



DAYBREAK

UNIT
2

Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua



<input type="checkbox"/> Leviticus 1:1 — 2:16	<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 12:1-16	<input type="checkbox"/> Deuteronomy 21:1 — 22:30
<input type="checkbox"/> Leviticus 3:1-17	<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 13:1-33	<input type="checkbox"/> Deuteronomy 23:1 — 24:22
<input type="checkbox"/> Leviticus 4:1-35	<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 14:1-45	<input type="checkbox"/> Deuteronomy 25:1 — 26:19
<input type="checkbox"/> Leviticus 5:1 — 6:30	<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 15:1-41	<input type="checkbox"/> Deuteronomy 27:1-26
<input type="checkbox"/> Leviticus 7:1-38	<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 16:1-50	<input type="checkbox"/> Deuteronomy 28:1-68
<input type="checkbox"/> Leviticus 8:1-36	<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 17:1 — 18:32	<input type="checkbox"/> Deuteronomy 29:1 — 30:20
<input type="checkbox"/> Leviticus 9:1 — 10:20	<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 19:1 — 20:29	<input type="checkbox"/> Deuteronomy 31:1-30
<input type="checkbox"/> Leviticus 11:1-47	<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 21:1-35	<input type="checkbox"/> Deuteronomy 32:1 — 33:29
<input type="checkbox"/> Leviticus 12:1 — 13:59	<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 22:1-41	<input type="checkbox"/> Deuteronomy 34:1-12
<input type="checkbox"/> Leviticus 14:1-57	<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 23:1 — 25:18	<input type="checkbox"/> Joshua 1:1-18
<input type="checkbox"/> Leviticus 15:1-33	<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 26:1-65	<input type="checkbox"/> Joshua 2:1-24
<input type="checkbox"/> Leviticus 16:1-34	<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 27:1-23	<input type="checkbox"/> Joshua 3:1 — 4:24
<input type="checkbox"/> Leviticus 17:1 — 18:30	<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 28:1-31	<input type="checkbox"/> Joshua 5:1 — 6:27
<input type="checkbox"/> Leviticus 19:1-37	<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 29:1 — 30:16	<input type="checkbox"/> Joshua 7:1-26
<input type="checkbox"/> Leviticus 20:1-27	<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 31:1-54	<input type="checkbox"/> Joshua 8:1-35
<input type="checkbox"/> Leviticus 21:1 — 22:33	<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 32:1-42	<input type="checkbox"/> Joshua 9:1-27
<input type="checkbox"/> Leviticus 23:1-44	<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 33:1-56	<input type="checkbox"/> Joshua 10:1-43
<input type="checkbox"/> Leviticus 24:1-23	<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 34:1 — 36:13	<input type="checkbox"/> Joshua 11:1 — 12:24
<input type="checkbox"/> Leviticus 25:1-55	<input type="checkbox"/> Deuteronomy 1:1-46	<input type="checkbox"/> Joshua 13:1-33
<input type="checkbox"/> Leviticus 26:1-46	<input type="checkbox"/> Deuteronomy 2:1-37	<input type="checkbox"/> Joshua 14:1-15
<input type="checkbox"/> Leviticus 27:1-34	<input type="checkbox"/> Deuteronomy 3:1-29	<input type="checkbox"/> Joshua 15:1-63
<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 1:1-54	<input type="checkbox"/> Deuteronomy 4:1-49	<input type="checkbox"/> Joshua 16:1 — 17:18
<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 2:1-34	<input type="checkbox"/> Deuteronomy 5:1 — 6:25	<input type="checkbox"/> Joshua 18:1-28
<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 3:1-51	<input type="checkbox"/> Deuteronomy 7:1 — 8:20	<input type="checkbox"/> Joshua 19:1-51
<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 4:1-49	<input type="checkbox"/> Deuteronomy 9:1 — 10:11	<input type="checkbox"/> Joshua 20:1-9
<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 5:1 — 6:27	<input type="checkbox"/> Deuteronomy 10:12 — 11:32	<input type="checkbox"/> Joshua 21:1-45
<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 7:1-89	<input type="checkbox"/> Deuteronomy 12:1-32	<input type="checkbox"/> Joshua 22:1-34
<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 8:1-26	<input type="checkbox"/> Deuteronomy 13:1 — 14:29	<input type="checkbox"/> Joshua 23:1-16
<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 9:1-23	<input type="checkbox"/> Deuteronomy 15:1 — 16:17	<input type="checkbox"/> Joshua 24:1-33
<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 10:1-36	<input type="checkbox"/> Deuteronomy 16:18 — 18:22	
<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 11:1-35	<input type="checkbox"/> Deuteronomy 19:1 — 20:20	

Daybreak is a personal Bible study continuum for the high school and adult levels. Scripture references are taken from the King James Version of the Bible. A companion series of Sunday school lessons, titled Discovery, is also available. All of the material is available on our website, as well as in printed form. The print version is designed to be stored in a binder; subsequent modules can then be easily inserted. Daybreak is an official publication of the Apostolic Faith Church. All rights are reserved.



Overview for Leviticus

Author: Commonly accepted to be Moses

Time Period Covered: Approximately 1446 B.C. – 1444 B.C.

Date Written: Approximately 1444 B.C. – 1410 B.C.

Setting: Mount Sinai

Central Passage: “For I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. For I am the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.” (Leviticus 11:44-45)

Prominent Characters: Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, Ithamar

Objectives: (1) An instruction book for the priests and Levites, detailing their duties and the way to approach God by sacrifice, and (2) Instructions on how to walk in holiness before God by separation from ungodly nations

Comments: It is easier to understand the message of Leviticus when we see the progression of the first books of the Bible. Genesis includes the account of Abraham’s call and the role of his descendents in the covenant God made with Abraham. Exodus tells of the deliverance of Abraham’s descendents, the Children of Israel, from Egypt’s bondage and the establishment of God’s covenant with them at Mount Sinai. In addition, Exodus covers the construction of the Tabernacle and describes the worship to be conducted in it. In Leviticus, we find specific instructions given to the priests and to the Children of Israel that they might know how to perform the worship demanded by God at Mount Sinai. The book is devoted to instructions for holy living.

In Exodus, God speaks from Mount Sinai and the book closes with the account of the Tabernacle’s dedication, and the Glory of God filling it. In Leviticus, God speaks to His people from the Tabernacle, the place where He has chosen to dwell among them.

Among other things, Leviticus reveals how a man can approach a holy God. The word “holy” occurs over eighty times in this book. Since man is unable to

atone for his own sins, a mediatorial system was established to provide access to God. Thus, the role of the sons of Aaron as priests becomes important.

The original Hebrew title, *Wayyigra*, means “and he [God] called.” Our English title, *Leviticus*, was given to the book because it is concerned with the Levitical system of worship and is based on the Greek translation, *Levitikon*, or “pertaining to the Levites.”

While Moses is credited as being the author, it is notable that twenty of the twenty-seven chapters begin with, “and the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,” or words close to that. This reminds us of the book’s divine authorship.

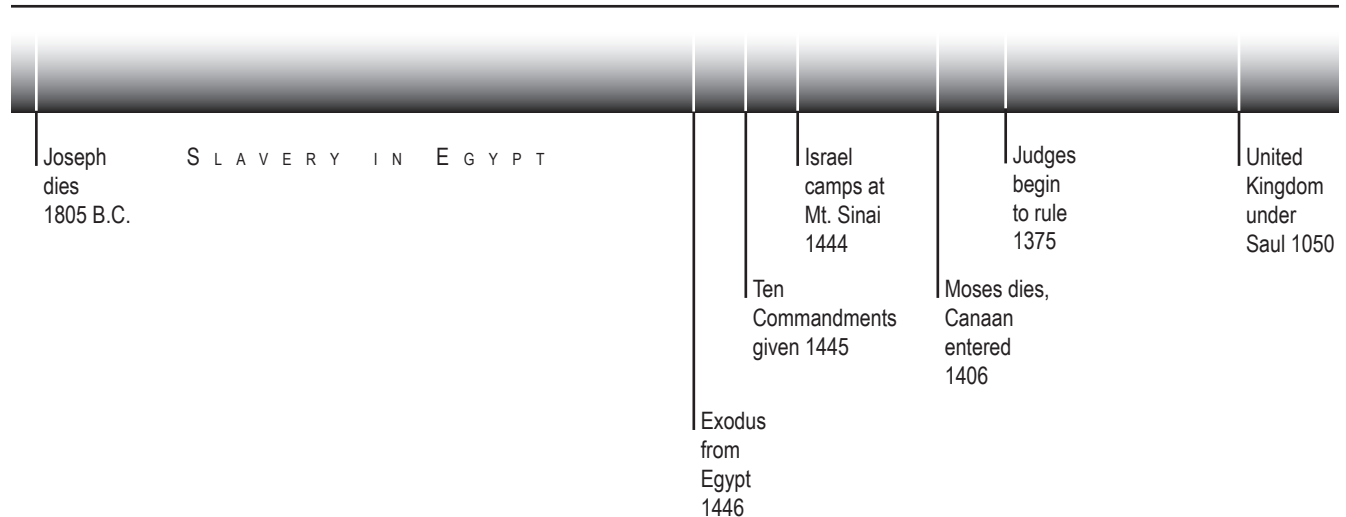
We gather from Exodus 40:17 and Numbers 1:1 that the giving of the statutes of this book and the events written in it, occurred between the time of the erection of the Tabernacle in the first month of the second year after Israel’s departure from Egypt and the first day of the second month of the same year.

The book can be divided into two main sections. Section 1 deals with how a sinful people approach a holy God and includes Leviticus 1:1 — 16:34. This section also gives instructions for sacrifices (Leviticus 1:1 — 7:38), consecration of the priests (Leviticus 8:1 — 10:20), identification of activities that defile a person (Leviticus 11:1 — 15:33), and explanation of the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16).

Section 2 deals with communion with God and instructions regarding how the people were to live before Him and is comprised of Leviticus 17:1 — 27:34. Included in this section are the social and ceremonial laws (Leviticus 17:1 — 25:55), the promised blessings and curses (Leviticus 26:1-46), and God’s instructions concerning vows and offerings (Leviticus 27:1-34).

Although the book is made up of laws, it includes incidents of what happened when people or priests obeyed or disobeyed God’s laws. Punishment was quick for those who rebelled against God, but He also made a promise for those who would obey Him: “And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people. I am the LORD your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye should not be their bondmen; and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you go upright” (Leviticus 26:12-13).

Timeline



Outline

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A complete amplified outline of this book is available on our website at www.apostolicfaith.org.*

- I. The way of access to God (1:1—16:34)
 - A. By sacrifice (1:1—7:38)
 - B. By priestly ministry (8:1—10:20)
 - C. By ceremonial purity (11:1—15:33)
 - D. By annual atonement (16:1-34)
- II. The way of fellowship with God (17:1—27:34)
 - A. By separation unto holiness (17:1—22:33)
 - B. By observing religious feasts (23:1-44)
 - C. By obedience in worship and reverence (24:1-23)
 - D. By observing the Sabbatic Year and Jubilee (25:1-55)
 - E. By heeding God's promises and warning in the land (26:1-46)
 - F. By keeping vows and paying tithes (27:1-34)



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“No meat offering, which ye shall bring unto the LORD, shall be made with leaven: for ye shall burn no leaven, nor any honey, in any offering of the LORD made by fire.” (Leviticus 2:11)

Several years ago I worked for the headquarters of a large retail chain, where my department’s responsibility was vendor compliance. When vendors wanted to do business with our store, we would send them a large manual with all the requirements for displaying and selling their product in our stores. The vendors would have to agree to comply with all the requirements. For example, a clothing vendor would have to agree to use a certain hanger approved by the retailer. If the vendor decided to use a substitute hanger that was not approved by the store, he would be charged a penalty for non-compliance. Each vendor was issued a “report card” on a regular basis to see how he measured up to the retailer’s standards.

