

Sunday School Member Quarterly

Spring 2022

Deuteronomy

Choose Wisely

Sunday School Lessons for Adults and Youth

Written by John O. Yates



Morningside

B A P T I S T C H U R C H

2604 Bemiss Road, Valdosta, GA 31602

(229) 242-1426 www.morningside.ws

Sunday School – 9:00 each Sunday Morning

*Sunday School Member Quarterly, Winter 2001-2002,
Deuteronomy.*

Copyright © 2001, John O. Yates, October 2001. All
rights reserved.

Revised and updated 2022
for the spring 2022 quarter.

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are taken
from the King James Version of the Bible.

Soli Deo Gloria!

Sunday School Lessons

March through May 2022

Deuteronomy *Choose Wisely*

LOOKING BACK

<i>Mar. 6:</i>	Learn From the Past (Deut. 1 – 3).....	8
<i>Mar. 13:</i>	“Take Heed ... Lest Thou Forget” (Deut. 4).....	11

LIVING RIGHT

<i>Mar. 20:</i>	The Ten Commandments (Deut. 5).....	14
<i>Mar. 27:</i>	The Heart of the Law (Deut. 6).....	18
<i>Apr. 3:</i>	What God Requires of You (Deut. 7 – 11).....	21
<i>Apr. 10:</i>	The Sanctuary and Feasts (Deut. 12 – 17).....	24
<i>Apr. 17:</i>	Will You Obey God? (Acts 13).....	27
<i>Apr. 24:</i>	Deadly Idolatry (Deut. 13).....	30
<i>May 1:</i>	Abomination and Atonement (Deut. 17 – 18).....	33
<i>May 8:</i>	Justice (Deut. 19 – 21).....	36
<i>May 15:</i>	Family Relationships (Deut. 22 – 25).....	39
<i>May 22:</i>	The Talking Tithe (Deut. 26).....	42

LOOKING AHEAD

<i>May 29:</i>	The Choice is Yours (Deut. 27 – 30).....	45
----------------	--	----

Supplementary Materials

Daily Bible Reading Guide.....	4
Coming Next Quarter.....	4
Map of the Promised Land.....	6
Introduction to Deuteronomy.....	7
How to Become a Christian.....	Back Cover

Daily Bible Reading Guide

Read the following scripture passages each day and complete the learning activities in this book each week. This will prepare you for Sunday School class, and God will bless you as you read, study, and memorize His Word.

Week of February 28 – March 5

Mon: Deuteronomy 1; **Tues:** Deuteronomy 2;
Wed: Deuteronomy 3; **Thurs:** Memorize Proverbs 3:5-6;
Fri: Deuteronomy 2; **Sat:** Deuteronomy 3

Week of March 7 – 12

Mon: Deuteronomy 4:1-24; **Tues:** Deuteronomy 4:25-49;
Wed: Roman 2; **Thurs:** Memorize Romans 2:4;
Fri: Deuteronomy 4:1-24; **Sat:** Deuteronomy 4:25-49;

Week of March 14 – 19

Mon: Deuteronomy 5:1-21; **Tues:** Deuteronomy 5:22-33;
Wed: Exodus 20:1-17; **Thurs:** Memorize the Ten
Commandments; **Fri:** Exodus 20:1-17; **Sat:** Deuteronomy 5

Week of March 21 – 26

Mon: Deuteronomy 6; **Tues:** Proverbs 22;
Wed: Psalm 78:1-39; **Thurs:** Memorize Deuteronomy 6:4-7;
Fri: Mark 12:1-34; **Sat:** Deuteronomy 6

Week of March 28 – April 2

Mon: Deuteronomy 7; **Tues:** Deuteronomy 8;
Wed: Deuteronomy 9;
Thurs: Memorize Deuteronomy 10:12-13;
Fri: Deuteronomy 10; **Sat:** Deuteronomy 11

Week of April 4 – 9

Mon: Deuteronomy 12; **Tues:** Deuteronomy 13;
Wed: Deuteronomy 14; **Thurs:** Deuteronomy 15;
Fri: Deuteronomy 16; **Sat:** Deuteronomy 17

Week of April 11 – 16

Mon: Acts 13; **Tues:** Matthew 28; **Wed:** Luke 23;
Thurs: Luke 24; **Fri:** John 20; **Sat:** Romans 6

Week of April 18 – 23

Mon: Deuteronomy 13; **Tues:** 2 Corinthians 11;
Wed: John 14; **Thurs:** Memorize John 14:6; **Fri:** 2 John;
Sat: Deuteronomy 13

Week of April 25 – 30

Mon: Deuteronomy 17; **Tues:** Deuteronomy 18;
Wed: 1 Corinthians 5; **Thurs:** 1 Timothy 4;
Fri: Deuteronomy 17; **Sat:** Deuteronomy 18

Week of May 2 – 7

Mon: Deuteronomy 19; **Tues:** Deuteronomy 20;
Wed: Deuteronomy 21; **Thurs:** Memorize 1 Timothy 2:1-2;
Fri: Deuteronomy 19 – 20; **Sat:** Deuteronomy 21

Week of May 9 – 14

Mon: Deuteronomy 22; **Tues:** Deuteronomy 23;
Wed: Deuteronomy 24; **Thurs:** 1 Corinthians 6;
Fri: Matthew 19:1-15; **Sat:** Deuteronomy 25

Week of May 16 – 21

Mon: Deuteronomy 26; **Tues:** Malachi 3; **Wed:** Matthew 6;
Thurs: Memorize Malachi 3:10; **Fri:** Matthew 7;
Sat: Deuteronomy 26

Week of May 23 – 28

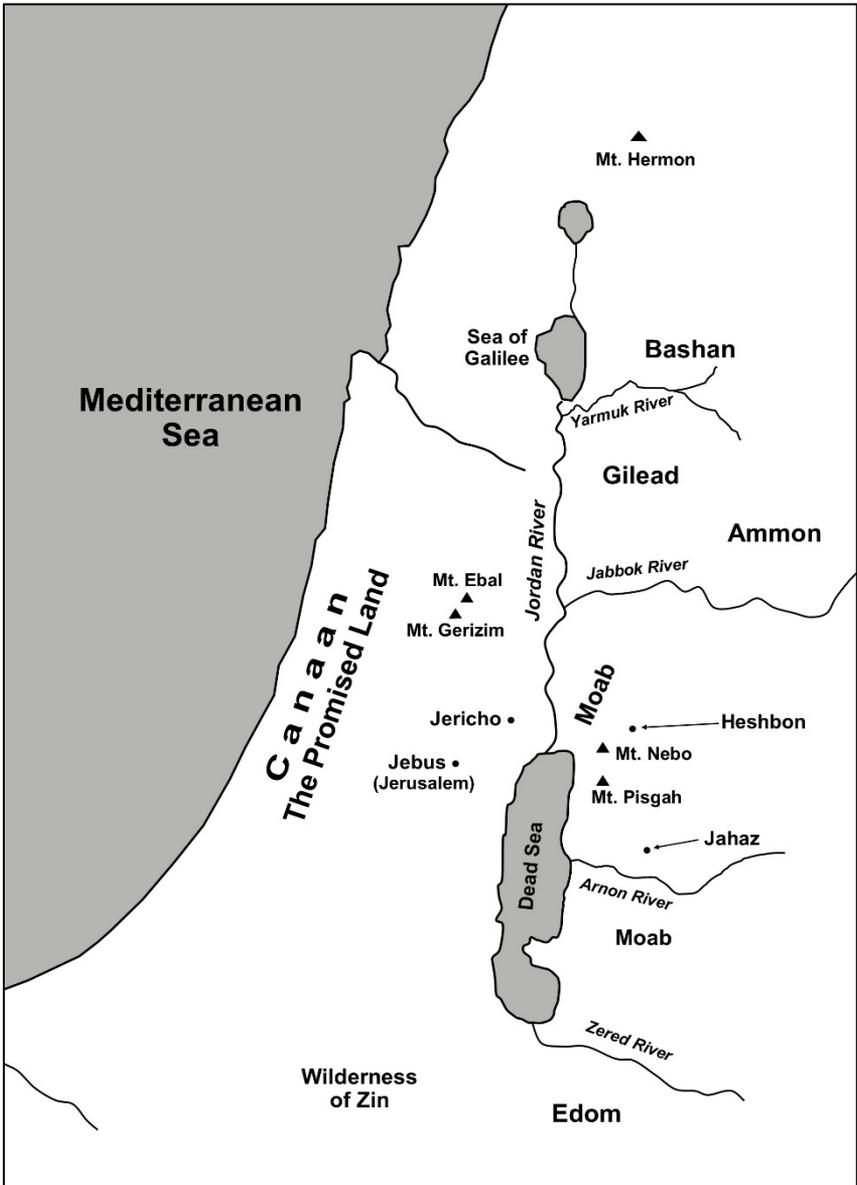
Mon: Deuteronomy 27; **Tues:** Deuteronomy 28;
Wed: Hebrews 13; **Thurs:** Memorize Deuteronomy 30:19;
Fri: Deuteronomy 29; **Sat:** Deuteronomy 30

