

# THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

## DEUTERONOMY 1-4

What does “*The Andy Griffith Show*”, “*I Love Lucy*”, “*Batman*”, and “*The Law of Moses*” have in common? “*Holy Rerun, Batman. They’ve all been re-released!*”

Well, the book of Deuteronomy is exactly that – *it’s a holy rerun.*

The word “*Deuteronomy*” literally means “*second law*”. The Greeks used the word to mean “*copy or duplicate*”.

Deuteronomy was a refresher course on the Law of Moses for the younger generation that was about to enter a new land.

The Hebrews, God delivered from Egypt – exited bondage, but never achieved victory. They received God’s Law at Mt. Sinai, but failed to trust God and enter the Promised Land. As a result a whole generation ended up buried in the wilderness.

Now their children are camped by the banks of the Jordan River with another opportunity to trust and obey. A land of bounty and prosperity lies ahead.

But just as they embark, God prepares them by repeating to them the same set of standards and instructions He gave to their fathers at Mt. Sinai. Deuteronomy is in essence...

Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers summarized and repackaged.

The book begins, “**These are the words which Moses spoke to all Israel on this side of the Jordan in the wilderness, in the plain opposite Suph, between Paran, Tophel, Laban,**

**Hazereth, and Dizahab.**” These are all locations deep in the Sinai Peninsula, still near Mount Sinai. This was their starting point...

Yet victory was just a few days away. We’re told in verse 2, **“It is eleven days’ journey from Horeb by way of Mount Seir to Kadesh Barnea.”** After receiving the Law of God at Mount Sinai the first generation was just eleven days from the Promised Land. They could almost taste the milk and honey.

But notice the jab in verse 3, **“Now it came to pass in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month, that Moses spoke to the children of Israel according to all that the LORD had given him as commandments to them...”**

Now here they are 40 years later. The journey from Mount Sinai, or Horeb, to Kadesh Barnea normally took 11 days. Kadesh was a Canaanite border town - their gateway to God’s blessing. Yet 40 years later the Hebrews were still on the outside looking in. Unbelief had turned a 11 day trip into a 40 year death march.

But when the first generation died off the tide began to turn. Victories over the Amorite kings east of the Jordan set the stage for a new day in the life of Israel.

For **“after he had killed Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon, and Og king of Bashan, who dwelt at Ashtaroth in Edrei. On this side of the Jordan in the land of Moab** (Moab was just west of the Dead Sea and the Jordan River)...

The first generation would’ve entered the Promised Land

from the south – from Kadesh. Their descendants crossed over the Jordan and entered from the east.

In Moab, Moses renewed the nation's marching orders...  
"Moses began to explain this law, saying, "The LORD our God spoke to us in Horeb, saying: 'You have dwelt long enough at this mountain. Turn and take your journey, and go to the mountains of the Amorites, to all the neighboring places in the plain, in the mountains and in the lowland, in the South and on the seacoast, to the land of the Canaanites and to Lebanon, as far as the great river, the River Euphrates.'" This is the land God promised Israel. It includes what is today much of the Middle East.

Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, even Iraq is land that God deeded to the Jews.

"See, I have set the land before you; go in and possess the land which the LORD swore to your fathers - to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob - to give to them and their descendants after them." The land belonged to the Hebrews, but they had to take possession. They had to rise up in faith, and grab hold of all God had given.

*This is also true of us...* the joy of the Lord - the peace of God - the power of the Holy Spirit - the love of Jesus - has been deeded to every believer... but we don't always experience these blessings because we buckle under to fear, or get distracted by the world, and we don't grab hold of what God grants us.

Moses says in verse 9, "And I spoke to you at that time,

saying: 'I alone am not able to bear you. The LORD your God has multiplied you, and here you are today, as the stars of heaven in multitude.'" Numbers 1 tells us the nation that left Egypt numbered 603,550 fighting men – males 20 years old and older. Add women and children, and the Hebrew nation probably numbered close to 3 million people.

Moses notes their vast numbers... Verse 11, and “May the LORD God of your fathers make you a thousand times more numerous than you are, and bless you as He has promised you!” But... “How can I alone bear your problems and your burdens and your complaints?” Moses is thankful for the people God entrusted into his care, but they were simply too many of them to attend to all their needs.

