will be left alone
in a land of grain and new wine.
Dew will drip from Israel's skies.

²⁹ You are blessed, Israel.

Who is like you,
a nation saved by the LORD?

He is a shield that helps you
and a sword that wins your victories.
Your enemies will come crawling to you,
and you will stomp on their backs.

Moses' Death and Burial

34:1 Then Moses went up on Mount Nebo from the plains of Moab. He went to the top of Pisgah, across from Jericho. The LORD showed him the whole land.

He could see Gilead as far as Dan, ²all of Naphtali, the territory of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the territory of Judah as far as the Mediterranean Sea, ³the Negev, and the Jordan Plain—the valley of Jericho – the City of Palms—as far as Zoar.

⁴Then the LORD said to him: This is the land I promised with an oath to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. I said I would give it to their descendants. I have let you see it with your own eyes, but you may not go there.

⁵As the LORD had predicted, the LORD's servant Moses died in Moab. ⁶He was buried in a valley in Moab, near Beth Peor. Even today no one knows where his grave is.

⁷Moses was 120 years old when he died. His eyesight never became poor, and he never lost his physical strength. ⁸The Israelites mourned for Moses in the plains of Moab for 30 days. Then the time of mourning for him was over.

⁹Joshua, son of Nun, was filled with the Spirit of wisdom, because Moses had laid his hands on him. The Israelites obeyed him and did what the LORD had commanded through Moses.

¹⁰There has never been another prophet in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD dealt with face to face. ¹¹He was the one the LORD sent to do all the miraculous signs and amazing things in Egypt to Pharaoh, to all his officials, and to his whole country.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

After Moses sang the Song of Testimony Against Israel, that same day God told him: Go into the Abarim Mountains to Mount Nebo and look at the land I'm giving to the Israelites. On this mountain you will die.

Moses blesses the tribes before he dies but leaves out the tribe of Simeon that was absorbed into Judah. He describes God as coming from the east, from Mount Seir where the sun rises on the land of Israel. God is the King of Jeshurun, his pet name for his people. Reuben is mentioned first as he was the first born of Jacob. But he had sex with Jacob's concubine, so his blessing is short and limited.

Judah, the royal tribe, was alone among the tribes. So Moses prayed God would protect them.

Levi was Moses' tribe and the tribe of the priests. They were a faithful tribe to God who helped Moses punish the people after the Golden Calf Idol was destroyed. **Exodus 32:25-29**. Later Phinehas, the son of Eleazar and grandson of Aaron, the High Priest, stopped the plague God was bringing on Israel at Baal Peor so God made a covenant of peace with the Levities. **Numbers 25:10**.

The High Priest was given the Thummim and Urim, the stones in the High Priest's breastplate that determined the answer to questions asked of God. They were to teach the words of the Law **Torah** to the people.

The Holy Mountain of God, that is Jerusalem, would lie in the territory of Benjamin. Joseph was given a long blessing by Moses as did Jacob. The two grandsons of Joseph, the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, were the two largest of the twelve tribes.

Moses' blessings end by returning to the God of Jeshurun. Israel will live securely as a nation saved by God who is their shield against their enemies.

Moses then goes up Nebo and dies. He was 120 years old, but he never lost his physical strength. The Israelites mourned for him for 30 days. Then Joshua, filled with the strength of the Lord, took over.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. In **Genesis 14:19**, King Melchizadek blessed Abraham. Now Moses blesses the tribes of Israel. Here we have bookends for the Pentateuch. Blessings abound in these five books. What do you consider the greatest blessing for Israel in these five books?
2. What was the purpose of Moses blessing the tribes.
3. What was the reason God did not allow Moses and Aaron to enter the Promised Land?
4. Describe the best characteristics of Moses, the servant of God.
5. What gave Joshua the strength to lead God's people into the Promised Land? **HINT: Deuteronomy 34:9.**

EPILOGUE

The Lord your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants. You will love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and you will live. You will again obey the Lord and follow all his commands that I'm giving you today. **Deuteronomy 30:6, 8.**

The Book of Deuteronomy takes us through the time Moses spent teaching the Israelites in the Plains of Moab beginning on the first day of the eleventh month in the fortieth year after they had left Egypt. They had left Mount Sinai on the twentieth day of the second month of the second year. **Numbers 10:11.** Now, they were on the edge of the Promised Land east of the Jordan River across from Jericho.

Moses was 80 years old when God called him from the burning bush to go to Egypt and tell Pharaoh to release the Israelites to worship their God in the desert. **Acts 7:23, 30.** Moses was 120 years old when he died. For 40 years he had led the people.

So this book is a summary of all that Moses wanted the people to know. Twice Moses had spent 40 days and 40 nights on Mount Sinai talking to God. **Exodus 24:18; 34:28**

What did Moses want the people to understand?

The LORD set his heart on your ancestors and loved them. Because of this, today he chooses you, their descendants, out of all the people of the world. **Deuteronomy 10:15.** So, you should love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. **Deuteronomy 6:5.** Obey the Lord your God and follow his commands and laws that I'm giving you today. **Deuteronomy 27:10**

As simple as that. As difficult as that.