Coming Next Quarter

June – August 2022

Joshua, Judges

Map of the Promised Land



Introduction to Deuteronomy

Author: Moses

Date: 1405 B.C.

The title of the book of Deuteronomy comes from the Greek Septuagint, which referred to it as the “*Second Law*.” In reality, the book of Deuteronomy is not a second law, but a retelling of God’s Law. The Hebrew title for the book comes from the first words of Deuteronomy 1:1, and literally means, “*The Words*.”

The book of Deuteronomy consists of a series of sermons Moses preached to the Israelites shortly before they entered the Promised Land under Joshua’s leadership. As such, the book might aptly be called “The Preaching of Moses.”

Purpose: The purpose of Deuteronomy is three-fold: (1) to remind the Israelites of God’s dealings with them (and their failures) in the past, (2) to teach the Israelites how to live, and (3) to prepare them to enter the Promised Land. The book contains repeated warnings against idolatry and wickedness. Moses challenged the Israelites to choose to live according to God’s instructions and therefore receive His blessings. The title of this study is *Choose Wisely*.

Historical Setting: All the messages recorded in the book of Deuteronomy were preached to the Israelites as they camped on the plains of Moab, very shortly before Moses’ death.

God led the Israelites out of Egypt, gave them His Law at Mount Sinai, and led them to Kadesh Barnea. Israel rebelled against God, so He made them wander in the wilderness forty years. The book of Deuteronomy begins on the first day of the eleventh month of the fortieth year (Deut. 1:3) since their departure from Egypt. Israel crossed the Jordan River a mere 70 days later, on the tenth day of the first month (Josh. 4:19).

March 6, 2022

Deuteronomy 1 – 3

Learn From the Past

Those who refuse to learn from the past are doomed to repeat it.

We have all made mistakes and poor choices in the past, but if we don't learn from those mistakes, we will certainly repeat them. That is exactly the reason parents punish their children. When we make a mistake or a poor choice and then suffer the unpleasant consequences, it helps us remember not to do the same thing again.

Who do you know who can be trusted? Think of someone you know who is trustworthy, and then answer this question: How do you know that person can be trusted? Proven trustworthiness in the past is the only way we can know someone is trustworthy.

In this week's scripture, God wanted the Israelites to learn two important lessons from their past: (1) He had proven Himself to be trustworthy, so He could be trusted in the future, and (2) the Israelites had proven they were not trustworthy, so they needed to trust God and not themselves in the future. We need to learn those same lessons. Read the **Introduction to Deuteronomy** (page 7), and then answer the following questions.

Deut. 1:3-5 “And it came to pass in the _____ year.”

It had been forty years since the Israelites left Egypt. Moses spoke to them after they had defeated two kings on the east side of the Jordan River (see the **Map of the Promised Land** on page 6).

Deut. 1:6-7 God told Moses to lead Israel from Mount Horeb (another name for Mount Sinai) northward toward the Promised Land, which He described in verse 7.

Deut. 1:8 What did God tell Israel to do?

Why was God giving them the Promised Land?

God blessed and multiplied Israel, and led them to a place called Kadesh Barnea, on the southern border of the Promised Land. The Israelites sent spies to study the new land (Num. 13:1-25).

Deut. 1:25 How did the spies describe the land?

Deut. 1:26-28 Why did Israel refuse to go up and possess the land?

Deut. 1:29-31 Moses told the people not to be afraid. What did he remind them about God's past behavior, in order to calm their fears?

Deut. 1:32 "Yet in this thing _____ did not _____ the _____ your _____."

God proved that the Israelites could trust Him, but the Israelites proved they could not be trusted to obey God. Let's study some more examples.

Deut. 2:14 God promised that all the adults who rebelled against Him at Kadesh Barnea would die in the wilderness without entering the Promised Land (Num. 14:28-30). How long did God wait for that to happen?

Deut. 2:15 Why did those men die?

God kept His word and proved He is trustworthy.

Deut. 2:16-18 When all that rebellious generation had died, God told Moses to lead Israel into the land of Moab (east of the Dead Sea).

Deut. 2:30-33 How did God again prove He could be trusted?

Deut. 3:1-3 Again, God proved He could be trusted. How?

Deut. 3:21 What did God remind Joshua that he had seen?

What did God promise Joshua?

Deut. 3:22 Why did God say Israel should not fear her enemies?

Concluding Thoughts: God repeatedly proved that Israel could trust Him, by doing exactly what He said He would do. He had a proven track record of being trustworthy, and He reminded Israel about it. **God is still trustworthy.**

On the other hand, Israel had a proven track record of disobeying God. They proved they were not trustworthy and they paid a price for it. Like Israel, **we cannot be trusted to obey God.**

Since God can be trusted, and the Israelites couldn't, they should have learned from their past that it was always best to do exactly what God said. **We must learn that same lesson.**

What has God done in the past that proves to you He can be trusted?

God's trustworthiness toward you in the past shows He can be trusted in the future. Learn from your past so you can choose to trust God right now and in your future. Thank Him for being trustworthy. Tell Him you trust Him right now.

Project: Memorize **Proverbs 3:5-6**. Begin a journal of God's trustworthiness. Write a description of any time in your past when God has done something that proves He can be trusted. Add to that journal as new things occur. When you face trials, struggles, or uncertainty, read your journal to remind you that God can be trusted. Do the **Daily Bible Readings** (page 4) each day this week and come to Sunday School this Sunday. Your presence will encourage others to trust God.

“Take Heed ... Lest Thou Forget”

When you were growing up, did you ever go away from your parents for a few days? You might have gone to camp, on a school band trip, or a church youth retreat.

What did your parents do just before you left home? They probably recited a long list of reminders. You probably heard “Don’t forget” and “Remember” many times before you left on your trip.