Exodus 18 tells us that Moses’ father-in-law, Jethro, came to his rescue. Jethro knew the answer to frustration is delegation. He encouraged Moses to divide the people up into smaller groups, and put able men over each to serve as judges.

A case too hard for the subordinates, was then brought to the big cheese.

Hey, some of us are experiencing *agitation and frustration* because we haven’t learned the art of *delegation*. If a man - the stature of a Moses - couldn’t do it all... neither can you. When God surrounds a ministry leader with able people - willing to help – he needs to *pass on* – not *hold on* – to responsibility.

In verse 19 Moses continues his history lesson.

He wants the younger generation to learn from their parent’s

mistakes. "So we departed from Horeb, and went through all that great and terrible wilderness which you saw on the way to the mountains of the Amorites as the LORD our God had commanded us." When the young guns fought with Sihon and Og they walked up the Jordan River – on the east bank. They looked over the river at the bounty they could've had 40 years earlier – *instead they grew up in a barren wilderness.*

They shook their heads and wondered why their parents were so stupid. Like other young people I know, they thought, "How could our parents be so dumb!"

Hey, it's easy to *criticize* your parents – it's harder to *rise above* your parents.

It's surprising how easy it is to repeat the same mistakes we loathe in our parents. Moses is warning the kids, lest they repeat the sin of their fathers.

"Then we came to Kadesh Barnea." The next few verses Moses recount the story from Numbers 13 when Moses sent 12 men to spy out the Promised Land.

The spies returned with a huge cluster of grapes. And in verse 25 we read they share their report, "It is a good land which the LORD our God is giving us."

Verse 26, "Nevertheless you would not go up, but rebelled against the command of the LORD your God; and you complained in your tents, and said, 'Because the LORD hates us, He has brought us out of the land of Egypt to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us. Where can we go up?"

Our brethren have discouraged our hearts, saying, "The

people are greater and taller than we; the cities are great and fortified up to heaven; moreover we have seen the sons of the Anakim there." Numbers 13 refers to them as "giants".

"Then I said to you, 'Do not be terrified, or be afraid of them. The LORD your God, who goes before you, He will fight for you, according to all He did for you in Egypt before your eyes, and in the wilderness where you saw how the LORD your God carried you, as a man carries his son, in all the way that you went until you came to this place.' God gave the Hebrews *a piggy-back ride*.

He broke the will of Yul Bryner with ten miraculous plagues. He parted the Red Sea even with Edgar G. Robinson scoffed at Moses. Then God sent bread from heaven for them to eat, and brought water from a rock for the people to drink.

God even guided them supernaturally. He sent a cloud by day and fire by night.

Verse 32, "Yet, for all that, you did not believe the LORD your God, who went in the way before you to search out a place for you to pitch your tents, to show you the way you should go, in the fire by night and in the cloud by day."

God carried them piggy-back! He put the nation on His shoulders, and carried them... And He'd planned to set them down in the land of Canaan had their faith not been overcome with fear. They thwarted God's plan because of unbelief.

"The LORD heard the sound of your words, and was angry, and took an oath, saying, 'Surely not one of these men of this evil generation shall see that good land of which I swore to

give to your fathers, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him and his children I am giving the land on which he walked, because he wholly followed the LORD.' Caleb was one two spies who gave a good report. They were the only first generation survivors to enter the land.

And Moses mentions the other survivor, "The LORD was also angry with me for your sakes, saying, 'Even you shall not go in there; Joshua the son of Nun, who stands before you, he shall go in there. Encourage him, for he shall cause Israel to inherit it.'" Joshua also lived to see and enjoy the blessing of God.

"Moreover your little ones and your children, who you say will be victims, who today have no knowledge of good and evil, they shall go in there; to them I will give it, and they shall possess it." The first generation worried about the giants slaughtering their kids. It was those kids who slaughtered the giants. "But as for you, turn and take your journey into the wilderness by the Way of the Red Sea.'

It reminds me of the poem, "*Footprints in the Sand*".

A man has a dream in which he's walking down the beach. He sees two sets of footprints, and realizes God has been walking by his side. But on occasion, during trials and difficulties, the man sees only one set of footprints. The man asked the Lord why He left him when the times got difficult...

