

Deuteronomy Ch 26-27

Since it's been a little over a month since we last looked into this book as a corporate gathering, allow me just a minute to refresh your minds as to what's going on here as we pick up the text tonight. Moses is now 120 yrs old and in just a few days he will die, and so he's taking one last opportunity to rehearse for the children of Israel some miscellaneous laws and statutes by which they are to be governed by as they enter into the Promised land. How they were to enter act with one another, how they were to enter act with the other nations around them, and how they were to enter act with God as the one who brought them up out of the land of Egypt and brought them into a rich land that flowed as it were with milk and honey. Just lush and able to abundantly supply their every need, and so Moses has spoken to them concerning practical ways that they were to love their neighbor as themselves, looking out for one another, helping one another, doing unto others as they would have done to themselves. He's illustrated the concept of not being unequally yoked in any capacity, from the animals they use to plow the fields, to the type of seeds they use to sow those fields and no doubt we can contextually apply the relationships between believers and non believers, we're not to be yoked up with those people who don't love the Lord Jesus, that's what the bible teaches. He's spoke on sexual purity and cleanliness both physically and spiritually before God. He's spoken on the law concerning divorce and the fact that they were to be honest in their business dealings, he's exhorted them to be obedient to the rulers of Israel, to submit to those who are you're overseers in the body. And several other just miscellaneous ways that they were to conduct themselves when they crossed the Jordan into the Promised Land. The last decree that we read of in ch 25 was God's instructions for them to destroy the Amalekites, they were to utterly wipe them out because of what they did to the nation of Israel when they were coming out of Egypt. They came up behind them and began attacking their rear flanks and killing those who were weak and the stragglers that were tired and weary. And because of that they were to blot out their remembrance from under heaven, just remove that entire race from off the face of the earth. And you recall the time came for that to happen and Saul failed to obey the command of the Lord and saved the king alive, and to make a long story short when you read concerning the end of Saul's life, you find out that it was an Amalekite that ultimately destroyed him. And as I've stated; in the study of typology you find that the Amalekites always represent the flesh and the flesh life, and the point of the whole lesson concerning what happened to Saul, in saving alive just one remnant and not utterly destroying them completely in light of 1 Cor 10:11 which says that "*all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition.*" Is the fact that if you don't destroy the flesh, if you don't crucify the flesh nature, even if you starve out and delete 99% of it but you save just one remnant alive, because it's one area that you really enjoy, or don't think that it's that big of a deal, eventually it will destroy you. Because no one can serve 2 Masters Jesus said you'll either love one and hate the other, or be loyal to one and despise the other.

These things were written for us for our admonition, for our warning and rebuke, not so that we can say man Saul sure blew it, yeah that's true, but the reason that God let's be aware of that fact is so that we won't do the same.

But how often we deceive ourselves into thinking, that was different, that was then, my life is different. And so you set there in awe of how bad Saul blew it and just can't believe that he succumbed to the flesh as you pound down your 3rd or 4th beer or are surfing to that spot on the internet that you know you shouldn't be or cuss out that man that cut you off on the road, or whatever the case may be. Is it really different, sure the scenario may be different, but the heart of the matter is still the same, submission to the flesh rather than the Spirit. And so what makes you or me think that our end will be any different than Saul's if we do the same thing he did in saving alive just one small remnant of the flesh? So you have a choice to make, am I going to serve the flesh and lusts of it regardless of how minor I may consider it or how much I justify killing the majority of it so am better off than I would've been, which is pure deception because flesh is flesh and sin is sin and there's no such thing as minor sin, it all keeps us out of heaven apart from the grace of God imputed to you through Jesus Christ Or are you going to serve the Lord by the power of the Spirit and walk in the Spirit to fulfill His desires for your life in order to give honor and glory to Jesus Christ What does the Scripture say? Blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven, you shall not forget, or in NT terms, *"put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts."* Rom 13:14