Why did your parents review all those instructions? Because they cared about your safety and well-being. They wanted what was best for you, so they repeated many instructions and warnings.

Just before Israel entered the Promised Land, God used His spokesman Moses to remind the Israelites about many instructions and warnings. God told them to be careful not to forget several things. We need to remember the same things God wanted the Israelites to remember. Take heed, lest you forget the following:

God’s Commands

Deut. 4:1 Moses told Israel to remember God’s laws and rules. What did he say would happen if they remembered them?

Deut. 4:2 “Ye shall not _____ unto the _____ which I _____ you, neither shall ye _____ ought from it.” Israel was to remember and obey God’s commands.

God’s Awesome Power

Deut. 4:9 What did God warn Israel not to forget?

Deut. 4:10-11 Years earlier, God called Israel together at Mt. Horeb (Mt. Sinai) to teach them His Law. What did the Israelites see there?

Deut. 4:12 What did Israel hear?

Deut. 4:13 What did God give to Israel?

God wanted Israel to remember His commands and instructions to them. He wanted them to remember His awesome power and the fear they felt in His presence. That fear and reverence should have motivated Israel to obey God, but it didn't. We should remember:

God's Promise of Punishment

Deut. 4:23-24 God warned Israel not to forget the covenant and worship idols. How did Moses describe God?

Deut. 4:25-26 What did God promise to do to Israel if they corrupted themselves and worshipped idols?

Deut. 4:27 What else did He promise to do to Israel?

Deut. 4:28 Since Israel was so interested in worshipping false gods, God promised to scatter them in foreign lands where idols were worshipped.

God's Offer of Repentance

Deut. 4:29-30 Even after Israel corrupted herself and became scattered in pagan lands, they could still return to God. What did God promise in verse 29?

Deut. 4:31 If we repent, God will not _____ us, _____ us, or _____ His promises to us.

Just like the Israelites, God has promised that if we disobey Him, we will bear the consequences brought on by our sin. If we repent of our sins and seek God, we will find Him. Praise God that He still

offers repentance to His wayward children! There is one more thing we should take heed of, lest we forget:

Our Position In Jesus Christ

Deut. 4:32-34 Did God treat any other nation like He did Israel?

Deut. 4:35-36 God revealed Himself and spoke to Israel.

Deut. 4:37-38 God brought Israel out of bondage and gave them a new land. Why did He do this?

Deut. 4:39 What was Israel to remember?

Deut. 4:40 What God tell them to do?

Concluding Thoughts: Just like the Israelites, we need to remember God's **commands and instructions**. We shouldn't forget the times we've seen His **awesome power**. We should remember that He has promised to send **punishment if we disobey**. We must not forget that even when we do disobey, **His goodness leads us to repentance** (Rom. 2:4). Finally, we must remember that God has given us a very special **relationship with Him**.

God chose us, He loves us, He reveals Himself to us, He brought us out of sin's bondage, and He has given us a new inheritance. Because of all the things we remember, we ought to obey God fully. When we do, we will be blessed.

Remember and obey God's commands. If you have disobeyed, accept His offer of repentance. Thank Him for who you are in Christ. Make a commitment to obey Him fully from this day on.

Project: Memorize **Romans 2:4**. Do you know a class member or loved one who has forgotten some of these things? Go to that person and lovingly urge him or her to remember.

The Ten Commandments

The Ten Commandments have become a contentious topic in recent years. This fundamental code of conduct, which God gave the Jewish people 3500 years ago, is the basis for our entire legal system. Those who settled in America and established its laws and standards knew that obedience to the Ten Commandments would yield a peaceful, loving, and prosperous society.

Yet the Ten Commandments have been banned from our schools, courtrooms, and public buildings. Why are they so hated? It is because they are God-given rules for right behavior, and sinful human nature hates rules. The fact of the matter, though, is that if the Ten Commandments were universally obeyed, there would be no war, murder, divorce, crime, or false religion. Read Deuteronomy 5 and let's learn about the Ten Commandments.

Deut. 5:1 Moses called all Israel together. What did he want them to hear?

Deut. 5:2-5 “The LORD our God made a _____ with _____ in _____.”

Moses reminded the Israelites that forty years earlier God had given them His Ten Commandments. That took place at Horeb (an alternate name for Mount Sinai) shortly after the Israelites left Egypt. You can read about that event in Exodus 20. In the following verses, Moses repeated the Ten Commandments.

Relating Rightly to God

Deut. 5:6 The Lord began by reminding Israel that He had brought them out of bondage in Egypt. If you are saved, God has brought **you** out of bondage to sin and death. Remembering what God has done for us in the past should make us want to obey Him.

Deut. 5:7 # 1 – “Thou shalt have _____ before me.” The first commandment is to have **NO OTHER GODS**. We are to worship God, and God alone!

Deut. 5:8-10 # 2 – The second commandment is to have **NO IDOLS**. We are not to make or worship any image or statue. What does verse 9 say God will do to those who violate this commandment?

What does verse 10 say He will do for those who obey Him?

Deut. 5:11 # 3 – The third commandment is: **NO USE OF GOD’S NAME**. What will God do to those who break this rule?

Deut. 5:12-15 # 4 – The fourth commandment is to **KEEP THE _____**. God wanted His people to work six days each week, and then set aside the Sabbath day (Saturday) for rest and worship. This is the only one of the Ten Commandments not repeated in some form in the New Testament. Christians are no longer under Sabbath restrictions, but we should still set aside a day for worship. The early church adopted the first day of the week (Sunday) as the day of worship in honor of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, which took place on Sunday. That is why we call Sunday the Lord’s Day. Christians should gather for worship on Sunday.

The first four commandments were given to keep the Israelites in **right relationship with God**. We, likewise, ought to worship God only, respect and honor Him and His name, and worship Him regularly. The remaining six commandments were given to keep the Israelites in **right relationship to one another**. Obey them and you’ll have a happier, less complicated life.

Relating Rightly to One Another

Deut. 5:16 # 5 – “_____ thy _____ and thy _____.” The fifth commandment is: **HONOR YOUR PARENTS**. What did God promise to those who obey this command?

Deut. 5:17 # 6 – “Thou shalt not _____.” Some have mistakenly taken this commandment to be a prohibition on war, capital punishment, hunting, and the eating of meat, but it is nothing of the kind. The word translated “kill” in this verse literally means “murder.” The sixth commandment is: **NO MURDER**.

Deut. 5:18 # 7 – What does the 7th commandment forbid?

The seventh commandment is: **NO ADULTERY**. Marriage is a sacred union, which is never to be violated. God hates immorality, and it leaves terrible scars.

Deut. 5:19 # 8 – “Neither shalt thou _____.” Imagine what this world would be like if this were obeyed! The eighth commandment is: **NO THEFT**.

Deut. 5:20 # 9 – “Neither shalt thou bear _____ against thy neighbour.” The term “false witness” refers to the giving of false testimony and to lying in general. The ninth commandment is: **NO LYING**.

Deut. 5:21 # 10 – What does the tenth commandment forbid?

This commandment deals with the thoughts and desires that lead to violation of commandments six through nine. The tenth commandment is: **NO COVETING**.

Deut. 5:32 What did God expect of the Israelites?

Deut. 5:33 God promised that the result of obeying the Ten Commandments would be, “that ye may _____, and that it may be _____ with you, and that ye may _____ your days in the land which ye shall possess.”