God answered, He hadn't left him. In fact it was during the tough times that God carried him, and that's why there were only one set of footprints...

But there's a similar poem that reminds me of the nation Israel at Kadesh...

"One night I had a wondrous dream - one set of footprints there was seen. The footprints of my precious Lord, but mine were not along the shore. But then some stranger prints appeared, and I asked the Lord, "What have we here?" Those prints are large and round and neat, "But Lord, they are too big for human feet."

"My child," He said in somber tones, "For miles I carried you alone. I challenged you to walk in faith, but you refused and made me wait." "You disobeyed, you would not grow, the walk of faith, you would not know, so I got tired, I got fed up, and there I dropped you on your rump."

"Because in life, there comes a time, when one must fight, and one must climb, when one must rise and take a stand, or leave their rump prints in the sand."

That's exactly what happened to the first generation. God demonstrated His faithfulness over and over – He carried them piggyback - yet they refused to trust Him. And literally, God dropped them in the sand. They died in the wilderness.

The rest of the chapter recounts the reaction of the Israelites when they realize they'd missed their opportunity. They took up weapons and went out to fight - but the Lord was not with them. They went in their own strength and were routed.

All this was a warning not to repeat their parent's mistakes.

It's been said, "Experience is the best teacher, but why does it always have to be your own experience?" A wise person learns from the experiences of others.



Chapter 2, "Then we turned and journeyed into the wilderness of the Way of the Red Sea, as the LORD spoke to me, and we skirted Mount Seir for many days." Moses says they "skirted", or "circled" Mount Seir - which was a range of mountains south of the Dead Sea. It's sad, but they just went around in circles.

For four decades the Hebrews march in circles - verse 3 "And the LORD spoke to me, saying: 'You have skirted this mountain long enough; turn northward.'"

Perhaps that's what God is saying to you tonight... You've been going around in circles long enough. It's time to believe God, and lay hold of your blessings.

Well, the second generation begins their march to the Promised Land, and they pass through the boundaries of three nations... Edom, Moab, and Ammon.

All three were relatives of Israel. *Edom* or *Esau* was Jacob's brother. Moab and Ammon were the sons of Lot – who was Abraham's nephew.

All three nations occupied territory God gave them. Thus, God instructed the Hebrews not to meddle, or harass, or do battle with these three nations... Hey, purchase supplies from them, but respect their territory as God's gift to them.

Verse 4, "And command the people, saying, "You are about to pass through the territory of your brethren, the descendants of Esau, who live in Seir; and they will be afraid of you. Therefore watch yourselves carefully. 5 Do not meddle with them, for I will not give you any of their land, no, not so

much as one footstep, because I have given Mount Seir to Esau as a possession.

You shall buy food from them with money, that you may eat; and you shall also buy water from them with money, that you may drink.

For the LORD your God has blessed you in all the work of your hand. He knows your trudging through this great wilderness. These forty years the LORD your God has been with you; you have lacked nothing." For forty years the people never went to bed hungry, or got thirsty. Chapter 8:4 tells us that for four decades the clothes of the Hebrews didn't wear out – nor did their feet even swell.

Imagine, the population of metro Atlanta trudging through the desert... *do you think we'd have problems?* Those 40 years were proof of God's faithfulness.

In verse 8, "And when we passed beyond our brethren, the descendants of Esau who dwell in Seir, away from the road of the plain, away from Elath and Ezion Geber, we turned and passed by way of the Wilderness of Moab.

Then the LORD said to me, 'Do not harass Moab, nor contend with them in battle, for I will not give you any of their land as a possession, because I have given Ar to the descendants of Lot as a possession.' " (The Emim had dwelt there in times past, a people as great and numerous and tall as the Anakim. They were also regarded as giants, like the Anakim, but the Moabites call them Emim.

The Horites formerly dwelt in Seir, but the descendants of Esau dispossessed them and destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their place, just as Israel did to the land of

their possession which the LORD gave them.)

'Now rise and cross over the Valley of the Zered.' So we crossed over the Valley of the Zered. And the time we took to come from Kadesh Barnea until we crossed over the Valley of the Zered was thirty-eight years, until all the generation of the men of war was consumed from the midst of the camp, just as the LORD had sworn to them. For indeed the hand of the LORD was against them, to destroy them from the midst of the camp until they were consumed."