In our Scripture reading, Israel was given instructions on how to bring their offerings to the Lord. They were reminded that God is holy and He has certain standards that must be met in order to receive His blessing. It is good to remind ourselves that God is holy and that He wants us to be holy. If we want to have fellowship with God, we must meet the standards set forth in His Word. If we meet His requirements, He has promised that He will dwell in us and give us the power to live a life that is holy and acceptable to Him.

In our focus verse, the Children of Israel were instructed not to use any leaven (yeast) in their meat (grain) offerings. Leaven was a symbol of sin. Any sin, no matter how small, will separate a person from fellowship with God. We need to examine our “sacrifice” and make sure it meets the pure and unblemished standard established by God.

BACKGROUND

The Book of Leviticus begins after the Children of Israel reach Mount Sinai on their way to the Promised Land. The Tabernacle had just been completed, and Moses instructed the people how they were to worship God. The rituals in Leviticus were understood by the Israelites because they fit the culture of that time, but they were intended to reveal a holy God who wanted their utmost devotion.

Throughout Leviticus, the words *sacrifice* and *offering* are interchangeable. There were five basic

offerings that were acceptable to God, and each offering corresponded to a specific circumstance in a person’s life. The purposes of these offerings were for praise and worship, for forgiveness, and to restore fellowship with God. All but one of these required a blood sacrifice. Leviticus chapters 1 and 2 deal with two of these offerings.

The first offering mentioned is the burnt sacrifice, which atoned for committed sins. In animal sacrifices two things were accomplished. The animal paid the penalty for sin by becoming a substitute for the sinner, and the death of the animal symbolized the giving of one life so another could be saved. The animal chosen for the sacrifice had to be without blemish and had to be offered through a mediator. It could be a bullock, a sheep or goat, a turtledove or a young pigeon. The sacrifice was brought to the Tabernacle where it would be examined by the priest to make sure it was acceptable. The person making the sacrifice placed his hand on the animal’s head (except in the case of a bird) while the priest killed the animal, showing their recognition of the animal becoming their substitute. The entire animal, except for the skin and blood, was dismembered, washed, laid in order on the altar, and burned, showing complete dedication to God. The priests kept the hide for themselves (see Leviticus 7:8). The birds were cropped and laid on the altar whole. This offering signified a person’s earnest desire for fellowship with God.

What set Israel apart from their heathen neighbors was that other nations offered sacrifices to appease their gods, while Israel made sacrifices to a holy God, not to appease Him, but to offer a substitute for the punishment they deserved as sinners.

In Leviticus 2, Moses gave instructions for a meat offering, which was grain rather than the flesh of an animal. This offering was offered along with the burnt offering and represented a gift of thanks to God. It was a reminder that everything they had came from God, and they owed Him their lives.

There were three kinds of meat offerings: (1) fine flour mingled with oil and frankincense, (2) cakes or wafers of fine flour and oil that were baked in an oven or frying pan, and (3) roasted kernels of corn with oil and frankincense. No leaven or honey, both of which ferment, were to be present in any meat (grain) offering. Leaven (or yeast) represented sin, because it affected the whole loaf just as sin affects the whole life.

The priest put only a portion of the cake on the altar to be burned. The rest was kept by the priests for their personal consumption.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah's Bible Outlines
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- I. The way of access to God
 - A. By sacrifice
 - 1. General instructions to all
 - a. The first utterance—the sweet-savor offerings
 - (1) The burnt offering (1:1-17)
 - (a) The bullock (1:1-9)
 - (b) The sheep or goat (1:10-13)
 - (c) The doves or pigeons (1:14-17)
 - (2) The meal offering (2:1-16)
 - (a) General instructions (2:1-3)
 - (b) Specific instructions (2:4-11)
 - [1] The offering prepared (2:4-7)
 - [2] The offering presented (2:8-10)
 - [3] The offering prepared—without Yeast reemphasized (2:11)
 - (c) Further instructions—firstfruits (2:12-16)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. What were the two types of sacrifices mentioned in today's text?

2. Why do you think God was so particular about the type of animal used, and how it was prepared for the sacrifice?

3. Christians do not offer animal sacrifices today, so how can we show our devotion to God and acknowledge that all we have belongs to Him?

CONCLUSION

Romans 12:1 says to “present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.” In order for our sacrifice to be acceptable, we must examine our lives to make sure they are without sin or moral blemish.

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“It shall be a perpetual statute for your generations throughout all your dwellings, that ye eat neither fat nor blood.” (Leviticus 3:17)

Several years ago, as my mother’s family was together for their family reunion, my mother’s generation gathered in a large circle, and the younger people sat wherever there was a seat. As story after story came from this older generation, I sat and wept. One by one they rehearsed the goodness of the Lord. They told of healings, providential protection and leading, and marvelous experiences from the Lord.

One of the stories that remained with me was about my grandmother’s faith. My grandparents died in an automobile accident four years before I was born, so I never had the opportunity to know them. Although I had heard portions of this story before, on this day one of my uncles told it in its entirety. My grandparents had relocated from Oklahoma to a dry-land homestead in California and my grandfather and uncles were out clearing and burning the brush in order to plant the field when, suddenly, a bobcat ran through the fire and attacked two of them. My grandfather was able to kill the cat, and a bit later, the authorities discovered that it carried rabies. My grandfather and the uncle telling the story were taken by train to the nearest large hospital, several hours away, where they could be treated for the disease. The memory was still so vivid to my uncle that, although he was in his 80s by then, he could describe the room as if he had been there the day before.

My grandmother was left on their homestead with her other children, just months away from delivering her sixth child. In order to get water, she had to go by wagon to her brother’s homestead five miles down the road. Despite these problems, she did not despair. She prayed and believed God was in control. Her husband was a backslider. She did not know if my grandfather or her son were going to pray or ever come home, but she believed God in spite of the obstacles.

The Lord heard those prayers and healed my grandfather and uncle. Shortly after they arrived home, my grandfather realized that he never once thought of praying in all the weeks of being so near death. He started to pray for conviction, and that prayer was answered; a short time later, he was saved.

As the stories of our family’s history went on, all of them expressing praise and thanksgiving at the goodness of the Lord, I realized that anything I was

facing, had faced in the past, or would face in the future was not too hard for God to handle. At that time, there were problems in my life that threatened to swamp me, but as I heard of the good things the Lord had done in the past, it gave me faith to trust Him for my future.

In today’s focus verse, the Children of Israel are instructed to make the peace (thanksgiving) offering a perpetual statute for their generations, wherever they lived. In other words, they were to give voice to the goodness of the Lord in the presence of their children and grandchildren—not just at certain times of the year when the holiday season would dictate being thankful, but continually.

BACKGROUND

The peace offering was different from the other offerings mentioned in Leviticus. The offering could be either male or female. This was also the only offering that was shared with the worshipers. After the sacrifice was completed, the priest took a large portion of the meat, and the rest went to the offerer, who could then enjoy the meat with his family and friends.

The peace offering meal was more than just the enjoyment of good fellowship with friends. It was also a time of joyful thanksgiving that everything was clear between the worshiper and God. Leviticus 7:11-34 offers further instruction on peace offerings.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

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- I. The way of access to God
 - A. By sacrifice
 - 1. General instructions to all
 - a. The first utterance—the sweet-savor offerings
 - (3) The peace offering (3:1-17)
 - (a) The offering from the herd (3:1-5)
 - (b) The offering from the flock (3:6-17)
 - [1] A lamb (3:6-11)
 - [2] A goat (3:12-17)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. What were the Children of Israel to bring as a peace offering?

2. Why was the goat or lamb to be unblemished?

3. What blessings has God bestowed on your life in response to an offering you made to Him?

CONCLUSION

Are we making offerings of peace or thanksgiving to the Lord? When we do, we have the assurance that He will abundantly bless us!

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“When a ruler hath sinned, and done somewhat through ignorance against any of the commandments of the LORD his God concerning things which should not be done, and is guilty; Or if his sin, wherein he hath sinned, come to his knowledge; he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a male without blemish.” (Leviticus 4:22-23)

It has been said, “Ignorance is bliss.” While that phrase is debatable, we can surmise what was meant. Lack of knowledge on some topics can cause a temporary absence of stress or anxiety. However, even errors that are made through ignorance still have to be properly dealt with.

A few years ago, I was in Texas on business. When away from home on a Sunday, my custom is to see if one of our branch churches is nearby so I can attend service. After some research, I discovered that one of our churches was within a reasonable distance so I contacted the pastor for directions. He graciously obliged, and on a beautiful Sunday morning, I set out for church. Part way there, I realized that I had miscalculated the driving time and would be somewhat late for the morning service. Then, I turned the wrong way and began chewing up more precious minutes trying to find a way to backtrack. Finally, I found the church. By this time, it was nearly 11:30 a.m., but as I entered the sanctuary, the congregation was still singing hymns, so I joined in and, despite my embarrassment, enjoyed the rest of the service.

After church, the pastor and his wife invited me to lunch. We went to a local restaurant and enjoyed good food and even better fellowship. Eventually, I needed to get back, so I bid them farewell. After driving a short while, I turned on the radio and the announcer gave the local time. To my horror, it was an hour later than I had thought! This was the weekend that daylight savings time went into effect, and I had forgotten to set my clock ahead the previous night. Instead of being thirty minutes late to church, I had been an hour and a half late to church!

My tardiness was not a sin, but it was a mistake that needed to be acknowledged. I made my apologies to the pastor (and hoped he passed them on to his patient congregation, who had been waiting for my arrival!). The fact is, even though I did not realize how late I was, I was still late.

The Israelites who sinned ignorantly were still guilty and had to be reconciled to God. In today’s text,

we see how God made provision for that eventuality. Let’s thank God for his provision and mercy both in the days of the Old Testament and today.

BACKGROUND

The first three chapters of Leviticus deal with voluntary, sweet savor offerings. With chapter 4, attention shifts to the sin and trespass offerings, which were obligatory rather than voluntary.

Leviticus 4 addresses sin committed through ignorance. This is where one unwittingly committed a violation of the Old Law but, for various reasons, did not immediately realize the transgression. A priest, a congregation member, a leader of the people, and an Israelite had varying rituals to observe as stipulated in this chapter.

One theme in this chapter is the requirement of a payment for sin. The higher the stature of an individual, the higher the price was to satisfy the guilty verdict. Ignorance was not a defense.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

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- I. The way of access to God
 - A. By sacrifice
 - 1. General instructions to all
 - b. The second utterance—the non-sweet-savor offerings
 - (1) The sin offering
 - (a) Introduction (4:1-2)
 - (b) A sin offering for the priest (4:3-12)
 - (c) The sin offering for the congregation (4:13-21)
 - (d) The sin offering for a leader (4:22-26)
 - (e) The sin offering for an Israelite (4:27-35)
 - [1] A goat (4:27-31)
 - [2] A lamb (4:32-35)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. What type of sin offering was required of a priest?