Concluding Thoughts: Why are the Ten Commandments so hated today? They are simply a code of conduct designed to keep us in **right relationship with God and with others**. The devil doesn't want us to have right relationship with God and others, so he wants us to be ignorant of the Ten Commandments. He doesn't want them seen, heard, learned, or obeyed.

While the Ten Commandments are a wonderful code of conduct, remember that obeying them will not get a person to heaven. Salvation is only available through Jesus Christ. No one can fully obey the Ten Commandments (James 2:10), which is why we need a Savior. If you don't know Jesus as your Lord and Savior, read the simple plan of salvation printed on the back of this book. Confess your sins and ask Jesus to save you right now.

Project: Memorize the Ten Commandments this week. Look for opportunities this week to work the Ten Commandments into your conversation, perhaps by commenting on sin and evil in the world. If everyone obeyed the Ten Commandments, the world would definitely be a better place! Do the **Daily Bible Readings** (page 4) each day.

The Heart of the Law

The first five books of the Bible are filled with many rules, laws, and regulations by which the Jewish people were to live. There were so many rules, in fact, that certain religious leaders devoted their entire lives to studying and explaining the laws to the people.

Last week we learned about the Ten Commandments. Those ten rules are the Jewish Law in a nutshell, but people have still found them hard to obey. Human nature is to break rules, and God's Ten Commandments are just that: a set of rules. How can we possibly obey the Ten Commandments?

Once Jesus was asked to name the single greatest commandment in the Law, and He quoted a verse found in this week's lesson. In Deuteronomy 6 we will discover the very heart of the Law.

Deut. 6:1 Who commanded Moses to teach the laws to Israel?

Deut. 6:2 How long was Israel to obey God's laws?

What was the promised result of obedience?

Deut. 6:3 What else did God promise if they obeyed?

Deut. 6:4 "Hear, O Israel: The _____ our God is _____ LORD." There are no other gods!

Deut. 6:5 "And thou shalt _____ the LORD thy God with all thine _____, and with all thy _____, and with all thy _____."

God expects **complete love and devotion** from his people. Jesus quoted this verse and called it "*the first and great commandment*" (Matt. 22:37-38). This is truly the heart of the Law: if we obey this command, we will automatically obey all the others.

Deut. 6:6-7 “And these _____, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine _____.” God expects His people to know His Word, and parents are supposed to teach it to their children. According to verse 7, when are we to do this?

Deut. 6:8-9 The Israelites were to keep God’s Word constantly before their eyes and in their thoughts. When do you think about God’s Word?

Deut. 6:10-11 God was about to give Israel a new land, full of cities, furnished houses, and established agricultural crops. They were to be blessed with abundance, but there was a danger in that.

Deut. 6:12 What did God warn Israel not to do?

Deut. 6:13-15 What did God promise to do if Israel started worshipping false gods?

There is real danger in forgetting the Lord!

Deut. 6:16 What was Israel warned not to do?

Deut. 6:17 What were they supposed to do?

God expects our complete devotion and obedience.

Deut. 6:18-19 What blessings did God promise if Israel obeyed Him?

Deut. 6:20 What would their children ask them?

God has always been concerned with the religious instruction of younger generations. As the Israelites followed the commands and instructions of Almighty God, it would be a natural thing for their children to ask the meaning of the rules and rituals. Observation naturally leads children to questioning, and questioning gives

parents an opportunity to teach. Please note that parents bear the **primary** responsibility for the teaching of their children. Teachers at church can only supplement the teaching children get at home.

Deut. 6:21 What were the parents to tell their children?

Deut. 6:22-23 What had the Lord done for them?

Deut. 6:24-25 Why did God give Israel rules to live by?

When God gives us instructions, rules, and prohibitions, it is **always** for our **good**.

Concluding Thoughts: What is the heart of the Law?

1. Realize that obedience brings blessing.
2. Know and love God completely and teach your children to know and love God completely.
3. Don't forget or forsake the Lord.
4. Obey God and do right.

That is the heart of the Law, because if you do the things commanded in this chapter, you will automatically keep the Ten Commandments. Your behavior will be pleasing to God.

Keep God's Word always in your mind and teach others to do the same. *"Beware, lest thou forget the LORD."*

There is no better time than today to commit your life to Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 6:2). If you're already saved, rededicate yourself to Jesus. If you've never been saved, ask Jesus to save you now.

Project: Memorize **Deuteronomy 6:4-7**. Don't miss Sunday School this Sunday.

What God Requires of You

Who places requirements upon you? People such as your boss, your superior officer in the military, your teacher in school, and your parents can put requirements on you. They can require you to do certain things.

What does the word **requirement** mean? Something that is required is **not optional**. There are **no alternatives** to doing something that is required.

Would God ever place requirements upon His people? He required the Israelites to do certain things that you will learn about in this week’s lesson. This lesson covers portions of five chapters in the book of Deuteronomy. As you read the scripture and answer the questions, ask yourself if these requirements apply to you.

Separation

- Deut. 7:1** When God brought the Israelites into the Promised Land, He was going to use them to drive out several pagan nations who already lived there. These nations were stronger than Israel.
- Deut. 7:2** “Thou shalt _____ them, and utterly _____ them; thou shalt make no _____ with them, nor show _____ unto them.”
- Deut. 7:3** What was Israel forbidden to do?
- Deut. 7:4** Why did God want Israel to remain separate from the pagan nations?
- Deut. 7:5-6** Why did God want Israel to destroy their places of idol worship?

Memory

Deut. 8:18 “But thou shalt _____ the LORD thy _____.” We must remember that God gives us the ability to work and earn a living.

Deut. 8:19-20 What did God promise would happen to Israel if they forgot Him?

Understanding

Deut. 9:4-5 God had already promised to drive the pagan nations out of the Promised Land. Why was He going to drive those nations out?

Deut. 9:6 What did God want Israel to understand?

We must **understand** that our blessings and victories are often not the result of our goodness or righteousness, but rather the fulfillment of God’s purpose for us and His judgment of wicked people.

Complete Devotion

Deut. 10:12-13 What does the Lord require of His people? Fill in the blanks to find out: “And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to _____ the LORD thy God, to _____ in all His ways, and to _____ Him, and to _____ the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, to _____ the _____ of the LORD, and His _____, which I command thee this day for thy good?”

Deut. 10:14-17 God reminded Israel that He chose them and loved them, and He wanted their **complete devotion**.

A Wise Choice

Deut. 11:22-25 What did God promise if they obeyed Him?

Deut. 11:26 God gave Israel a choice. They could choose a **blessing** or a **curse**. This was a very important choice. We have the same choice, and we must choose wisely.

Deut. 11:27 What actions would bring a blessing?

Deut. 11:28 What actions would bring a curse?

Concluding Thoughts: Certain things are required of you. You can take any classes you want, but if they don't meet the requirements for graduation, you won't graduate. The same is true for your work. You can do anything you want at work, but if you don't fulfill your boss' requirements, you may get fired.

God has placed requirements upon His children. They aren't requirements for salvation; the only requirement for salvation is a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. The requirements the Lord gave Israel were requirements for staying in proper fellowship with God.

Those same requirements are still applicable to us. To remain in proper fellowship with God, we must choose to:

1. Be **separate** from the world,
2. **Remember** the Lord and His blessings upon us,
3. **Understand** God's sovereignty and our sinfulness,
4. Be **completely devoted** to Him, and
5. Make **wise choices**.