"So it was, when all the men of war had finally perished from among the people, that the LORD spoke to me, saying: 'This day you are to cross over at Ar, the boundary of Moab. And when you come near the people of Ammon, do not harass them or meddle with them, for I will not give you any of the land of the people of Ammon as a possession, because I have given it to the descendants of Lot as a possession.'" (That was also regarded as a land of giants; giants formerly dwelt there. But the Ammonites call them Zamzummim, a people as great and numerous and tall as the Anakim. But the LORD destroyed them before them, and they dispossessed them and dwelt in their place, just as He had done for the descendants of Esau, who dwelt in Seir, when He destroyed the Horites from before them. They dispossessed them and dwelt in their place, even to this day.

And the Avim, who dwelt in villages as far as Gaza - the Caphtorim, who came from Caphtor, destroyed them and dwelt in their place.)"

Notice the terms for giant who lived in the land of Canaan... "*Nephilim*" and "*Rephaim*" both Hebrew words. Also *Anakim*,

*Emim, and Zamzummim.*

Israel is tiptoeing through the tulips. God tells them to avoid a conflict with Edom, or Moab, or Ammon... not a good tune up for a war-going army...

*But there comes a time to fight...* Verse 24, **"Rise, take your journey, and cross over the River Arnon. Look, I have given into your hand Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land. Begin to possess it, and engage him in battle.**

**This day I will begin to put the dread and fear of you upon the nations under the whole heaven, who shall hear the report of you, and shall tremble and be in anguish because of you.'** The Arnon was a river that ran from the mountains of Moab into the Dead Sea – but to the Israelites it was a turning point. When they crossed the Arnon they were no longer *wanderers*, but *possessors - occupiers*.

Let me encourage you tonight to cross the Arnon. Stop wandering and drifting spiritually – stop traveling in circles – and determine in your heart to exercise your faith. Stop settling for less than God's best. Trust God for His total victory.

Verse 26, **"And I sent messengers from the Wilderness of Kedemoth to Sihon king of Heshbon, with words of peace, saying, 'Let me pass through your land; I will keep strictly to the road, and I will turn neither to the right nor to the left. You shall sell me food for money, that I may eat, and give me water for money, that I may drink; only let me pass through on foot, just as the descendants of Esau who dwell in Seir and the Moabites who dwell in Ar did for me, until I cross the Jordan to the land which the LORD our God is giving us.'** He

asks for safe passage.

"But Sihon king of Heshbon would not let us pass through, for the LORD your God hardened his spirit and made his heart obstinate, that He might deliver him into your hand, as it is this day. And the LORD said to me, 'See, I have begun to give Sihon and his land over to you. Begin to possess it, that you may inherit his land.' "Then Sihon and all his people came out against us to fight at Jahaz."

And the LORD our God delivered him over to us; so we defeated him, his sons, and all his people. We took all his cities at that time, and we utterly destroyed the men, women, and little ones of every city; we left none remaining. We took only the livestock as plunder for ourselves, with the spoil of the cities which we took."

We read that the Hebrews destroyed the women and children as well as the men – and wonder, *why so barbaric?* Remember these were Canaanites steeped in vile and wicked practices. One theory suggests that the giants in the land were the result of demons taking over the bodies of men and impregnating women.

Genesis 6:4 seems to imply this also happened before the flood, and it caused God to destroy the entire human race. He started over with Noah and his family.

The giants may've been a demonically sired race of freakish humanoids.

It's interesting that the highest experience in the occult is sex with a demon. The offspring is called a "*moon-child*". And it's is now a favorite Hollywood theme.

The 1968 movie, *“Rosemary’s Baby”* was based on this concept.

More recently, in the movie, *“Michael”*, John Travolta, played a lust-filled angel whose main desire was to hit on beautiful women... *Hey, this stuff is demonic.*

Canaanite culture was up to its eyeballs in devilish and perverted practices.

The killing of these Canaanite children may’ve been an act of mercy when you realize the evil influence they were subjected to living in such a wicked society.