2. What type of sin offerings were required for an Israelite?

[illegible]

Ignorance may or may not be bliss, but when it results in error, the error must still be corrected!

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“Then it shall be, because he hath sinned, and is guilty, that he shall restore that which he took violently away, or the thing which he hath deceitfully gotten, or that which was delivered him to keep, or the lost thing which he found.” (Leviticus 6:4)

Restitution is a Biblical principle and as important in our time as it was when God expected it of the Children of Israel. Although it may be a trial in the process, in the end it is a blessing. A late member of our Portland congregation spoke of the trial and blessing of restitution:

“I [had] promised God I would clean up the past. It was not easy to write back to people who had highly respected me and tell them of the shrewd business deals I had turned, how I had double-crossed them and taken advantage of them. It was difficult to write to institutions of learning and confess that I had stolen things out of the laboratory. God also showed me I needed to get things straight with the men in my employ whom I had underpaid.

“I just didn’t know if I could do it, and I backed off for a night or two. But finally I said yes to God. The next morning, I began to write letters, and the Lord was right there to remind me of every crooked deal. They all came before me as vividly as though I had committed them just the day before. I didn’t beat around the bush or make excuses. I just came right out and told the people I had wronged all about it. I knew I was dealing with God, as well as man. I spent nearly the whole day writing letters of restitution, enclosing checks to cover the wrongs that I had done. But oh, the joy that came into my heart!”

While we now have the Spirit of God to show us how to right past wrongs, Leviticus 6:1-7 laid out for the Children of Israel what they were to do with regard to injuries done to a neighbor in matters of property. In the cases noted, restitution was not enough. In addition, the guilty person was required to add twenty percent over and above the value of the injured party’s loss. Even though Christ’s Blood has made trespass offerings unnecessary today, it is still essential to make things right with those we have hurt, whenever that is possible, and great joy will follow our efforts.

BACKGROUND

One of the purposes of God’s Law was to make the Israelites aware of their sins and unintentional

trespasses so that they would not repeat them, and so that they could be forgiven for them.

Leviticus 5:1-13 refers to the sin offering. In ancient Israel, everything was divided into categories of “clean” or “unclean.” For instance, certain animals, foods, and practices were considered “unclean.” If any person touched or violated the unclean thing, they sinned against the Lord and a sin offering was required.

The people were exhorted to bring offerings proportionate to their economic status. For those who could do so, a lamb or goat was required. If this was not possible, they could bring two turtledoves or young pigeons. If they were really poor, they could bring fine flour.

Leviticus 5:14-6:7 refers to the trespass (or guilt) offerings. This was similar to the sin offering but required restitution. This offering was to be made when someone had been harmed in some way, even if the wrongdoing was unintentional. For Israel, the guilt offering was the way to handle sins that had a certain monetary value associated with them.

Leviticus 6:8-30 focuses on the priests’ responsibilities in performing the sacrifices. In order for the sacrifice to be accepted by God, it was necessary for the priests to carefully follow the instructions given by God.

The burnt offerings were to be burned continuously throughout the night. The priests were to wear special clothing when taking ashes off the altar, signifying the importance of the Lord’s sacrifices. The priest was to take off his special linen clothes and put on other clothes to carry the ashes out of the camp to a “clean” place. The fire on the altar was not allowed to go out day or night, and it appears that the burnt offering was a daily routine.

Some of the sacrifices provided food for the priests. Part of the meat (grain) offering was consumed on the altar and part was eaten by the priests. No one else was allowed to eat of this offering because it was holy, or set apart for the Lord.

Sin offerings could be eaten by the priest that performed the sacrifice and shared with the other priests. One exception to this rule was the special sacrifices that were brought to the holy place in the Tabernacle, which were to be completely burned on the altar. If any blood was splattered on the priests’ clothes during the sacrifice, they were to wash their clothes in the holy place. The priests needed to understand the holiness of the sacrifices and the need to follow God’s instructions when eating the sacrifices.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

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- I. The way of access to God
 - A. By sacrifice
 - 1. General instructions to all
 - b. The second utterance—the non-sweet-savor offerings
 - (1) The sin offering
 - (f) The sin offering for special offenses (5:1-13)
 - [1] The special offenses (5:1-4)
 - [2] The specific recourse (5:5-13)
 - (2) The trespass offering (5:14—6:7)
 - (a) Trespass against the Lord (5:14-19)
 - (b) Trespass against a man (6:1-7)
 - 2. Specific instructions to the priests
 - a. The law of the burnt offering (6:8-13)
 - b. The law of the meal offering (6:14-23)
 - (1) The peoples (6:14-18)
 - (2) The priests (ordination offering) (6:19-23)
 - c. The law of the sin offering (6:24-30)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. What was the difference between a sin offering and a guilt offering?

2. Why do you think God required Israel to pay an extra twenty percent when making restitution?

3. What do God's requirements for holiness and obedience in performing the sacrifices in the Tabernacle teach us about showing reverence for God's House and His requirements?

CONCLUSION

Have you done wrong? The message from God's Word is simple: make it right!

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“This is the law of the burnt offering, of the meat offering, and of the sin offering, and of the trespass offering, and of the consecrations, and of the sacrifice of the peace offerings.” (Leviticus 7:37)

Computer programming is systematic and can be laborious. In a nutshell, it is a set of instructions to carry out a specific task. However, unlike human language, where the speaker voices a simple command and the listener acts upon the message, computer language is far more complex.

For instance, if you want someone to open the window, you simply voice that request. In computer language, you would need to describe every sequential movement necessary to accomplish the task. This would mean that the person would get up from his chair, make a left or right turn, take an exact number of steps to the window, lean forward at a precise degree, stretch forward his hand the exact distance to the window lever, and pull it up so many inches. Any minor omission in the instruction would lead to the window not being opened.

Similar to a computer programming instruction, God gave instructions about His laws to the Children of Israel in the minutest detail. The reason was to ensure that they would have no doubt as to what God’s intents were on any given commandment.

Today also, God wants us to fully understand His instructions. Although we are not under the Law as the Children of Israel were, we have His Word, and He wants to write that Word in our hearts. The Bible gives us His commands and a standard by which to measure our actions and thoughts. When we don’t know what to do in everyday situations, God uses His Spirit to give us step-by-step guidance. If we purpose to follow Him and do our best to stay in tune with His Spirit, He will make sure that we understand what He wants us to do.

Are you facing a situation where you feel the need of specific direction? Maybe you want detailed instructions, something like must be given to a computer—stand up, turn right, take four steps, etc. Tell God your needs. He may not give you computer directions, but He will direct your heart.

BACKGROUND

God continued to impress upon the Children of Israel that man is unworthy of direct access to Him,

and that the only way of access was through mediatorial sacrifice. Prior to this time, God had outlined for them the necessary sacrifices and offerings for the different kinds of sins and trespasses. He also instructed them on the types of freewill offerings that were acceptable to Him.

In our lesson today, He detailed how the people and the officiating priests needed to conduct the trespass and the peace offerings. The Lord had told them that a trespass was a sin committed against the commandment of the Lord in ignorance, or by unwittingly touching something that was unclean, or pronouncing an oath, or doing something wrong against a neighbor. The Lord instructed that the priests performing the trespass offering should regard it as most holy. He ascribed the same seriousness to a trespass as He did to an outright sin, saying, “As the sin offering is, so is the trespass offering: there is one law for them” (Leviticus 7:7).

The trespass offering involved specified animal sacrifice, but the people were forbidden from eating the blood or fat of the sacrificed animal. The priests, however, were allotted a portion of the sin and the trespass offerings. In verses 28-36, God stated specifically which parts went to them. This allotment helped support the priests and their families. It was part of God’s way of making provision for those who labored full-time in His service.

The peace offering had two parts: the thanksgiving offering and the vow or voluntary offering. The required sacrifice for this offering largely involved non-animal products that were sacrificed unto the Lord. Unlike the trespass offerings, those who made either a thanksgiving offering or vow or voluntary offering were allowed to eat of it. However, different time limits for the consumption of the offerings were outlined. In addition, God commanded that anyone bringing or eating of these sacrifices must not be unclean or have touched an unclean thing prior to the time of sacrifice.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- I. The way of access to God
 - A. By sacrifice
 2. Specific instructions given to the priests
 - d. The law of the trespass offering (7:1-10)
 - e. The law of the peace offering (7:11-36)
 - f. Conclusion (7:37-38)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. What was the difference between a trespass offering and a peace offering?

2. Why do you think God prohibited the people from eating the blood of any sacrificed animal?

3. Why was it necessary for the person who offered a peace offering to bring it before the Lord?

4. How can you be certain you are getting God's direction?

CONCLUSION

God's commands are clear enough for everyone to understand. It is up to us to follow those instructions so that we can please God and derive the benefits of His divine favor.

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

**“So Aaron and his sons did all things which the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses.”
(Leviticus 8:36)**

It is not always easy to come up with concise, clear instructions! Have you ever been given directions to a place, only to find out that the information given you was faulty or incomplete? Have you tried to follow instructions on how to put together a piece of furniture you just purchased, only to find out that an important part of the instructions was missing? Maybe a computer “whiz” has given you guidance on how to fix a problem on your laptop, but left out one vital detail. If you have not had anything like that happen to you, at some point in your life you probably will.

God gives us clear and detailed instructions as we seek to follow Him. He does not instruct us to do something and then neglect to tell us how to follow through. I once heard someone say, “Where God’s finger points, His hand will make a way.” That is an exciting thought! Not only has God left us a complete set of instructions in the Bible, but also He has made a way for us to be able to follow them.

In today’s text, we see an example of God’s instructions to the Children of Israel. The specific directions given to Moses for the consecration of Aaron and his sons included washing them with water, dressing them in the right attire, sanctifying the Tabernacle and all that was in it, anointing Aaron by pouring oil on his head, and then proceeding with the sacrifice of a sin offering, a burnt offering, and bringing a ram of consecration. After the blood was sprinkled on the altar, they were to partake of a sacrificial meal. All was done “which the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses.” Moses followed God’s instructions completely.

God has not left us in the dark regarding what we are supposed to do. In our walk with Him, how vital it is that we pay attention to His clear, complete instructions, and then follow through in obedience. Because Moses did so, God could work “by the hand of Moses.” Will the same be said of us?

BACKGROUND

From the time of Adam’s fall, sin has separated man from God. To find forgiveness, people need mediators. Abraham and Job made their sacrifices for their families. Later, when the Children of Israel left Egypt and the Law was given, the descendants of

Aaron were chosen to serve as priests and perform the sacrifices that would bridge the gap between God and man.

The orders to consecrate Aaron and his sons were first given to Moses while he was on Mount Sinai (Exodus 28 and 29). In today’s text, the instructions were repeated. This was not because Moses had forgotten what God had said, but because at this point all the proper elements were in place. The Tabernacle had been set up, and it was time to install the priests. Although Aaron and his sons had been nominated to this office, they had to be consecrated in order to be able to attend to the business of the priesthood.