That is what God requires of you. Will you strive to meet those requirements? Tell Him so right now.

Project: Memorize **Deuteronomy 10:12-13**. If you need to change something about your behavior or lifestyle to meet those requirements, begin doing so today.

The Sanctuary and Feasts

- “I believe I can worship God just as well on the golf course or in my living room as I can at church – maybe even better!”
- “I’ve earned everything I’ve got, and I don’t see why I should give any of it to the church!”
- “God doesn’t expect us to be at church every time the door is open. Those people down there are fanatics!”
- “I really can’t afford to tithe, but if I have any money left over at the end of the month, I’ll give some to the church.”

Have you ever heard statements like those? They reveal ignorance of God and the sincere worship He wants from His people. In this week’s lesson, you will see that God gave the Israelites many instructions about how they were to worship Him. What can we learn from those instructions about our own worship?

The Central Sanctuary

Deut. 12:1 These are God’s commands to His people.

Deut. 12:2-3 What was Israel told to do to all the places of false worship when they entered their new land?

Deut. 12:4-5 The false religions had many places of worship. God promised to select **one central place** where all His people were to worship Him.

Deut. 12:6-7 What were the Israelites to bring to the central sanctuary?

The lesson for us is that **God expects His people to have a church home**. If you are a Christian and don’t belong to a local, Bible-believing church, you are out of God’s will.

Passover

Deut. 16:1 What great event in Israel's history did the Passover commemorate?

Deut. 16:2-8 The things the Israelites were to do during the feast of Passover reminded them that God brought them out of Egyptian bondage. One of the key elements of that event was the placing of lamb's blood above and beside their doorway, which protected them from death (Ex. 12:7-13).

Passover reminds us that **the blood of Jesus covers all our sin.**

Weeks

Deut. 16:9 The feast of Weeks came at the beginning of the harvest and was to remind Israel that God was the source of all their provision.

Deut. 16:10-12 What were the Israelites to bring (v. 10)?

What were they to do (v. 11)?

What were they to remember (v. 12)?

This feast reminds us that God gives us everything we have.

Tabernacles

Deut. 16:13-15 The feast of Tabernacles came in the fall, at the end of the harvest, and reminded Israel that God brought them from poverty and slavery to plenty and freedom.

We should remember that God has brought us from the slavery of sin to freedom in Jesus Christ.

Men Must Come Worship Three Times Each Year

Deut. 16:16-17 What did God expect all Israelite men to do?

What were they to bring?

God expects us to attend church regularly. You cannot willfully skip out on regular worship at your church and be right with God.

Unblemished Offerings

Deut. 17:1 What kind of offerings were the Israelites to bring?

Christians are to give their first and best to God. Anything less is an abomination to Him!

Concluding Thoughts: Review the six things we can learn from the instructions God gave Israel about the sanctuary and the feasts. Now, reread the statements at the very beginning of this lesson. Which of the instructions do those statements violate?

Now think about your own worship, service, and giving to the Lord. How does your worship compare to what God expected of the Jews? Do you belong to a church that you attend regularly? Are you giving your first and best to the Lord? Do you realize that apart from God you would have nothing, and without the blood of Jesus you would bear the full penalty for all your sins?

What parts of your worship and giving need improvement? Today is a great time to make a renewed commitment to the proper worship of God. Take whatever steps are necessary this week to bring your worship and giving in line with what God expects.

Project: Follow through with your renewed commitment to God. Demonstrate your commitment by attending Sunday School and worship services this Sunday.

Will You Obey God?

Obey or disobey.

Johnny’s mom told him to clean up his room, but instead he played video games. Johnny disobeyed. Rachel’s mother told her to clear the table, so she got right up and started carrying plates to the sink. Rachel obeyed. Steve saw that the speed limit was 35, but he was in a hurry, so he drove 45 miles per hour. Steve disobeyed. Emily’s boss told her to complete a certain project, so she set everything else aside and focused only on that project until it was finished. Emily obeyed. We really don’t have any trouble telling the difference between obedience and disobedience. This quarter we are learning that there are costs when we disobey.

This Sunday is Easter. We are going to learn about the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ; but we will also consider a very important question: “Will I obey God?”

Turn to Acts 13. Paul, accompanied by Barnabas, was on his First Missionary Journey. While in the city of Antioch of Pisidia they went into the Jewish synagogue on the Sabbath day.

Acts 13:15-16 The rulers of the synagogue invited Paul to speak.

Acts 13:17 What had God done for Israel?

Acts 13:18-20 God brought them into the land of Canaan.

Acts 13:21 They wanted a _____; God gave them _____.

Acts 13:22 Who was their next king?

What did God say about him?

Acts 13:23 “Of this man’s _____ hath God according to His promise raised unto Israel a _____, _____.”

Acts 13:24-25 John the Baptist pointed people to Jesus.

Acts 13:26 What word did God send them?

Acts 13:27 The Jews at Jerusalem did not recognize Jesus for who He was, so they wanted to kill Him.

Acts 13:28 Was Jesus guilty of any wrongdoing?

What did the Jews do?

Acts 13:29 Jesus was crucified in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies. What was done with His body?

Acts 13:30 “But God _____ him from the _____.”

This is the wonderful message of Easter. Jesus Christ was killed through the brutal means of crucifixion, after which His dead body was placed in a tomb. Three days later He arose from the dead, proving that He had conquered death and all His promises were true.

Acts 13:31 How do we know Jesus really arose from the dead?

Acts 13:32-33 His resurrection fulfilled promises made long ago.

Acts 13:34-35 Will Jesus ever experience corruption – the decay of death?

Acts 13:36 Did David’s body decay in the grave?

Acts 13:37 “But He, whom God raised again, saw no _____.”

Acts 13:38 What is available through the risen Christ?

Acts 13:39 What happens to those who believe in Jesus?

The word **justified** means to be made right with God, just as if you had never sinned. No sinner can come into God's presence, so we must be justified if we want to be with God in heaven. Look back at that verse. Could the Law of Moses justify anyone?

Salvation (another word for justification) is only available through faith in Jesus Christ. **If Jesus had not risen from the dead, His dead body would still be in the tomb, and He would not have the power to save anyone.** That's why the apostles preached so often about Jesus' resurrection. **That's why Easter is so important.**

Now let's return to our opening question: will you obey God? In the following verses God gives you some important commands.

Acts 17:30 What has God commanded everyone to do?

1 John 3:23 What else does He command us to do?

Concluding Thoughts: Have you obeyed God's commands? Have you **repented** of (turned away from) your sins and **believed** (placed your faith) in Jesus Christ for salvation?

If you obey God's commands, you will be saved and spend eternity with Jesus in heaven. If you stubbornly refuse to obey those simple commands, you will be eternally lost. This quarter we have discovered some of the terrible costs of disobedience in the lives of people who lived long ago. Still today, disobedience carries a high price tag. **The cost of disobeying God's clear commands to repent and believe in Jesus is eternal torment in hell.**

Have you already obeyed those commands? If so, thank God right now for raising His Son from the dead so you could be saved. If you've never repented and placed your faith in Christ, please read the verses on the back of this book and turn to Jesus today.

Project: Tell someone the Good News about Jesus this week.

Deadly Idolatry

There are thousands of religions in the world, with more springing up every day. Most people who follow those religions are sincere in their beliefs.

The popular modern worldview is that no religion is superior to any other. Many people say that every religion is of equal value, and that the sincerity of one's beliefs is the most important issue.