Verse 36 describes the extent of the victory, **“From Aroer, which is on the bank of the River Arnon, and from the city that is in the ravine, as far as Gilead, there was not one city too strong for us; the LORD our God delivered all to us.**

**Only you did not go near the land of the people of Ammon - anywhere along the River Jabbok, or to the cities of the mountains, or wherever the LORD our God had forbidden us.”** With this victory over Sihon Israel gains momentum....

Chapter 3, **“Then we turned and went up the road to Bashan; and Og king of Bashan came out against us, he and all his people, to battle at Edrei.”**

Edrei was east of the Jordan River – southeast of the Sea of Galilee.

In verse 2 Moses continues, **“And the LORD said to me, 'Do not fear him, for I have delivered him and all his people and his land into your hand; you shall do to him as you did to Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heshbon.'**

"So the LORD our God also delivered into our hands Og king of Bashan, with all his people, and we attacked him until he had no survivors remaining. And we took all his cities at that time; there was not a city which we did not take from them: sixty cities, all the region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan.

All these cities were fortified with high walls, gates, and bars, besides a great many rural towns. And we utterly destroyed them, as we did to Sihon king of Heshbon, utterly destroying the men, women, and children of every city.

But all the livestock and the spoil of the cities we took as booty for ourselves."

Verses 8-10 outline the land taken in the victories over Sihon and Og – it was all the territory east of the Jordan River. And notice the detail in verse 11...

"For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of the giants. Indeed his bedstead was an iron bedstead. (Is it not in Rabbah of the people of Ammon?) Nine cubits is its length and four cubits its width, according to the standard cubit."

King Og was one of the last of these remaining giants.

We don't know how big he was, but if the size of his bed is any indication... Og was a *hog!* His bed was 13½ feet long and 6 feet wide. Call it a *real king-size bed!*

Verses 12-20 recall the deal Moses made with the 2½ tribes that wanted to settle east of the Jordan River. Moses was concerned that these tribes would stay east of the river, and leave their brothers to fight for the Promised Land alone.

Moses deeded these 2½ tribes the land they want only after

they vowe to fight.

He marks out the boundaries for these 2½ tribes in the following verses...

In verse 21 Moses says, "And I commanded Joshua at that time, saying, 'Your eyes have seen all that the LORD your God has done to these two kings; so will the LORD do to all the kingdoms through which you pass.'" What happened east of the Jordan will happen on the west bank if Israel continues to walk by faith...

Moses encourages his successor, "You must not fear them, for the LORD your God Himself fights for you.' The key to victory is not more fight – but more faith.

Verse 23, "Then I pleaded with the LORD at that time, saying: 'O Lord GOD, You have begun to show Your servant Your greatness and Your mighty hand, for what god is there in heaven or on earth who can do anything like Your works and Your mighty deeds?'" What an amazing statement... and from a man like Moses.

Moses saw miracles we have a difficult time imagining... a bush burns but is not consumed - a rod becomes a snake - the Nile turns to blood - darkness covers Egypt for three days - the Red Sea splits – food falls from heaven with the morning dew – water pours from a rock – the ground opens up and swallows the rebels...

Yet Moses says, "O Lord God, You have begun to show Your servant Your greatness and Your mighty hand..." All Moses saw was just a beginning. It was the tip of the iceberg. God was just getting started with His miracles.



And remember it was in the midst of one of God's miracles that Moses forfeited the privilege of entering the Promised Land. He disobeyed God at the waters of Meribah.

He blew his cool and misrepresented God as mad with the people.

God worked a miracle. He brought water from a rock. But in Moses' anger he struck the rock twice - when God had told him to merely speak to the rock.

And as a result, God told Moses he would not bring the people into the land.

But Moses had gone a long way with these people and now he can't stand the thought of getting this close to his goal, and not entering the land for which he's longed - so in verse 25 Moses prays, "let me cross over and see the good land beyond the Jordan, those pleasant mountains, and Lebanon."

"But the LORD was angry with me on your account, and would not listen to me. So the LORD said to me: 'Enough of that! Speak no more to Me of this matter.'

Go up to the top of Pisgah, and lift your eyes toward the west, the north, the south, and the east; behold it with your eyes, for you shall not cross over this Jordan." God answers half of Moses' prayer. He'll see the land, but not enter.