The job of the priests was to oversee the sacrifices of the people and to approach God on behalf of the people to make atonement for their sins. The priests were to stand in the gap that had been caused by sin in the Garden of Eden, and to be mediators between God and man. They were to be holy and consecrated to the office according to the specifications given by God to Moses.

At least twenty times in Leviticus 8 through 10, the word “commanded” is used. Moses and Aaron did not have to come up with an ordination ceremony. The same God who instructed Moses in how to build and furnish the Tabernacle gave comprehensive directions on how the priests were to be installed.

Aaron and his sons allowed Moses to carry out what God had said, and Aaron became the High Priest. Aaron was a symbolic picture of our High Priest, Jesus Christ, whose utmost sacrifice brought in a new dispensation where He became our mediator to God.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- I. The way of access to God
 - B. By priestly ministry
 - 1. The consecration of the priesthood (8:1-36)
 - a. The consecration (8:1-13)
 - (1) The preparation (8:1-5)
 - (2) The cleansing of Aaron and his sons (8:6)
 - (3) The clothing of Aaron (8:7-9)
 - (4) The anointing (8:10-12)
 - (a) Of the Tabernacle (8:10-11)
 - (b) Of Aaron (8:12)
 - (5) The clothing of Aaron’s sons (8:13)
 - b. The offerings (8:14-30)

- (1) The sin offering (8:14-17)
- (2) The burnt offering (8:18-21)
- (3) The offering of ordination (8:22-30)

c. The sacrificial feast (8:31-36)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. What was the first thing Moses did to Aaron and his sons?

2. Why was it important for Moses and Aaron to exactly follow God's directions?

3. What are some of the specific instructions God has given you to follow?

CONCLUSION

There is nothing missing, no absent component, no unidentifiable route, in God's directions to us. The way to Heaven is marked and clear! Are you following along that way in obedience?

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And Moses said, This is the thing which the LORD commanded that ye should do: and the glory of the LORD shall appear unto you.” (Leviticus 9:6)

Our daughter was learning to sew. She found a pattern for a nightshirt and some pretty, blue material, and she was excited as she envisioned the finished product. Things went along fine for a while—until she came to a part of the instructions she did not understand. Becoming impatient to get on with the project, she began to put things together as she thought they should go without referring further to the directions. When the material bunched up, she cut off the excess. When it stuck up where it shouldn't, she just stitched it down. Needless to say, the nightshirt became a disaster and was never fit to wear!

In today's text, God established the requirements and directions for various types of offerings that were to be brought by the priests before the Lord. When these were offered according to God's instructions, God's glory was revealed and the sacrifice consumed. When, as in the case of Nadab and Abihu, the instructions were not followed, the consequences were immediate death! Retribution was swift and sure.

“To obey is better than sacrifice” is the theme repeated throughout the Word of God. We, too, are given specific instructions regarding our walk with God. If we want to receive His blessings, we must obey Him. We start by coming to Him the way He has provided. He sent His Son to be the Mediator between God and man, and there is no other way to God but through Christ. Then we follow through by learning His requirements and by asking Him daily for His help in obeying His instructions.

It does not pay to “put together” our Christian life without looking at His instructions. God has good reasons for His commandments. Yes, we can choose to do things “our way” instead of God's way, but that is not wise. In fact, it will lead to certain disaster! We can avoid grave spiritual consequences and assure ourselves of God's blessing by carefully following His instructions.

BACKGROUND

God gave strict guidelines to the priests and to the people regarding the various types of offerings. Prior to the time of Moses, the head of each family had offered sacrifices. God appointed Aaron as the first High Priest, and his descendants were to have “an

everlasting priesthood throughout their generations” (Exodus 40:15). Since the office was hereditary, the descendants of Aaron were obligated to accept the responsibility and meet the qualifications.

The High Priest was the supreme religious head of the people. He was distinguished from his fellow priests by the clothes he wore, the duties he performed, and the particular requirements placed upon him. The High Priest was to obey every detail that God instructed him to do.

The order of the sacrifices was significant, following a standard pattern of ritual. The priest had to offer sacrifices for himself first before he could offer sacrifices for the people. Having made sacrifice for himself and for the people, he brought the blood into the Holy of Holies and sprinkled it on the mercy seat, God's “throne.”

The priests were the official communicators between God and man. No person could bring his own sacrifice to God. The worshiper brought his offering—a physically perfect animal from the herd or flock or, in the case of a poor man, doves or pigeons—to the forecourt of the Tabernacle. He laid his hand on it, implying that it represented him, and slaughtered it. Then he took it to the priest and the priest, in turn, offered it to God. The priest went from man to God with the prayers and praises of the people. He stood for them and pleaded their cause.

Moses gave detailed directions for priests. Those instructions stated that God's minister must be holy so he could serve a holy people as the holy God directed. God's judgment resulted when those commands were not obeyed. When Aaron's sons offered sacrifices in a manner contrary to God's command, the entire community witnessed the consequences.

Moses spoke to the people and told them that the glory of the Lord would appear when the ordination was completed. Moses, Aaron, and the people then went to work and completed God's instructions. Soon after, the glory of the Lord appeared, showing His approval of their obedience.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah's Bible Outlines
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- I. The way of access to God
 - B. By priestly ministry
 2. The inauguration of the priestly ministry (9:1-24)
 - a. The ministry inaugurated (9:1-21)
 - (1) Moses' instructions (9:1-7)
 - (2) The offering for the priests (9:8-14)

- 3.** What danger are you in if you fail to come to God as He has commanded you to?

CONCLUSION

An old familiar hymn says, “Trust and obey, for there’s no other way . . .” There is truth in that admonition! God has given us instructions in His Word. Let’s take care to follow them!

NOTES

- [illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“For I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. For I am the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.” (Leviticus 11:44-45)

My cousin was recuperating in the hospital after a near-fatal accident on his job. Because of the nature of his injury and to prevent the possibility of infection, scrupulous care was taken to prevent his visitors from contaminating the surroundings. A sign on the door let us know that before we entered his room we must put on surgical gowns and gloves. We were not allowed to touch him or the bed he was lying in, and I noticed that every nurse who entered scrubbed thoroughly and put on gloves before assisting him in any way. It was clear that every effort was being made to keep him free from germs. Maintaining a sterile environment was of paramount importance.

Leviticus 11 outlines God’s instructions to the Israelites regarding ceremonial purity. Whether it was selecting or preparing their food, caring for a mother and a new baby, diagnosing a disease, or disposing of waste, nothing was overlooked in the camp of Israel, lest someone be defiled. Obviously, God considers cleanliness and purity of utmost importance!

While the dietary and societal guidelines mandated for the Israelites were specific to them, the spiritual principal of separation from defilement applies to believers today. As God’s people, we must be willing to be different. We must be willing to separate ourselves from anything that would defile or contaminate the purity God has given us. In the New Testament, Paul wrote to the believers at Corinth, “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you” (2 Corinthians 6:17). This doesn’t mean that we become hermits and withdraw from any contact with sinners. Rather, it means we carefully avoid anything that would influence us toward sinful practices. In a world contaminated by evil, we resist the sin around us, rather than partaking in it.

Do not let circumstances or other people’s expectations control you. Christians are instructed to be holy. Be firm as you stand true to God, and refuse to compromise on His standards for living!

BACKGROUND

In the Mosaic Law, cleanliness and godliness went hand in hand. In several areas of Jewish life, God’s Law had to be followed exactly to maintain purity physically and spiritually. Choosing which foods to eat was one of those areas. The Lord had not only the health of the people in mind when He gave these instructions, but He was also reminding them that they belonged to Him and that He wanted them to remain separate from anything defiling. However, even though obeying these laws could guarantee ceremonial cleanness, it did not make a person holy in character.

The concept of clean and unclean animals dates back to the time of Noah (Genesis 7:1-10). In this chapter, Moses did not list the names of which animals were clean or unclean, but he gave the characteristics of each so the people knew which animals could be eaten and which could not.

Requirements for the land animals were that they had to chew the cud and have a split hoof. If only one of these characteristics was possessed by the animal, it was rejected. The water creatures had to have both fins and scales, thus eliminating all shellfish, catfish, and eels. (These species are scavengers and thus could pick up parasites and infect those who ate them.) The forbidden fowl were birds of prey that would have been defiled by the dead carcasses they fed on. All insects were forbidden for food except those with jointed hind legs used for jumping, such as locusts, katyids, crickets, and grasshoppers.

Leviticus 11:24-43 deals with the touching of dead animals. This kept contamination from spreading throughout the camp and protected the Jews from sickness. It also taught the people to appreciate cleanliness and to stay away from anything that would make them unclean. The women of Israel were meticulous in their housecleaning to avoid any form of uncleanness.

In verses 44-47, the Children of Israel were admonished to sanctify themselves and be holy. In order to use wise discernment, they had to become familiar with God’s Law and then obey it on a daily basis. Parents had a responsibility to teach their children the Law and warn them of the consequences if they did not obey it (Deuteronomy 6:1-9). They were to remind themselves daily that they belonged to Jehovah, the true God, and that they were to keep themselves separate from the heathen nations around them.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah's Bible Outlines
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- I. The way of access to God
 - C. By ceremonial purity
 - 1. Separation from certain foods (11:1-47)
 - a. Animals unclean upon the earth (11:1-8)
 - b. Things unclean in the water (11:9-12)
 - c. Birds unclean in the air (11:13-19)
 - d. Insects that are unclean (11:20-23)
 - e. Defilement by contact with their carcasses (11:24-28)
 - f. Swarming creatures unclean on the earth (11:29-45)
 - g. Summary (11:46-47)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. What characteristics did the following animals have to possess to be clean?

Land animals

Water creatures

Fowl of the air

Insects

2. Why do you think God required the Israelites to not eat certain foods in order to be holy?

3. How can we keep ourselves holy in an unclean world?

CONCLUSION

Though we live in a society where good is called evil and evil is called good, God's requirements are unchanging. God still hates sin, and He will judge it. Purity pays!

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And the priest shall see the raw flesh, and pronounce him to be unclean: for the raw flesh is unclean: it is a leprosy.” (Leviticus 13:15)

One summer day, when I was a young boy, my mother dressed my older sister and me for a special occasion and told us not to get dirty. However, we soon forgot our mother’s instruction. We went to a nearby playground, found a mud puddle, and before long, both of us were covered from head to toe with mud. All of a sudden, we realized that we had gone way too far and, if caught, the consequences would be bad. We tried to make it to the bathrooms in our house before being seen by Mom. We sneaked through the back door and my sister made it to the first bathroom. I had to try for the bathroom next to my parents’ room, but I didn’t make it. My mom caught me! There was no hiding my guilt: it was all over me.

In the time of the Children of Israel, God had a plan for dealing with unclean conditions. In the case of leprosy, precautions were needful so that the disease would not spread. Left untreated, it not only brought death to the individual, but it spread and infected those around him or her.

Leprosy is symbolic of sin. The Bible teaches that we are all born in the unclean state of sin. All of us are stained by the inherited sinful nature. Like my inability to hide my guilt as a young boy, our depraved condition cannot be hidden from God. Just as He had a plan for dealing with the unclean conditions in our text, God made a way for us to be cleansed from the condition of sin through the provision of Jesus’ death on Calvary.