Is that the way God sees it? Is sincerity really the only issue? Are there many ways to God, or just one, as Jesus said (John 14:6)?

God told Israel that false religion was not to be tolerated in their land. Read Deuteronomy 13 and let's see what we can learn from God's instructions to Israel.

Deut. 13:1 Who did God name in this verse?

False prophets claim to speak for God, but their message doesn't agree with God's Word. A "*dreamer of dreams*" is one who claims to have received some message from God in his dreams.

Deut. 13:2 Some signs and wonders the false prophets and dreamers predict may come to pass (2 Cor. 11:13-15). What is their message?

Deut. 13:3-4 How was Israel to respond to their false teaching?

Deut. 13:5 What did God tell them to do to the false prophets?

Why must they do that?

Deut. 13:6 Verses 1-5 deal with false prophets and dreamers who would try to lead Israel into false religion. Who else could try to lead them astray?

Deut. 13:7 Israel was about to conquer a land where many false gods were worshipped. False religion would be all around them, but they were not to become involved. The same is true today; we are surrounded by false religion, but we must stay true to God.

Deut. 13:8-10 What did God tell the Israelites to do to idolators, **even** if they were within **their own family**?

Note that “*all the people*” were to be involved in the execution of the idolator.

Deut. 13:11 What would “*all Israel*” learn from the public execution of idolators?

God warned Israel about the enticement to false religion coming from false prophets, dreamers, and family members. In the next verses He warned about an Israelite city worshipping false gods.

Deut. 13:12-13 What other idolators did God warn Israel about?

Deut. 13:14 What were they to do to find out if the charges of idolatry and false teaching were true?

Deut. 13:15 What did God tell Israel to do with the inhabitants of that city?

This is very harsh punishment, but remember that before an entire city could be led into idolatry, they must have already disobeyed God’s instructions in verses 1-11.

Deut. 13:16-17 What did God tell Israel to do to that city and all its contents?

Why were they to do this?

Deut. 13:18 God’s blessing would come when Israel fully obeyed the Lord.

Concluding Thoughts: God warned Israel about false religion coming from **false prophets, family members, and fellow countrymen**. The Lord told them to execute all worshippers of false gods because He wanted His people to be pure and uncorrupted by false religion. In Israel, there was to be a **very high cost** for following false religion.

There is still a high cost of following false religion. We don't execute idol worshippers today, but if a person becomes involved in false religion, he or she will have bad associates, make bad choices, and have a bad eternity in hell! As a matter of fact, modern terrorism is completely the result of false religion. False religion can lead people to hate and kill others. Genuine Christianity will never do that, but false religion will.

The instructions in this chapter were given to the nation of Israel, to be followed after they settled into the Promised Land. New Testament Christians have never been told by God to kill people who follow or teach false religion. Mentally deranged people have done such terrible deeds, but God did **not** tell them to.

What, then, can we learn from this lesson? We are clearly told to strictly avoid followers of false religion, and not to endorse or encourage them (2 John 1:7-11). Are you tolerating false religious beliefs and practices at your church, in your family, or among your associates? Perhaps you need to speak up for the truth of the Gospel to a friend, family member, or fellow church member. There is only **one way** to heaven, and His name is **Jesus**.

Project: Memorize **John 14:6**. Don't listen to false teaching this week. Read your Bible daily so you will recognize false teaching when you hear it.

Abomination and Atonement

Horoscopes are available on websites, mobile apps, and newspapers. Many people wouldn't think of starting the day without checking their horoscope. On the highway we see signs advertising palm readers and in the grocery store checkout line we are confronted with magazines full of astrology and psychic predictions about future events. TV talk shows feature witches and others who claim to communicate with the dead, along with ads for psychic readings.

Such practices used to be confined to far-off countries and primitive tribes, but magic and mysticism are alive and well in America today.

How does God feel about such behavior? Is it just innocent fun? Should Christians participate in such things? Let's find out.

Deut. 17:2 Israel was to be alert to anyone “that hath wrought _____ in the sight of the LORD thy God, in _____ His covenant.”

Deut. 17:3 What things might this wicked person have done?

Deut. 17:4 God refers to this wicked idolatry as an _____.

The word **abomination** literally means something that is disgusting, detestable, and causes revulsion. What is the most disgusting sight you can imagine? Would it be raw sewage running through the streets of a poor third-world city, or the mangled remains of some poor animal that has been repeatedly run over on the highway? Whatever is the most detestable thing you can imagine – God views false religion as **worse** than that!

Deut. 17:5-7 What was Israel told to do to the wicked person?

Deut. 18:9 What was Israel not to learn to do?

**Deut.
18:10-11**

“There shall _____ be found among _____...”
Verses 10-11 list nine pagan activities that were not to be allowed in Israel. What are they?

1. “Anyone that maketh his son or his daughter to _____ through the _____” – child sacrifice to false gods.
2. “Or that useth _____” – seeking to know the future by signs and omens.
3. “Or an observer of _____” – like modern astrologers who seek to know the future by observing the moon and stars.
4. “Or an _____” – one who uses magic spells to predict the future.
5. “Or a _____” – one who uses supernatural powers to cause things to happen.
6. “Or a _____” – exercising magical mind control over others, like a hypnotist.
7. “Or a _____ with familiar _____” – a medium, who supposedly conjures up the spirits of the dead, but actually communicates with demon spirits (1 Tim. 4:1).
8. “Or a _____” – having supernatural knowledge and performing magical feats.
9. “Or a _____” – one who worships or “talks” with the dead (1 Sam. 28:7-11)

Deut. 18:12 How did God describe those who do these things?

**Deut.
18:13-14**

The pagan nations did these things, but “thou shalt be _____ with the LORD thy God.”

Deut. 18:15 Who did the Lord promise to raise up for Israel?

How were they to receive that Prophet?

Deut. 18:16-18 God told Moses about the coming Prophet almost forty years earlier at Horeb. The Prophet of whom these verses speak is none other than Jesus Christ, who arose from Israel with similarities to Moses, and spoke God's Word to Israel.

Deut. 18:19 What did God promise to anyone who rejects the words of the Prophet (Jesus)?

Concluding Thoughts: Jesus Christ came into the world to bring atonement for our sins. Atonement means to pay the price for sin and bring reconciliation between sinful man and Holy God.

God hates and detests the mystical practices of false religion. He said such abominable practices should not be found among His people. They result in death and eternal separation from God, but atonement is available through Jesus Christ. It is true that humans have a natural tendency toward wickedness and evil, but it is also true that any who turn to God through Jesus Christ will find forgiveness and atonement. The choice is ours.

Christians have no business participating in any of the abominable practices named in today's lesson. It is **not** innocent fun to go to a séance, call a psychic hotline, or even read your horoscope. Such practices are **disgusting** and **repulsive** to Almighty God. If you are involved in any such activities, **stop immediately!**

If you've never turned your life completely over to the Lordship of Jesus, do so right now. Without Jesus Christ, you are involved in false religion, bound to wickedness, and headed for eternal torment in hell. Turn to Jesus Christ for salvation right now! Read the verses printed on the back of this book and ask Jesus to save you.

Project: Take a good look around your home. If you find pagan religious symbols, astrological signs, or horoscopes, get rid of them **immediately**. They are not fun or art; they are abominations.