God sends Moses to the top of Mount Pisgah. Pisgah was probably the mountain range. Mount Nebo was the tallest peak. The mountain sits 2600 feet above the Dead Sea - opposite where the Jordan River feeds into the Dead Sea.

The summit offers a panoramic view of the interior of Israel.

From the top of Mount Pisgah you can see the rooftops of Bethlehem and Jerusalem.

Moses was allowed to see the land, but God tells him in verse 28, “But command Joshua, and encourage him and strengthen him; for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the land which you will see.’

“So we stayed in the valley opposite Beth Peor.” - near Mount Pisgah.

In chapter 4 Moses encourages the second generation, and establishes a principle important for us. “Now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I teach you to observe, that you may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers is giving you. You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take anything from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.”

Don’t add to or take away from God’s Word. Let the Bible speak for itself.

The human tendency is to either *water down the Word*, or *make it harder than God intended*. The liberal waters it down. The legalist adds to it. Both are wrong.

“Your eyes have seen what the LORD did at Baal Peor; for the LORD your God has destroyed from among you all the men who followed Baal of Peor. But you who held fast to the LORD your God are alive today, every one of you.”

The case of Baal Peor was the idolatry provoked by Balaam in Numbers 25. Moabite prostitutes lured the Hebrews into the worship of their false gods.

In the judgment that followed 23,000 Hebrews lost their lives.

Verse 5, "Surely I have taught you statutes and judgments, just as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should act according to them in the land which you go to possess. Therefore be careful to observe them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.'

"For what great nation is there that has God so near to it, as the LORD our God is to us, for whatever reason we may call upon Him? And what great nation is there that has such statutes and righteous judgments as are in all this law which I set before you this day?" The Law of Moses is the most advance legal and moral code ever composed. Today, 3500 years later, the ethical and legal framework of Western Civilization rests on the foundation of the Law of Moses. It was brilliant.

Thus, Israel had two characteristics that made it unique among the nations... its *access to God* and its *instruction from God* – as a result it was God's plan to use the Hebrews as a witness to the nations. Israel was God's lighthouse.

But God tells them, "Only take heed to yourself, and diligently keep yourself, lest you forget the things your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days

**of your life.”** It’s difficult to grasp how Israel could forget the miracles they witnessed – or commandments written with the finger of God...

*Until you have kids...* You parents know that you can give instructions one minute. Make sure your kids understand what you mean - then fifteen minutes later they’ve developed a horrible case of Alzhiemers. *“Mom, I forgot!”*

One of the key words in the book of Deuteronomy is the word *“remember”*.

It appears 14 times in the book. This is why God spends the first four chapters of Deuteronomy retelling the history of Israel. It’s every generation’s responsibility to remember God, His truths, and the lessons He taught to previous generations.

God goes to tremendous lengths to teach human beings lessons they tend to forget overnight. One of the primary lessons in the book of Deuteronomy - is it’s **our responsibility to remember**... A good memory is a huge key to discipleship.

And not only do we need to remember God’s statutes... Moses says, **“And teach them to your children and your grandchildren, especially concerning the day you stood before the LORD your God in Horeb, when the LORD said to me, 'Gather the people to Me, and I will let them hear My words, that they may learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children.'”**

**“Then you came near and stood at the foot of the mountain, and the mountain burned with fire to the midst of heaven, with darkness, cloud, and thick darkness.**

**And the LORD spoke to you out of the midst of the fire. You**

heard the sound of the words, but saw no form; you only heard a voice. So He declared to you His covenant which He commanded you to perform, that is, the Ten Commandments; and He wrote them on two tablets of stone. And the LORD commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that you might observe them in the land which you cross over to possess.” Notice, God is saying... He wants us teaching our kids the commandments He wrote with His own hand... God’s Top Ten List...

Notice, the Ten Commandments are what God tells us we should teach our kids - yet sadly, we can’t even hang them on the wall in a public classroom.

Friday night I was studying this passage, and at that moment Nick walked into the room. I decided to put my parenting to the test, and see if he could name the Ten Commandments. *If this is what God wants me to teach my kids - how am I doing?* Nick remembered nine. At midnight on a Friday I thought that was good.

Let me dare you to go home tonight and ask your children to name the Ten Commandments – *can you name them?* We need non-negotiables in our lives.