Imagine how the Children of Israel felt when a priest declared them clean of disease! We can experience greater joy than they felt by having our sins forgiven.

BACKGROUND

These two chapters deal with physical conditions that caused a person or garment to be classified as clean or unclean.

In chapter 12, the cleansing process was designated for women after they had given birth. If a male child was born, the purification time was forty days. If the infant was a female child, it was eighty days. Atonement for the women was made by a lamb of the first year being sacrificed as a burnt offering, and a young pigeon or a turtledove as a sin offering. If she

was not able to bring a lamb, then two turtledoves or two pigeons could be substituted. The priest would make atonement for her, and she was then pronounced clean.

The pattern of the priest inspecting individuals’ symptoms, diagnosing, and giving the verdict of clean or unclean is repeated seven times in chapter 13. Those declared to be leprous had to tear their clothing, bare their heads, cover their mustaches, and live in a solitary dwelling located outside of the camp. They would warn any one passing by of their condition by crying out, “Unclean! Unclean!” This chapter ends with the priestly duty of inspecting clothing to prevent diseases from spreading. If a garment was declared to be unclean, it was burned.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- I. The way of access to God
 - C. By ceremonial purity
 - 2. Separations concerning childbirth (12:1-8)
 - a. The period of uncleanness (12:1-5)
 - b. The offerings (12:6-8)
 - 3. Separations concerning leprosy
 - a. The diagnosis of leprosy (13:1-44)
 - b. The requirements of a leper (13:45-46)
 - c. The garments with leprosy (13:47-59)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. When a priest was unsure of a person’s condition, for how many days was the individual confined?

2. What was the social impact on an individual who was declared unclean?

3. How should we examine ourselves in order to prevent ourselves from becoming spiritually unclean?

[illegible]

CONCLUSION

Leprosy separated an individual from society. Similarly, sin separates us from God. Unlike those who were declared unclean, however, we have a cure for the condition of sin. Through Jesus' shed Blood we can be made clean, and stay unspotted from the world.

NOTES

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“This shall be the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing: He shall be brought unto the priest.” (Leviticus 14:2)

When I was young, after washing up, I would have to report to my mom for her inspection. She would check me over, look at my hands and face, inspect my ears, and so on, to make sure I was clean. If I wasn't clean enough, it was back to the soap and washcloth.

For a leper to be cleansed, he was required to show himself to the priest. Until declared clean, he was not permitted to enter the city, so the priest would have to go outside the walls or away from the tents to inspect the individual. In keeping with this provision of the Mosaic Law, even Jesus commanded the lepers he healed to go and show themselves to the priest (Matthew 8:2-4).

The disease of sin is, in the sight of God, much more unclean than leprosy. Lepers were not permitted to dwell around or in the presence of other people, but those with sin will not be permitted to dwell in the presence of God. They will be kept separated and barred from entering Heaven. However, even though there was no assurance that the leper would be cleansed of leprosy, we are assured that if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us. We can all be cleansed of sin!

When a leper was cleansed, there would be a difference in his skin and flesh; he would be noticeably different from the way he was before he was cleansed. The same thing is true when we are cleansed from sin. There is a change; after being cleansed by the Blood of Jesus, our lives will be different—noticeably transformed—and clean. The Scripture tells us that old things are passed away and all things are become new; we are different creatures. If the priest inspected and found even a small trace of leprosy, he would determine that the individual was not cleansed. The same thing holds true for sin; if any trace of sin remains, one has not been cleansed.

Although we do not go to a priest to be inspected when we are cleansed from sin, those around us are continually, and very thoroughly, inspecting our Christian lives. No signs or traces of sin should be there.

What a wonderful privilege we have—to live lives that are clean and pure in the sight of God, and above reproach in the sight of man!

BACKGROUND

God had instructed the Israelites that the disease of leprosy rendered its victims “unclean.” While other cultures may have regarded this condition as a horrible disease, the concept of “unclean” was based on God's laws, and leprosy was often used as an analogy of sin. Contact with a leper defiled whoever touched him, so while the cure of other diseases was called “healing,” that of leprosy was called “cleansing.”

Those afflicted with this disease had to keep themselves separate from others, and could not enter into walled cities (or the Israelite camp). Whenever the lepers were in the vicinity of other people they had to keep themselves covered and call out, “Unclean! Unclean!” to warn the uninfected individuals from getting close to them. In Bible times, if lepers got too close to uninfected people, they were pelted with stones to encourage them to move away.

In 1873, Dr. Armauer Hansen of Norway was the first to see the leprosy germ under a microscope, providing evidence that leprosy is caused by a germ. It is not hereditary. Medical treatments were developed in the following years, and in 1970, drug trials on the island of Malta led to an effective treatment for leprosy. In the years since then, millions of people have been successfully treated for leprosy, with virtually no relapse. However, leprosy still exists in many parts of the world.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah's Bible Outlines
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- I. The way of access to God
 - C. By ceremonial purity
 - 3. Separations concerning leprosy
 - d. The cleansing of a leper (14:1-32)
 - (1) The inspection (14:1-2)
 - (2) The offering of two birds (14:3-7)
 - (3) The personal cleansing (14:8-9)
 - (4) The offering of the animals (14:10-32)
 - e. The cleansing of leprosy in a house (14:33-53)
 - (1) The identification of leprosy and its removal (14:33-42)
 - (2) The continuance of leprosy in a house (14:43-47)
 - (3) The cleansing of a house (14:48-53)
 - f. Conclusion (14:54-57)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. What sacrificial actions were required to be undertaken by the cleansed leper?

2. What might be a symbolic reason for sacrificing one of the two birds and letting the other go?

3. How are the actions required by the Mosaic Law similar to actions that might be taken by health officials during a modern-day epidemic?

4. Other people “inspect” our lives as they observe our daily actions and reactions. What behaviors might they regard as “unclean”? What behaviors would they classify as “clean”?

CONCLUSION

Do those inspecting your life observe a life free from any trace of sin?

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“Thus shall ye separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness; that they die not in their uncleanness, when they defile my tabernacle that is among them.” (Leviticus 15:31)

When our first son was born, I was not allowed to be in the delivery room. After the doctor announced to me that my wife was fine and that we had a baby boy, my mind was ahead of my steps as I dashed into the room to see him. I was in a hurry to know the little person who stretched himself so hard before birth that we could count his fingers!

However, as I was about to enter the room, a nurse abruptly stopped me. She said that I could not go in quite yet. I explained that the doctor had said the baby was delivered, and that I was eager to meet my new son. The nurse replied that I had to wash my hands and put on a gown and a pair of gloves before I could approach him, explaining that without taking those precautions, I could pass on some germs to the baby. I had to do what was required, though I was the father.

In today's text, God gave a direct instruction to the Children of Israel on how they needed to be clean before Him, not only in their hearts but also in their bodies. His call to them, as shown in our focus verse, was to be mindful of the pure quality of God's holiness. They were to take steps to separate themselves from sin and partake of His holiness.

God also calls us to holiness. Though He does not hold us to the regimented aspects of bodily cleanness that He expected of Israel, those were shadows of the more serious holiness of the heart and deeds that God wants His people to have today. Yet we cannot make ourselves holy. This state of heart is something that God gives us when we submit ourselves to Him and consecrate fully to do His will. Then, just as the nurse was careful to avoid germs in the delivery room, so we need to take care that we allow no sinful thing into our lives. We need to daily ask God to guard our hearts and to keep us holy by His power. He will do it for us.

BACKGROUND

God wanted to reveal His holiness to the Children of Israel so that they would know how to relate to Him. He had told Moses earlier that no man could see His face and live. The holiness of God requires that everything and everyone around Him be holy.

In today's chapter, the word “issue” was used twenty-four times. God was concerned that these people's bodies be kept clean, and that disease did not spread from one to another. Their physical regulations were a reminder that God wanted their hearts to be holy. The one who was unclean and in the state of unholiness needed to undergo a careful, and sometimes lengthy, period of purification. The purification often involved a sacrifice.

In verses 16-18, God did not intend to show the marriage relationship between a husband and wife as unholy or defiled. However, even though this relationship was God-authored, the Israelite couple needed to remember that God is Lord of their physical as well as spiritual lives. God wanted to be a part of every area of their lives.

The list of requirements in this chapter were not just suggestions by Moses regarding healthy practices that might prevent infection or illness. God gave Israel these commandments, and the focus verse was a reminder that the consequences of disobedience could be dire.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah's Bible Outlines
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- I. The way of access to God
 - C. By ceremonial purity
 - 4. Separation from bodily issues (15:1-33)
 - a. Uncleanness of a man (15:1-18)
 - (1) Any bodily discharge (15:1-15)
 - (a) The fact of uncleanness (15:1-12)
 - (b) The cleansing for uncleanness (15:13-15)
 - (2) Seminal emission (15:16-18)
 - b. Uncleanness of a woman (15:19-30)
 - (1) The issue of blood in the menstrual cycle (15:19-24)
 - (2) Issue of blood not from the menstrual cycle (15:25-30)
 - c. Summary (15:31-33)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. What practical steps were those who were unclean commanded to take?

2. Why do you think the lengthy purification period was necessary for the specified uncleannesses?

3. Why do you think people and objects that the unclean person came in contact with also needed to be purified?

4. What might bring uncleanness in your Christian life? How can you avoid these things?

CONCLUSION

God's holiness is supremely pure. Anyone who aspires to have a relationship with God and to live with Him in Heaven someday must be holy. Therefore we need to be diligent in our efforts to allow God to make and keep us holy.

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the LORD, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the vail.” (Leviticus 16:12)

Carefully, the high priest lifted the curtain, mentally checking to be certain all was in order. Then, with reverence, he slowly entered the room. This chamber contained no light except the glory of God’s presence, which rested over the mercy seat. In his hands, he carried a golden censer containing coals of fire and incense, “beaten small.” When the incense was burned, it would make a cloud of smoke between him and God, “that he die not.”

Think of how the high priest must have felt as he stood in the Presence of God! He alone could enter the Holy of Holies, and he was allowed in only once each year—on the Day of Atonement. In our time, each of us has the opportunity to come into the presence of God. Instead of coming only once a year, we may come as often as we choose. Yet, we must remember not to approach God carelessly.

Incense symbolizes prayer (see Revelation 8:3), so how would our prayers qualify to become incense “beaten small”? Would just any prayer fall into that category, or might there be some special criterion?

Perhaps today, you will work for a demanding employer or with a quarrelsome fellow employee. Your soft answers in the face of this adversity could qualify your prayers to become incense beaten small.

Maybe you have a terminal illness and have chosen not to worry over the future, but to trust God to bring glory to Himself. This is incense beaten small.

God may ask you today to witness to someone, and witnessing takes you out of your comfort zone. Obedience equals incense beaten small.

Perhaps someone in your family is requesting that you give up some cherished activity to accommodate his or her schedule. Submitting your will to another makes incense beaten small.

Opportunities are before each one of us every day. Some are small things that might seem unimportant. Others are life-changing situations. What will we do with today’s opportunities?

The moment the incense touched the coals, the sweet-smelling smoke billowed and drifted upward. Just so, we can offer praise to God that will ascend as a sweet smell if we have allowed Him access to our daily lives so our prayers are incense beaten small.