Justice

Justice is often perverted in our modern world. Some people want to guarantee the civil rights of criminals to the extreme point that they aren't really punished. Even if they are punished, it is usually many years after their crime. Innocent persons are abused by criminals, and it sometimes seems that criminals get off on minor technicalities. Guilt or innocence doesn't seem to be as important as having a prominent and highly paid lawyer!

It has been said that swift and certain punishment is the greatest deterrent to crime, but we certainly don't see that very often today. If God were to create a justice system, what would it look like?

God did institute a justice system for His people (Israel), one that guaranteed protection for the innocent and harsh punishment for the guilty. Let's examine the components of that justice system.

No Innocent Person Should Suffer

Deut. 19:2-3 How many cities was Israel told to set apart?

Deut. 19:4-6 Who was supposed to flee to those cities for protection?

These cities were known as cities of refuge. In ancient times it was common that if someone was killed, the nearest relative (the avenger of blood) would personally pursue and execute the killer. These cities of refuge were to provide protection for anyone who accidentally killed someone else.

Deut. 19:10 The important thing to learn from this is that **no innocent person should be punished unjustly.**

Murderers Deserve Death

Deut. 19:11 The next verses involve a truly guilty person fleeing to one of those cities.

Deut. 19:12 What were the elders of the city to do with that guilty man?

Deut. 19:13 Were they to have pity or compassion on the guilty murderer? God made it clear that **murderers deserve death** (see also Gen. 9:5-6).

Just Behavior

Deut. 19:14 A **landmark** was a property line marker. Why would it be wrong to remove such a marker?

Deut. 19:15 How many witnesses were needed for conviction?

No False Testimony

Deut. 19:16-18 Dishonest men can corrupt any legal system. If a false witness testified, the judges were to bring the matter to the Lord and determine the truth.

Deut. 19:19-21 What was the penalty for giving false testimony?

God ordained severe punishment for perjury. This would teach others not to lie. Were they to pity the guilty offender?

Deuteronomy 20 contains laws that relate to warfare. Verses 5-8 tell about men who were exempt from military service. Chapter 21 contains some laws relating to the family.

Inheritance Rules

Deut. 21:15-16 Polygamy was common in ancient times, and still exists in the Middle East today, but it was never ordained or approved by God. Whenever polygamy exists, there is also strife and conflict in the family. What problem is described here?

Deut. 21:17 What was the man required by God to do?

Children Are To Be Obedient

Deut. 21:18 What problem is described here?

**Deut.
21:19-21** What were the parents to do with their son?

God views obedience to parents as a very serious matter (Eph. 6:1-3), but New Testament Christians have never been told to execute their children. Why did God tell Israel to do this?

Concluding Thoughts: God is a God of justice. We see much injustice today, but one day the Lord Jesus Christ will return to rule this world with a rod of iron, and there will be no more injustice. In God's courts of justice, there will be no corruption.

How should Christians live in this unjust world? We should always try to be examples of just and righteous behavior. We must choose to live wisely but obeying God's rules and man's laws (Mark 12:17).

Christians should seek justice everywhere we can. The innocent need protection, and the guilty need punishment. We should do all we can, through the proper legal and governmental channels, to see that justice prevails; but we must also remember that we will not see ultimate and perfect justice in this corrupt world.

We have an obligation to pray for those who make and enforce our laws (1 Tim. 2:1-3). We should pray for our law enforcement officers, agencies, and judges. We should pray that the innocent are protected and the guilty are punished.

Project: Memorize **1 Timothy 2:1-2**. As you watch or read the news this week, look for examples of injustice in the legal system, and pray for those involved. Thank God that one day He will institute perfect justice.

Family Relationships

How many people do you know who have been divorced?

Families are falling apart at an alarming rate. Divorce is becoming more and more common – both inside and outside the church. Numerous studies have shown that the divorce rate among Christians is virtually identical to that of lost people.

Immorality is running rampant in America. Surveys reveal that half of young adults have lived with a person of the opposite sex before marriage. The trail of scarred lives and broken homes is getting longer and longer. Domestic violence and abuse are also on the rise.

Does God have anything to say about these problems? When He gave laws and guidelines to His people, He included clear instructions about family relationships. In this lesson we will discover some of those guidelines and rules.

Deut. 22:20-21 These verses describe what was to be done if a woman was not a virgin at the time she married. What was the penalty for premarital sex?

Deut. 22:22 What was the penalty for adultery?

Deut. 22:23-24 What was the penalty if a man had sex in the city with a betrothed woman?

Deut. 22:25-27 These verses give the penalty for a man having sex with a betrothed woman out in a remote field. Why was the woman innocent in this case?

Deut. 22:28-29 If a man had sex with a woman who was not betrothed, what was he required to do?

Deut. 22:30 This verse strictly forbids incest.

The verses you have just studied teach us that **morality is essential** for healthy family relationships. God places high value on morality. Immorality destroys trust and damages families. Christians must avoid all immoral behavior (1 Cor. 6:18-20).

Deut. 24:1 What family problem is described in this verse?

God hates divorce (Mal. 2:16), but it was common in ancient days, just as it is today. In this passage, God inspired Moses to give rules intended to prevent further defilement in Israel resulting from divorce. Jesus made it clear that God gave these rules because of the hard hearts of the Israelites (Matt. 19:4-9).

Deut. 24:2-4 If a man divorced his wife, she married someone else, and her 2nd marriage also ended, could she remarry her first husband?

God calls such a practice an **abomination**.

Deut. 24:5 What was a man supposed to do during his first year of marriage?

The second truth about family relationships is that **divorce causes problems**. God felt so strongly about this that he wanted newlyweds to have a full year to spend together solidifying their new marriage.

The next passage teaches that we should care for one another.

Deut. 25:5-6 If a childless married man died, what was his brother supposed to do?

This passage describes a practice that sounds very strange to us. It was called **levirate marriage** and was designed to do two things: (1) provide for and protect the widow, and (2) perpetuate the name and family line of the dead man. Remember that women couldn't work in ancient times and there was no welfare system to provide for them. Widows were usually poor and often destitute. Levirate marriage provided for and protected the poor widow.

Concerning perpetuating the name of the deceased brother, God placed great importance on inheritance and family lineage. Levirate marriage kept property in the family and kept the family name alive.

Deut. 25:7-10 What would happen if the surviving brother refused to marry the widow?

God has never told Christians to practice levirate marriage, but the truth we can learn from it is that **God expects us to care for our family members.**

Concluding Thoughts: What guidelines have we discovered about family relationships? In the chapters we've studied today God has shown us that:

1. **Morality is essential**
2. **Divorce causes many problems**
3. **We should care for one another**

What areas in your family relationships need improvement?

If immorality is a problem, you need to **stop it NOW** and ask God to heal the hurts that it inevitably leaves behind. Confess your sin and seek godly counsel.

If divorce has scarred your home, seek God for healing and restoration. Only He can heal the hurts you feel.

Care for and try to meet the needs of your family members.

If we're wise, we'll do things God's way. Make a commitment to God to fix things that are wrong in your relationships with your family members. Do it right now!

Project: Take definite steps to restore and improve family relationships this week. Do the **Daily Bible Readings** (pages 4-5) each day, and don't miss Sunday School!

The Talking Tithe

What are you saying when you tithe?

When you drop your offering envelope in the offering plate or receptacle, do you ever say anything? Have you ever heard anyone make a speech when they drop in their offering? You may not say anything verbally, but what does your giving say to the world about God and His provision for you?