The Ten Commandments should lay the ethical foundation in a child’s life.

Moses continues, "Take careful heed to yourselves, for you saw no form when the LORD spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire, lest you act corruptly and make for yourselves a carved image in the form of any figure: the likeness of male or female, the likeness of any beast that is

on the earth or the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the air, the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground or the likeness of any fish that is in the water beneath the earth.”

And take heed, lest you lift your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun, the moon, and the stars, all the host of heaven, you feel driven to worship them and serve them, which the LORD your God has given to all the peoples under the whole heaven as a heritage.” Don't worship the creation instead of the Creator.

God's glory is revealed in nature, but God's glory always transcends nature.

Notice the expression God uses in verse 19, when “you feel driven to worship.”

Human beings were made to be worshippers. God programs into every human heart the drive to worship something... For some people the temptation becomes the sun, moon, and stars... For others it's the car, the house, and the starlet.

Since we're physical creatures we find it easy to worship something tangible.

This is why God tells us to resist the urge to worship the creation instead of the Creator. Be careful that the drive within us finds its fulfillment only in God.

Verse 20, “But the LORD has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be His people, an inheritance, as you are this day.

Furthermore the LORD was angry with me for your sakes, and swore that I would not cross over the Jordan, and that I

would not enter the good land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance. But I must die in this land, I must not cross over the Jordan; but you shall cross over and possess that good land.

Take heed to yourselves, lest you forget the covenant of the LORD your God which He made with you, and make for yourselves a carved image in the form of anything which the LORD your God has forbidden you. For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.” Remember the danger is to forget...

"When you beget children and grandchildren and have grown old in the land, act corruptly and make a carved image in the form of anything, and do evil in the sight of the LORD your God to provoke Him to anger, I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that you will soon utterly perish from the land which you cross over the Jordan to possess; you will not prolong your days in it, but will be utterly destroyed. And the LORD will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the LORD will drive you.”

Moses is now speaking prophetically of Israel's future.

“And there you will serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see nor hear nor eat nor smell. But from there you will seek the LORD your God, and you will find Him if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul. When you are in distress, and all these things come upon you in the latter days, when you turn to the LORD your God and obey His voice (for the LORD your God is a merciful

God), He will not forsake you nor destroy you, nor forget the covenant of your fathers which He swore to them.” Israel might forget the Lord, but He will not forget His promises to Israel.

"For ask now concerning the days that are past, which were before you, since the day that God created man on the earth, and ask from one end of heaven to the other, whether any great thing like this has happened, or anything like it has been heard. Did any people ever hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as you have heard, and live? Or did God ever try to go and take for Himself a nation from the midst of another nation, by trials, by signs, by wonders, by war, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes? Israel was uniquely chosen by God. No other nation has ever been blessed with such direct divine revelation. Even today, Israel holds a special place in the economy of God.

This should make us marvel when Paul says in Romans 11 that we've been grafted into the blessings God promised Abraham. We too are recipients of a very personal and intimate access to God and revelation from God.

“To you it was shown, that you might know that the LORD Himself is God; there is none other besides Him. Out of heaven He let you hear His voice, that He might instruct you; on earth He showed you His great fire, and you heard His words out of the midst of the fire. And because He loved your fathers, therefore He chose their descendants after them; and



He brought you out of Egypt with His Presence, with His mighty power, driving out from before you nations greater and mightier than you, to bring you in, to give you their land as an inheritance, as it is this day.

Therefore know this day, and consider it in your heart, that the LORD Himself is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; there is no other.

You shall therefore keep His statutes and His commandments which I command you today, that it may go well with you and with your children after you, and that you may prolong your days in the land which the LORD your God is giving you for all time." Notice the duration of God's promises to Israel... "for all time".

God isn't through with the Jews. They are His special people *for all time*.

In verses 41-43 Moses establishes three cities of refuge east of the Jordan... *Bezer, Ramoth, and Golan*. Israel took back the Golan Heights in the Yom Kippur War in 1973. But the Golan was holy ground prior to the land west of the Jordan.

We talked extensively about the cities of refuge in Numbers 35.

The rest of the chapter summarizes Moses' brief history lessons.