BACKGROUND

The Day of Atonement was one of the greatest days of the Jewish year because, on this day, the high priest went into the Holy of Holies and offered incense and blood for the sins of the people. This was a symbol of the all-inclusive atonement of Christ. Work of all kinds was halted on this day, and the entire nation was called to prayer.

The Tabernacle was divided into two parts. The Holy of Holies was separated from the Holy Place by a veil, placed there to shield the priest who came into the Holy Place in his daily ministrations from the consuming presence of God, which was over the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies. The only time anyone entered the Holy of Holies, except when it was necessary to move the Tabernacle, was on the Day of Atonement.

The high priest washed with water, put on his linen robes, and took the offerings into the Holy of Holies. First he made a sin offering for himself and his family, sprinkling that blood before the Mercy Seat.

Lots were cast over two goats. One was brought as a sin offering for the people, and this blood was also sprinkled in the Holy of Holies. Atonement was made for the Tabernacle as a whole, and the brazen altar was sprinkled with the blood of both sin offerings.

Verse 21 is key because it is a picture of what Jesus Christ did for us. One goat was kept alive as a scapegoat. The high priest put his hands upon the goat’s head and confessed the sins of the people. Then the goat was sent away into the wilderness bearing the people’s iniquities. Hebrews 13:12 tells us, “Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.”

Then the high priest washed himself again and offered the burnt offering for himself and the people. Finally, the bodies of the slain sin offerings were disposed of, and other ceremonial details performed according to God’s instructions.

Five animals were involved: two for the high priest and his family, two were offered for the people, and the scapegoat was sent alive into the wilderness.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- I. The way of access to God
 - D. By annual atonement (16:1-34)
 1. The preparation of Aaron (16:1-4)
 2. The sacrifices (16:5-22)
 - a. The procurement and purpose (16:5-10)

- b. The sin offering for himself (16:11-14)
- c. The sin offering for the people (16:15-19)
- d. The live goat, the symbolic sin bearer (16:20-22)

4. The annual atonement established

perpetually (16:29-34)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. What was the high priest to wear on the Day of Atonement?

2. Why do you think God required such exacting ceremonies be performed on the Day of Atonement?

3. Does God have any requirements for those who come into His presence now? If so, what are they?

[illegible]

4. What actions might we take to help us come into God's presence with the right attitude?

[illegible]

CONCLUSION

Let us offer ourselves to God each day, so that He can help us live in a way that causes our prayers to ascend to Him as a sweet-smelling savour.

NOTES

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations; neither any of your own nation, nor any stranger that sojourneth among you.” (Leviticus 18:26)

In the middle of the nineteenth century, London was stricken with a devastating epidemic of cholera. As the disease rampaged through the city, it left thousands of people dead in its wake. No one knew the cause of the disease, and panic was widespread.

Dr. John Snow, a surgeon and pioneer of the science of epidemiology, suspected that the disease was spread by contaminated water—an idea that neither the authorities nor the rest of the medical profession accepted. In researching the deaths of 89 people in one week in a certain district of the city, Dr. Snow discovered that all but two of the dead had drunk from the Broad Street well.

At an emergency meeting of concerned leaders, Snow suggested that the handle of the Broad Street pump should be removed. Though they were reluctant to believe him, they agreed to remove the pump handle as an experiment. Within a few weeks, the outbreak in the area was all but over.

Sin contaminates. If not dealt with, it can quickly reach epidemic proportions. You may face situations where you will be scoffed at for establishing and maintaining standards of purity and holiness, but it is vital that you continue to do so. Ask the Lord to help you stand firm in upholding the instructions of God’s Word in every aspect of your life, and not to be swayed by the opinions of others.

In our devotional text for today, we read some of the measures God instituted to safeguard the holiness and separation of the Children of Israel from the evil nations around them. God wanted Israel to keep His Commandments, and they were to make sure the strangers dwelling in the land obeyed too. The strangers would suffer the same consequences for disobedience as the Children of Israel.

History tells us that the Israelites disobeyed God’s statutes, and ultimately were thrust into captivity as a result of their failure to obey. God means what He says!

Let us continually be on guard against the infiltration of the “filth” of this world into our lives, so that we might avoid God’s penalty for it!

BACKGROUND

These two chapters of Leviticus are included in what is commonly known as the “Holiness Code,” which encompasses chapters 17—20. This block of text constitutes a legal code for the people of Israel, touching on many aspects of their personal and public lives, and emphasizing that holiness is a practical thing.

Leviticus 17 deals with the sanctity of the blood, which is life. Life belongs to God and is considered sacred in God’s eyes. According to Leviticus 17:14, life is in the blood. Consequently, blood was not to be consumed in any way as food. Even during sacrifices, the blood was to be returned to God by sprinkling it on the altar or some other place in the sanctuary.

There were four conditions that governed Israel’s relationship to blood, as explained in chapter 17:

Verses 1-7: Any animal killed for food was to be brought to the sanctuary and offered as a peace offering or fellowship offering. This discouraged secretly killing an animal and eating it. It also dignified ordinary meals and made them into a sacred experience. In addition, it provided for the priests’ maintenance.

Verses 8-9: No one could offer a sacrifice any place other than the sanctuary. This was different than in the past when the head of a household could make an offering to the Lord anywhere.

Verses 10-13: No one was allowed to drink any type of blood. The purpose of blood was for atonement, and it was not to be treated as a common product.

Verses 14-16: Those who ate an animal that had died by itself or had been killed by another animal had to wash the clothes they were wearing, bathe their bodies, and keep themselves separated from all the people until the evening. It was an unpleasant thing to be declared unclean, so the practice of eating animals that had died in this manner was discouraged.

Through these regulations, Israel learned to recognize the sanctity of blood and the fact that God considered blood sacred because it was the very essence of life. These strict requirements pointed ahead to the precious Blood of Jesus, which would one day be shed for the redemption, sanctification, and healing of mankind.

Leviticus 18 deals with the sanctity of sexual relationships. To be holy in God’s eyes, the people had to avoid sexual activities that had been practiced by the Egyptians and the Canaanites (18:1-3). Israel was instructed to obey God’s standards, not those of the

people around them. They were to preserve the sanctity of marriage by not having sexual relations outside of marriage, or with anyone other than their spouse. To “uncover their nakedness” means “to have sexual relations.” God reminded Israel that adultery was strictly forbidden and stated His opposition to sexual abuse, bestiality, and homosexuality. These were common practices in Egypt and Canaan, and God let Israel know that they were an abomination to Him.

God told Israel He was destroying the inhabitants of Canaan because of their sinful sexual practices, and He warned Israel not to commit these abominations or the land would spew them out like the nations before them.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah's Bible Outlines
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- II. The way of fellowship with God
 - A. By separation unto holiness
 - 1. The holiness of the people
 - a. Reverence for blood (17:1-16)
 - (1) Concerning the slaying of animals (17:1-9)
 - (2) Concerning the eating of blood (17:10-16)
 - b. Moral purity (18:1-30)
 - (1) Holiness demanded (18:1-5)
 - (2) Unholiness delineated (18:6-23)
 - (3) Judgment described (18:24-30)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. How were the people to treat the blood of a slain animal?
-
-
-
-

2. Why did God give such explicit instructions regarding Israel’s sexual practices?

3. How can you maintain moral purity in today’s society?

CONCLUSION

God still requires that His people be holy. We cannot violate God’s moral law and escape the consequences, but oh, the benefits of obedience!

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD.” (Leviticus 19:18)

Growing up, I lived with my family in a neighborhood that included a locally owned store called Lou’s Market. Across the street from the market was a large sign advertising the business. One day, as a grade-school child, I decided to play with the sign. After a time, Lou stormed out of the store, hollered at me, and made motions with his arms. Although I could not hear his words, my young brain translated a clear message: Get away from the sign!

However, a busy street stood between us, so I continued playing with the metal sign by swinging it back and forth on its steel posts. I noticed that Lou was now talking to a man in a black car and pointing at me. Soon both of them motioned dramatically to me with the same cease-and-desist message. Shortly, the man in the black car raced around the block so he could park near where I was. At this, I ran away from the sign. The man followed in his black car but, because I was cutting through neighbor yards, he lost track of me. Just as I was nearing home, the man in his black car swung around a corner. I quickly ran through two more yards and into the safety of my own.

Clearly, I was in the wrong. The sign belonged to Lou and he had a right to demand respect for it. Yet, one could also question Lou’s reaction. After all, I was only a child and my playing with the sign had not been malicious in any way. The truth was, neither of us was exemplifying love for our neighbor, as is commanded in today’s focus verse.

The message in this verse, however, goes far beyond just dealing in a charitable manner with those who live near us. It is indicative of a much broader principle that was reiterated by Christ in His Sermon on the Mount: we are to treat all men with fairness, respect, and true brotherly love.

God is concerned for the welfare of each individual, and we are called to reflect His attitude toward those around us. May God help us to be good “neighbors” to everyone whose lives touch ours!

BACKGROUND

Throughout this chapter, God emphasizes His position in relation to the Israelites. In verse 4 and

others, He says, “I am the LORD your God.” (This last phrase is repeated over 40 times in chapters 18—26.) Further into the chapter, He shortens the point to, “I am the LORD,” and repeats this more than once. God was reminding the people of His identity and His final authority on all matters.

The theme of holiness that runs through this chapter is based on the fact that God is holy. God wanted the people to follow Him and be separate from the heathen nations around them. He clearly showed how the high order to holiness was completely supported by real, daily actions.

It is interesting to note that many of the verses in this chapter expand on the Ten Commandments. Three of the Commandments are mentioned in verses 3-4.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- II. The way of fellowship with God
 - A. By separation unto holiness
 - 1. The holiness of the people
 - c. Social equity (19:1-37)
 - (1) The foundation (19:1-8)
 - (2) Care of the poor (19:9-10)
 - (3) Avoid stealing and lying (19:11-12)
 - (4) Avoid oppression (19:13-14)
 - (5) Avoid unjust judgment (19:15-16)
 - (6) Love your neighbor (19:17-18)
 - (7) Various other regulations (19:19-37)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. How many of the Ten Commandments do you find embedded in chapter 19?

2. What do you think is meant in verse 14 by, “Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumblingblock before the blind”?

[illegible]

Our neighbors—both those next door and, more broadly, anyone whose life touches ours—are our own personal mission field. Let us view every interaction with our neighbors as an opportunity to demonstrate God’s love!

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the LORD your God. And ye shall keep my statutes, and do them: I am the LORD which sanctify you.” (Leviticus 20:7-8)

Our church’s campground restaurant comes under the jurisdiction of the Oregon Health Division regarding the practices used in food preparation. One of the mandates outlined in the current food-handlers handbook is that different cutting boards must be used for cutting up chicken and produce. Is this just a nit-picky regulation with no real basis? No, cross-contamination can occur between foods. Strict separation of utensils is necessary in order to avoid possible food-borne illnesses.