Offering time is pretty quiet in most churches. The “offertory” is usually one of the quietest and most subdued parts of the worship service. Offertory music could easily be used at a funeral!

God required the Israelites to bring many different types of tithes and offerings to Him. Did you know that He also required them to make a speech when they brought their tithes and offerings? Read Deuteronomy 26 to find out what they were supposed to say, as well as what we should realize when we give our offerings.

Deut. 26:1 Israel was to follow these rules when they settled in the Promised Land.

Deut. 26:2 What were they supposed to bring to the Lord?

Where were they supposed to take it?

They were to bring the first of their increase to the place God would choose for their central sanctuary (Deut. 12). Likewise, we should bring our tithes to our local church (Mal. 3:10); we must not send them to some other ministry or organization.

Deut. 26:3-4 What were they to say to the priest?

This statement acknowledged that God had given them the land that made the harvest possible.

Deut. 26:12 Every third year, the Israelites were to give their tithes for the support of the Levites (who served at the Tabernacle), as well as strangers, orphans, and widows. They were to tithe every year, but the third year's tithe went to support those who couldn't support themselves.

Deut. 26:13 What were they to say when they gave this tithe?

Deut. 26:14 They were to state that they hadn't violated the tithe or brought anything less than their very best. The verses we have studied show us that **our first and best belongs to God**. Look back at verse 5.

Deut. 26:5 When they brought their first fruits to God, what were they to say before the Lord?

The term **Syrian** reminded the Israelites that some of Abraham's family came from Syria. God brought Israel from nothing and made them into a mighty nation.

Deut. 26:6-7 What were they to recall about their past?

Just as Israel was in bondage in Egypt, we were in bondage to sin, but God looked on our affliction!

Deut. 26:8 What did God do for Israel?

Through making these statements when they brought their offerings to God, the Israelites were to remember and **understand where God had brought them from**.

Deut. 26:9-10 What else were they to say?

Deut. 26:11 Who gave them every good thing?

By making these statements, God wanted Israel to understand that **the only reason they had anything, much less anything to give, was that God had blessed them.**

When the Israelites brought their tithes and offerings to the Lord, they were to make statements that affirmed:

- Their first and best belonged to God.
- They understood where God had brought them from.
- They understood that God had given them everything they had.

After saying and understanding those important truths, the Israelites could then ask God something.

Deut. 26:15 What were they to ask God to do?

The Israelites were to place their trust in God for their future survival and blessing.

Concluding Thoughts: What does your tithe and offering “say” when you bring it to church? Perhaps we would do well to say the things God told the Israelites to say.

Whether we speak the words aloud or not, we should realize that our first and best belongs to God, remember where God has brought us from, realize that God’s blessing is the only reason we have anything to give, and trust God for our future.

Take time right now to pray and say those things to God. Use the statements in Deuteronomy 26 as a guide but pray in your own words. Thank God for saving you and providing for you. Place your trust in Him for the future and ask for His blessings.

If you’re not a tither, you are robbing God (Mal. 3:8-10) and are not entitled to ask for God’s blessing. Repent and start tithing today.

Project: Memorize **Malachi 3:10**. When you give your next tithe or offering, thank God for His provision and the privilege of giving.

The Choice is Yours

Did your parents ever tell you something like this: “If you do _____, I will give you a cookie, but if you do _____, I will spank you – the choice is yours.” What did you do? Did you choose the cookie or the spanking?

That’s an illustration of a very simple, childlike choice, but we face choices almost that simple every day. The civil authorities tell us if we obey the traffic rules we will be blessed by being allowed to use the public roads, but if we disobey, we will pay a price. Your employer does the same, by letting you know that if you do certain things you’ll get a paycheck, but if you don’t you’ll lose your job.

We choose between behaviors that bring good things and behaviors that bring bad things every day we live. God gave Israel a very clear choice, too. Let’s find out what that choice was and see if it applies to our lives today.

Behaviors That Bring God’s Curse

Deut.
27:12-14

Moses gave the Israelites some very specific instructions about a special ceremony they were to carry out after they entered the Promised Land. **Mount Gerizim** and **Mount Ebal** were two adjacent mountains (see the Map of the Promised Land on page 6). Half the tribes were to stand on one mountain, while the other half stood on the other mountain. The Levites were to speak.

Deut.
27:15-26

Describe in a word or short phrase each behavior that brings God’s curse:

- v. 15: _____ v. 16: _____
- v. 17: _____ v. 18: _____
- v. 19: _____ v. 20: _____

v. 21:	_____	v. 22:	_____
v. 23:	_____	v. 24:	_____
v. 25:	_____	v. 26:	_____

The behaviors that bring God’s curse include idolatry, disrespect for others, injustice, immorality, violence against the innocent, and disobedience to God’s Law.

Try to picture this scene in your mind. There were several million Israelites, and they were to stand on two mountains. Each time the Levites read off a behavior that was cursed by God, all the people were to answer with a thunderous “Amen!” What a vivid lesson!

Behaviors That Bring God’s Blessing

Deut. 28:1 What was Israel told to do to receive God’s blessings?

They could be blessed “if thou shalt _____ diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to _____ and to _____ all His _____ which I command thee this day.”

Deut. 28:2 God promised His blessings would **overtake** the Israelites, like a hunter relentlessly pursuing his unsuspecting prey.

Deut. 28:3-14 These verses describe the blessings Israel would receive for faithfully obeying God. What are those blessings?

v. 3:	_____	v. 4:	_____
v. 5:	_____	v. 6:	_____
v. 7:	_____	v. 8:	_____
v. 9:	_____	v. 10:	_____
v. 11:	_____	v. 12:	_____

v. 13: _____

v. 14: _____

The rest of chapter 28 describes more curses that would come upon Israel if they were disobedient. God even told them that hundreds of years later they would be invaded by foreign powers, lose their land, and be scattered all over the earth. God repeatedly told Israel that obedience to His Law would bring **blessing**, but disobedience would bring a **curse**. Then He gave them a **choice**.

Deut. 30:15 What were their possible choices?

Deut. 30:16 What would Israel have to do to be blessed?

Deut. 30:17-18 What did God promise would happen to them if they turned away from Him to worship false gods?

Deut. 30:19 “I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you _____ and _____, _____ and _____.”
What did God urge them to choose?

Concluding Thoughts: God gave Israel a choice. He vividly described the awful things that would happen if they were unfaithful to Him, as well as the wonderful things that would come their way if they obeyed. He made the choice clear, and practically **begged** them to choose to receive His blessings.

Unfortunately, history reveals that Israel chose God’s curse. His prophecy of their future was fulfilled. For thousands of years, they have experienced curses rather than blessings.

God has given us a choice as well. We can choose the blessing of eternal life by accepting Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, or we can choose hell if we reject Him. Have you chosen eternal life, or are you destined for hell? If you want to receive Christ, read the scripture verses printed on the back of this book, confess your sin, and ask Jesus to save you.

In addition to choosing Jesus, Christians also face daily choices about obeying God. We choose, by our actions, to either receive God's blessing or serious trouble.

Which do you want: blessings or curses? Confess your sin, recommit your life to the Lord, and commit to living each day in obedience to God's commands.

Project: Memorize **Deuteronomy 30:19**. If there are any behaviors in your life that could bring God's curse, stop them immediately.

Don't forget to get your copy of the *Sunday School Member Quarterly* for the new quarter. We'll study the final chapters of Deuteronomy next week and then continue on to the books of Joshua and Judges.