Vs1-4

A declaration of the faithfulness of God, though they have been a stiff-necked and rebellious people, a faithless people to God, yet He's been faithful to them, He has kept His word. And God will always keep His word, because God is faithful 2 Tim 2:13 *"If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself."* 1 Thess 5:24 *"He who calls you is faithful,"* 2 Thess 3:3 *"The Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard you from the evil one."* And 1 Cor 1:9 *"God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."* The bible has much to say concerning the faithfulness of God; the Psalms are just layered with declarations of the faithfulness of God. And here they were to acknowledge God's faithfulness to them verbally and they were to offer over to God the 1st fruits of their increase as just a practical way to express their worship and giving of thanks to God for His faithfulness. It's the way that they practiced what they preached, it was how they showed their sincerity concerning their appreciation to God. You might say they were to put their money where their mouth was. It was sort of like what we talked about Sunday morning, it was the working of the their faith, James said you show me your faith with out your works and I'll show you my faith by my works, this was an out working of their allegiance and submission to the Lord and His faithfulness to them.

Vs5-9

So as they rehearse their history they're reminded of the goodness and the greatness of God. Jacob went down into Egypt being a family of 70 people and in 400yrs God made them a great nation. But at the same time the Egyptians had enslaved them and forced them to serve with rigor and hard bondage, which is what the world and the flesh life always does. It enslaves you it causes you to serve its appetites with rigor and hard bondage, but we take note of vs 7, God always hears the cry of the oppressed, those who cry out to Him from the deep recess' of their hearts for deliverance. Those who desire to be set free from the bondage of sin, those who want to be released from the grip of the flesh to serve the true and living God.

And God will do for that person exactly what He did for these people as we read in vs 8, He will bring you out of that slavery and hard bondage to the flesh life with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and He will bring you into a good and lush land. He takes you out of the land of the flesh and into the land of the Spirit as you simply obey Him and seek to serve Him. And as they reflected on the goodness of God, and the redemptive grace of God, what was their response to be?

Vs10

They were to offer over to the Lord their 1st fruits and worship Him, and Sunday morning we spoke of how love and faith are sort of woven together and practically inseparable. Well worship and giving are the same way, they go hand in hand, true worship never seeks to get, it seeks to give. That's the difference between the Agape' love of God and the self centered love of man. The love of God seeks to give, seeks to bless, the love of man seeks to get, seeks to take, seeks self-satisfaction. So when you come to worship God, if in your heart you're needing a favor from God and so you're seeking to butter Him up, that's not true worship. Many times we masquerade or sort of hide our true desires by trying to approach God in worship and then oh by the way God as long as I'm here I have a request. But that's not true worship, that's God give me what I need, and it's not that it's bad to take your petitions to God, that's what we're supposed to do. But that's not worship, true worship is costly and it doesn't seek to get from God, it seeks to give to God for no other reason than the simple fact that He is worthy, and He is faithful, and He is good. And I could easily develop this biblical principal by speaking to you of David and the threshing floor of Ornan, or I could speak to you of the fact of when Jesus was born and the magoi came to Bethlehem, to worship Him. They didn't come bearing requests for their own personal profit or gain, they came bearing gifts to offer over to the King of Kings, and we know that there's nothing we can offer the Lord but that He doesn't already own it seeing as how the earth is the Lords and the fullness there of. But God is looking to our hearts and what it cost us to offer that sacrifice of praise over to Him, or to give to Him of our time when we would rather be doing something else, but we offer this time over to God, or we'd rather spend our money eating out and going to the show, feeding as it were our own desires, but God I'm offering it over to you as an expression of my worship.

They were to give to God their 1st fruits as an expression of worship and thanksgiving to God, for delivering out of bondage into the good land, and God desires that we do the same. That we give to Him the 1st fruits of our day, as we utter a prayer in the morning as we roll out of bed, and we give Him the 1st fruits of our time by starting off the day with a ch or 2 in His word. We give Him the 1st fruits of our increase, not out of what's left over after the bills are paid, God comes before rent, because He's your 1st priority, and then you trust Him to meet those other needs as you place Him 1st. And he'll do it, because He knows your need, and understands what it costs you and it blesses His heart because He knows it's an expression of your worship to Him. So with out going to in depth just know that true worship isn't about getting it's about giving, the giving of our hearts, our time, our energies, and our resources, in short God takes priority in all we have and all we are and all we do, our lives are to revolve around Him, and as that happens, everything else will strike the balance, if that doesn't happen, nothing will.