God’s requirements for our lives include a “strict separation” from influences that could contaminate us. One meaning of the word *sanctify* is “to set apart for a sacred purpose.” God wants a separated and holy people, for He is holy. Holiness means morally perfect, pure, and set apart from all sin—being totally devoted or dedicated to God, and reserved for His special use. God wants us to live with Him forever, but He cannot take anyone into His holy presence unless all sin is removed. We must set ourselves apart for God and look to Him for His imparted holiness. He has given us His Holy Spirit to help us obey and to give us power for service.

God gave many rules to the Children of Israel, but they were not without reason. He did not withhold good from them; He only prohibited those acts that would bring them to ruin. In the same way, He forbids us to do certain things because He wants us to avoid self-destruction.

Have you found yourself drawn to a forbidden physical or emotional pleasure? Society portrays sins as attractive, and attempts to cloud the dark side of such indulgences. Remind yourself that the consequences will be suffering and separation from the One who is trying to help you! Holiness brings a sincere desire to obey God. Every aspect of one’s life is placed in subjection to His lordship, every decision is made with Him taken into account, and every work honors Him. What a joyous and fulfilling existence becomes ours when we are sanctified!

BACKGROUND

The requirements established in chapters 17—20 of Leviticus opened the way for the Israelites to come

to God. They were given instructions on how to have a holy walk with God, along with rules for daily living concerning sacrifices, family responsibilities, sexual conduct, relationships, and worldliness.

God made a distinction between the Israelites and the heathen nations around them. He had delivered the Children of Israel out of idolatrous Egypt and set them apart as a unique nation, dedicated to worshiping Him alone and leading moral lives. He designed laws and restrictions to help them remain separate (both socially and spiritually) from the wicked heathen nations. As a chosen and separated people, the Children of Israel were obligated to make a difference between the clean and the unclean and not to live like the pagans around them.

God removed His people from Egypt; now He was removing Egypt from the people. He was showing them how to exchange Egyptian ways of living and thinking for His ways of living and thinking. God wanted His people to be set apart, different, and holy just as He is holy. They had two options: to be separated and holy, or to compromise with their heathen neighbors and become corrupt.

After the sacrificial system for forgiving sins was in place, the people were instructed on how to live as forgiven and holy people. The people of Israel were to consecrate themselves and be holy. “Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God am holy” (Leviticus 19:2).

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- II. The way of fellowship with God
 - A. By separation unto holiness
 - 1. The holiness of the people
 - d. Penalties for unholiness (20:1-27)
 - (1) For sacrificing to Molech (20:1-5)
 - (2) For worshipping demons (20:6-8)
 - (3) For cursing parents (20:9)
 - (4) For various sexual deviations (20:10-21)
 - (5) Conclusion (20:22-27)

A CLOSER LOOK

- 1. What was God’s reaction to a person who looked to “familiar spirits”?

[illegible][illegible]

God gave guidelines for His people to separate themselves from those things that would make them unclean. Like the Israelites, Christians also are called to be holy and remain spiritually separate from the world's wickedness.

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

**“And when ye will offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving unto the LORD, offer it at your own will.”
(Leviticus 22:29)**

“Just give it to the Lord.” How many times have you heard that comment related to a difficult situation in your life? From personal experience, I know this is much easier to say than to do.

I live in a large city with all the diversity you can imagine. As a single woman, I am solely responsible for the finances of my home, and I have a job that I believe came directly from the Hand of the Lord. The environment where I work is not conducive to living a holy life—my supervisor is a lesbian who emphatically verbalizes her personal opinions. My lifestyle as a celibate Christian conflicts with everything in her belief system. Her comments and actions toward me make my workplace a hostile environment—yet, I feel that the Lord has put me in this position for a purpose. My supervisor and my other co-workers are closely monitoring my reactions.

I *choose* to offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving, even for this difficult position. That choice does not make the outward situation any different, but it does help me to remember that God is still in control of everything in the world and especially the things that concern me—His child! If I can wrap myself in this thankful spirit, I will have the victory!

Does this mean that if I have a heart full of thankfulness to the Lord for His goodness, this situation will all be gone by next week? I don’t think so, but I need to be thankful anyway. The chorus from my youth starts singing itself in my head, “Hallelujah anyhow. Never, never let your troubles get you down.” That is easy to do when you are on a spiritual mountaintop, but it’s not quite so simple when you are in a valley.

The Children of Israel were told many dos and don’ts in this text. Yet, in the midst of the list, a choice was given to willingly offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving. Though at times it may seem a sacrifice on our part, we need to be thankful as well. When we are thankful in the middle of difficult situations, we will be a shining light to those around us.

BACKGROUND

The priests were “chief” men, or spiritual leaders, among the people of Israel. They stood between God and the people, instructing the people in what God wanted them to do, and offering to God the people’s sacrifices. God had additional requirements for them.

Personal holiness was mandatory for the priests, and some of the requirements extended to their families. They had to select their companions, bury their dead, and choose their food within the parameters God gave them. God did not want Israel to adopt pagan ways, and the priests needed to be examples in following God. The requirements for the high priest were even more stringent because he had been anointed with oil and consecrated to put on the high priest’s garments.

The priests could have no physical defects. This was not because God discriminated against or thought less of such people, but the priests represented God to the people. Their role pointed ahead to Jesus Christ, who would be the perfect High Priest. Also, the offerings of the people had to be unblemished because they, too, pointed toward Jesus, who would be the Perfect Sacrifice. Those priests who had physical blemishes were not banished from the tribe. They ate the priests’ food and lived in the priests’ area, but they could not go into the Holy Place or offer sacrifices.

The priests were required to be ceremonially pure. They had to be careful even about what they touched. Day after day, time after time, they offered sacrifices. How easily that could have become routine, and they could have become careless. God wanted the priests to show respect in their rituals and in their treatment of the items that had been consecrated to God. They were to share their food only with those who were qualified to eat it.

For priests, the requirements were high, but the rewards were great. They had the privilege of serving God as representatives of the whole congregation.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- II. The way of fellowship with God
 - A. By separation unto holiness
 - 2. The holiness of the priests (21:1—22:33)
 - a. The personal holiness of the priests (21:1-15)
 - (1) The regular priests (21:1-9)
 - (2) The high priest (21:10-15)
 - b. The physical disqualification of a priest (21:16-24)
 - c. The ceremonial purity of a priest (22:1-9)
 - d. The reverence of holy things by a non-priest (22:10-16)
 - e. The care in selection of animal sacrifices by a priest (22:17-33)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. Who could eat the priests' food with them?

2. How do you think God received sacrifices that were not offered willingly?

3. Describe a time someone you know evidenced a thankful attitude in difficult circumstances. What are the benefits of having a thankful heart at all times?

CONCLUSION

Maybe today you are facing unpleasant circumstances. Will you truly give the Lord a sacrifice of thanksgiving anyway?

NOTES

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, Concerning the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are my feasts.” (Leviticus 23:1-2)

I love holidays! Toward the first of September, I start thinking ahead to Thanksgiving and Christmas. Around our house, these are precious times when we get together with our loved ones and look back over the blessings of God in the year past. A great part of the enjoyment is in the anticipation and planning! We discuss who will be invited to Thanksgiving dinner, where the event will take place, and what will be served (the menu has to include Dad’s special dressing and Mom’s sweet potatoes, but we might be willing to negotiate on the rest of the menu!) Around October, we begin making Christmas cards to send to faraway friends. By early November, a great deal of our “spare” time focuses on finishing handmade gifts. December revolves around baking those special decorated holiday cookies, carefully wrapping the gifts we will be giving, picking out and decorating the perfect Christmas tree, and practicing for special programs at church.

The literal meaning of the word *holiday* is “holy day.” Israel’s holidays were different from those of the nations around them. They were ordained by God and were times of celebrating and honoring Him, not times of moral depravity as in the heathen nations nearby. God’s intention was for the people to use these special occasions as a time when they would come together for rest, refreshment, and remembering with grateful hearts all that He had done for them.

Obedience to God’s Commandments (among them, that of observing the feasts prescribed by God) ensured future blessings for the Children of Israel. As Christians, we also need to take time to remember what God has done for us. Even though we don’t keep the same annual feasts that Israel did, we can celebrate the birth of Jesus at Christmas and His Resurrection at Easter. We can participate in the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper, which Christ told His followers to continue to observe in honor of His death.

Much can be learned about a family or culture by observing the holidays they celebrate and the way they celebrate them. Take note of your personal holiday traditions. What do they say about your values? Do you take these times of remembrance as seriously as the Orthodox Jews take their Jewish festivals? We have so

much to be thankful for. Be sure to let God know how much you appreciate His provision for you.

BACKGROUND

This chapter instructs Israel in the feasts of the Lord, observances that were to be an important part of Israel’s culture and worship. The word *feasts* means “appointed times.” The words *holy convocation* appear ten times in our text and mean, “a sacred assembly.”

Verses 1-3 deal with the weekly Sabbath Day. This was a day that provided necessary rest for the people, animals, and land, and the Israelites were expected to honor it. By setting one day a week aside for rest and worship, they witnessed to the other nations around them that they belonged to the Lord. To dishonor the Sabbath Day was a serious offense and resulted in being cut off from the people.

The next seven feasts described were annual feasts. The first feast was Passover, which commemorated the time when the blood of a lamb preserved the life of their firstborn, and the Israelites’ deliverance from Egyptian bondage. It started the festival year at the beginning of spring and lasted for one day. God assigned the date as the fourteenth day of the first month based on a lunar calendar that used the phases of the moon. Each month starts with a new moon, reaching a full moon in the middle of a 28-day cycle. Passover always falls on the first full moon of spring, and this is why the date for Easter changes every year—it always coincides with Passover.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread was the second festival of the year. It started on the fifteenth day of the first month and lasted for seven days. Leaven in the Bible symbolizes sin, and the Israelites were not to eat any leaven during this feast. Eating unleavened bread represented a holy walk.

The third festival was the Feast of Firstfruits. This feast lasted one day and was celebrated on the day after the Sabbath during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The Jews were to bring the first crops of their spring planting to the priest at the Temple to be waved before the Lord on their behalf to thank God for the fertility of the land.

The fourth feast was Pentecost. It marked the beginning of the summer harvest and occurred on a Sunday, seven weeks (or fifty days) after the Feast of Firstfruits. This festival was to thank God for a bountiful harvest.

The Feast of Trumpets was the fifth feast of the year. It occurred on the first day of the seventh month

(in September) On this day the Jews were to express their thanksgiving to God by blowing trumpets and offering a burnt sacrifice to the Lord. The trumpets were made of ram's horns and some of the special trumpets were made of silver. On other occasions the high priest would blow a trumpet calling the field workers to come to the Temple for worship services.

The Day of Atonement was the sixth festival to be celebrated. It occurred on the tenth day of the seventh month and represented the removal of sin from the Jews and their nation, and the restoration of their fellowship with God. On this day, the high priest entered the sacred Holy of Holies where God himself dwelt. The high priest would first offer a sacrifice on his own behalf, and then he would make a sacrifice on behalf of all the Israelites. It is still treated as the most sacred of the holy days in Israel today. For the slightest violation like working on this day (lifting something too heavy or walking too far) a person could be cut off and no longer eligible for redemption. This time of confession was to last for twenty-four hours (23:32). During this twenty-four-hour period, the Israelites would confess their sins of the previous year.