Vs11

God desires His people to be a people that are full of joy, and as you reflect on His goodness to you, how all that God has done for you, delivering you from the snares of sin and death, giving you all that you have. (The bible says, "*What do you have that you did not receive?*") And it's a rhetorical question, the answer is nothing,) James 1:17 "*Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights.*" And as you consider how good God is to you, your natural response should be that of joy and rejoicing, what kind of witness is it to the world when all of God's people are constantly moaning and griping and whining and down. God says that we are to rejoice in every good thing that He gives us, which to this I would add even if He never gave you or me anything more than salvation, that should be all that's necessary for us to be a people of rejoicing and gladness.

Vs12-15

When you've done all that God commands and have been blameless, God says that blessing is what follows. And again it's not because anyone deserves it, it's because God is so gracious, and as we abide in Christ we can know that God is going to bless our lives, not necessarily materially, though that can happen if God so chooses, but none of it is because we're so cool and have some how merited it, it's because He's so good and desires to bless our lives out of His grace.

Vs16

Notice that, not with all your flesh, but with all your heart, God has always been interested in the heart.

Vs17-19

Vs1-2

Remember that right now they're still on the east side of the Jordan because Moses will be unable to cross over with them because of the fact that he misrepresented God, by striking the rock twice, insinuating that God was angry with the people when in-fact He wasn't. And not only did he misrepresent God, but also he destroyed the "type" concerning Jesus Christ Because Jesus, the "rock" of our salvation was only smitten once for all, not twice, and when Moses struck the rock twice, he ruined the type. So he's instructing them from the side opposite of the Promised Land.

Vs3-7

So they were to build an altar out of whole stones, in other words, the works of mans hands weren't to be upon it. When God 1st commanded the building of an altar, He didn't even encourage the use of stones, they were to just pile some dirt up and that was to be their altar. God's desire was that the place set aside for the worship of Him be simple and natural, nothing fancy and ornate, or elaborate. Why? Because when you come to a place of worship that's all elaborate, your immediately drawn to the loftiness and ornateness of it and you begin to glory in the works of mans hands rather than focusing on and looking to God Himself. When we were driving back from Branson we saw this church and it was just decked out. It looked brand new and there were all these columns all around that looked huge even from the highway, it was incredible architecture.

But for me it wasn't very approachable, I told Matt that I'd feel out classed before I ever even stepped through the door. God's not into all the beauty, and all the fine carvings, and the splendid architecture, now no doubt He desires that we maintain that which He entrusts to us and we desire it reflect our love for God, by the way we take care of it as it possible for us to do. But God desires that the place set aside for His worship be simple, approachable, and an environment that is as free from distraction as possible, one that is conducive to worship, that allows people to focus on Him, not the building. Because God is approachable, and open to whosoever desires to come to Him, and we don't want to be guilty of excluding anyone by the way that we present ourselves as though we're a cut above the average man, because we're not, nor will we ever be. Regardless of your income or my income we'll always be sinners saved by grace and we'll never amount to any more than that and we need to be sober concerning that. And open and receiving to anyone that God would bring to us, because God so loved *the world* and that's all of us folks. So they weren't to cut the stones or carve them up, but just use whole stones. And they were to offer burnt offerings, which were the offerings of consecration to God, and peace offerings, which were offerings of fellowship with God, partaking with God of the common meal in fellowship with Him.

Vs8-13

So 6 tribes were to stand on Mt Gerizim to bless the people or to declare the blessings of obedience, and then 6 tribes were to stand on Mount Ebal to issue the curse of disobedience. And those who were to do which are listed there for you, so as the people were standing in the valley, on the mountain to the left would yell out the blessings, and on the right hand side 6 of the other tribes would yell out cursings that would follow disobedience, so no doubt it was an awesome scene. And an awesome thing to experience, something that would root itself very deeply in your heart and in your mind.

Vs14-26

So after each of the curses was decreed or announced the people would have to cry out “So be it” in acceptance of the covenant and acknowledging the rightness of the curses if they were to disobey. And here in vs 26 was the clincher, the one that Paul reaches back into in the book of Galatians as they were approaching the law like a spiritual buffet of righteousness, desiring to submit to some laws and yet act as though others didn’t apply. And Paul said no you can’t do that, for it is written, “*Cursed is the one who does not confirm (or continue in) all the words of this law.*” The word cursed meaning to fall under the judgment of God, so thank God for the new covenant of grace that we have in Jesus Christ