The Feast of Tabernacles started on the fifteenth day of the seventh month and lasted for seven days. It celebrated God's protection and provision in the wilderness. The Israelites were to build "booths" or shelters outside their homes where they would dwell for seven days. These booths were to be made from the boughs of trees. During this feast the Israelites were also instructed to offer a daily burnt offering to the Lord.

All of these feasts were considered holy to the Lord, and Israel was to keep them every year. Today, Orthodox Jews are still careful to keep these feasts.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah's Bible Outlines
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II. The way of fellowship with God

B. By observing religious feasts (23:1-44)

1. The weekly Sabbaths (23:1-3)
2. The Passover (23:4-5)
3. The Feast of Unleavened Bread (23:6-8)
4. The firstfruits (23:9-14)
5. The Feast of Pentecost (23:15-21)
6. The Feast of Trumpets (23:22-25)
7. The Day of Atonement (23:26-32)
8. The Feast of Tabernacles (23:33-44)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. What word did God use in connection with the Sabbath, and what one prohibition did He make in this chapter regarding this special day?

2. Why do you think God was so adamant about Israel keeping these feasts every year as well as the weekly Sabbath?

3. What can we do to make the Lord's Day and partaking in the Lord's Supper more meaningful?

CONCLUSION

The feasts God prescribed for the Children of Israel were to be times when they would remember His provision and give Him honor for it. Are you setting aside times in your life when you give God the praise He deserves for providing for your needs?

NOTES

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Whosoever curseth his God shall bear his sin. (Leviticus 24:15)”

The boss of a person with whom I am acquainted told him and the other employees that they would be responsible for cleaning the employee restrooms on a scheduled rotation. This individual, presumably motivated by the thought that everyone who used the restrooms should be on the rotation, defiantly informed the boss that it was okay to have such a cleaning schedule if he (the boss) was on it too. As a result, he is no longer working at that company. His comment fell into the category of “gross insubordination,” and his employment was terminated as a consequence.

In our society, respect is required for people in certain positions. For example, when a judge enters the courtroom, everyone rises and remains standing until instructed to be seated. The judge is not addressed casually or without honor. There is a required decorum; to address a judge in a disrespectful manner would likely result in a charge of contempt of court.

However, there is no comparison between the respect due a boss or a judge to the respect and extremely high degree of reverence that we must show the Creator of heaven and earth. God deserves all the respect and reverence we can muster, and more!

Today’s focus verse shows that the Mosaic Law demanded respect for God. Blaspheming or cursing Him was (and still is) extremely serious business. Making blasphemy a capital offense showed its importance. While that level of punishment would be viewed as extreme in today’s society, it certainly demonstrated the importance that God placed upon proper reverence being given to His name.

Ponder the vast difference between mankind and God. How lowly and insignificant we are when compared to the Great Creator of the universe! We have no right to think we can be even slightly disrespectful to Him and be entitled to any mercy. Moses and the Israelites more closely recognized our true position (compared to God) than do many people today.

Let us take care to always show utmost respect for the awesome God we serve!

BACKGROUND

In this portion of text, laws for Tabernacle service and laws regulating conduct in the camp were set in place for the people.

Blasphemy was indicative of dishonor and defiance toward God, and its penalty was death by stoning. This penalty may seem severe to us, but it was no doubt a deterrent. Moses had so much respect, reverence, and deep affection for God and His name, that this punishment was not considered extreme at all.

The Israelites considered it impious to pronounce God’s name, which is Jehovah, so they always put either “Adonai” (Lord), or “hashem” (the Name) in the place of it. To them, God’s name was held to be so sacred that they rarely wrote it, and never pronounced it. In fact, according to some Hebrew scholars, God’s name has been unused by the Jews for so long, that the true Hebrew pronunciation is now totally lost.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

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- II. The way of fellowship with God
 - C. By obedience in worship and reverence (24:1-23)
 - 1. Obedience in worship (24:1-9)
 - a. The oil (24:1-4)
 - b. The bread (24:5-9)
 - 2. Obedience in reverence (24:10-23)
 - a. The blasphemy of God’s name (24:10-12)
 - b. The judgment for blasphemy prescribed (24:13-23)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. Under the Mosaic Law, what was the consequence of cursing God? What was the consequence of blaspheming God?

2. Why were cursing and blaspheming God considered such serious offenses?

3. How might people try to defend disrespectful actions directed toward God?

4. In what ways can we show proper respect and honor for the Name of God?

CONCLUSION

Even though the laws of our society do not require the punishment for blasphemy mandated by the Mosaic Law, offenders will face eternal consequences! Let us be careful to always honor the Name of our God.

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the LORD: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard. That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is a year of rest unto the land.” (Leviticus 25:4-5)

When my nephew was a toddler, he seemed to have an unlimited reserve of energy. While I have raised energetic children of my own, Ryan’s constant “on the go” attitude was quite a source of amusement. One day when our family gathered for a birthday celebration, Ryan (three years old at the time) was in rare form. The excitement of playing with his cousins seemed to propel him from one activity to the next with scarcely a pause to catch his breath. At last, however, the reserve of energy ran out. We discovered him standing by a chair, with his cheek against the seat, fast asleep!

How easy it is to get caught up in the fast-moving pace of our daily schedules, and fail to take necessary breaks in order to refresh ourselves physically, emotionally, and spiritually. God knew that would be our tendency, and so He instituted a “time out”—a weekly Sabbath of rest for His people. In today’s portion of text, He also provided a rest for the land—one year of rest after six years of production—and then, a special celebration called the Year of Jubilee after the seventh Sabbatical year.

Are you weary? Is your mind tired? Is your heart overwhelmed? Physical rest for your body is necessary, but the most desirable rest is to have your soul dwell at ease. The only sure way to find that rest is to make a spiritual connection with Christ and then to take time to sit at His feet.

Take a spiritual “Sabbath”! To do this, you must cease from your own efforts; you must trust in Jesus to bring you God’s rest. Set aside a time to quiet the internal noise so you can hear the still small voice of God. Meditate on His Word. Take time for prayer and reflection. As you turn to Jesus in your thoughts and prayers, He will give you rest.

For the Israelites of Moses’ time, this rest was to be part of their lives in the Promised Land. For us today, it is to be part of our lives here in the busy world we live in.

God wants you to enter into His rest. Will you?

BACKGROUND

The Year of Jubilee, the fiftieth year after seven cycles of seven years, was called the year of liberty. It was the year of restoration—a special year in which the people were to “proclaim liberty throughout all the land.” It had a leveling effect on Israel’s culture, giving everyone a new start economically and socially.

The Year of Jubilee was launched with a blast from a ram’s horn, signifying a call to joy, liberation, and the beginning of a year for doing justice and loving mercy. The trumpet was sounded on the close of the Day of Atonement; thus the jubilee commenced when the people had been humbling and afflicting their souls for sin. They were then able to hear the trump, or this voice of joy and gladness. All debts were canceled, slaves set free, and lands that had been sold were returned to their original owners.

The Observance of the Year of Jubilee rested on four convictions:

- Israel must fear God and refuse to take advantage of one another. (25:17)
- Israel must have faith that God would provide. (25:18-22)
- Israel must realize that the Promised Land belongs to the Creator, who divided it by grace, not by merit or social standing. (25:23-24)
- Israel must understand that they belonged to God, and people are not property. (25:35)

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- II. The way of fellowship with God
 - D. By observing the Sabbatic Year and Jubilee (25:1-55)
 - 1. The Sabbatic Year (25:1-7)
 - 2. The Year of Jubilee (25:8-55)
 - a. The consecration of the fiftieth year (25:8-12)
 - b. The Jubilee and the land (25:13-28)
 - c. The Jubilee and houses (25:29-34)
 - d. The Jubilee and the bondsmen (25:35-55)

A CLOSER LOOK

- 1. What were the people to refrain from doing in the seventh year, the year of Sabbath rest for the land?

3. In what ways might you observe a “Sabbath rest” from your normal activities? What would be the goal of such an observance?

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.” (Leviticus 26:3-4)

Not long ago, my nephew Andrew came home from school saying that a bully had taken his lunch money. Andrew told his mother that the bully threatened to beat him up if he didn't hand it over. What my nephew had that day was a very negative introduction to the *if/then* progression.

Many people associate this form of logic only with threats. “If you don't do this, then bad things will happen.” However, in spite of its sometimes sinister application, the *if/then* expression is neither good nor bad. It is deductive logic, pure and simple.

People have accused God of being threatening and looking for ways to punish. They view God's words as only “Thou shalt not.” This perspective is incorrect. God does require obedience, but it is an *if/then* situation. If you follow God, then He will richly reward you. If you fail to obey, then you will not be rewarded. That is fair. If people do not meet the criteria, why should they expect the reward?

In Leviticus 26, God provided the Children of Israel with this kind of logic. In verse 3, we see that God provided the “if” component. He plainly laid out what the conditions were. Look at the payback they received for following these criteria! The “then” blessings and benefits were extensive.

If negative consequences occurred, it was because Israel chose not to obey. The consequences were the loss of the blessings that God would provide if they stayed with Him. It was not God's plan for the Israelites to suffer in this way, but it was their choice whether or not to follow Him.

The same choice is ours today. It is God's plan for us to be blessed by obedience, but we choose whether or not we follow His instructions. Simply put, if you keep God's commandments, then you will be blessed. If you do not, you won't be!

Today, let us make sure we have aligned ourselves with the instructions in God's Word. As we do, we can be sure that His blessing will be upon our lives!

BACKGROUND

This chapter contains a general re-enforcement of the laws given by Moses. The Children of Israel

were promised rewards for obedience on one hand, and warned of the consequences for disobedience on the other. If they held proper regard for the Sabbath and did not turn to idolatry, then the Lord promised to bless them in many ways. These precious promises, though they appeared to relate chiefly to the life here on earth, were also indicators of the spiritual blessings God had for His faithful followers. All covenant blessings were summed up in the covenant, “I will be your God, and ye shall be my people.”

After God set forth the blessing that would make them a happy people if they would be obedient, He warned what would occur if they turned Him and His Commandments aside. The blessings provided (or held back) covered many facets of the lives of the Israelites. They included an abundance of the fruits of the earth, peace and safety under divine protection, victory and success in time of war, and the increase of their people. Even more of a blessing was the promised favor of God, the tokens of His presence and His grace.

There was no mistaking the consequences of disobedience. The loss of these blessings would be as devastating as having them would be of benefit.

If the Israelites confessed their sins, then God would again illustrate His faithfulness and willingness to freely forgive and restore blessings withdrawn while they were disobedient.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

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- II. The way of fellowship with God
 - E. By heeding God's promises and warning in the land (26:1-46)
 - 1. Promises of prosperity for obedience (26:1-13)
 - 2. Penalties for disobedience (26:14-39)
 - 3. Promise of restoration (26:40-46)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. List four of the specific blessings God promised the Israelites if they walked in His statutes and kept His commandments.

[illegible]

God is not vengeful or threatening. He does not issue ultimatums to catch us so we can be punished. While He insists on our obedience to His commands, for that obedience we receive immeasurable blessings. Let us not forget the *then* blessings God has for us when we love and follow Him.

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“Notwithstanding no devoted thing, that a man shall devote unto the LORD of all that he hath, both of man and beast, and of the field of his possession, shall be sold or redeemed: every devoted thing is most holy unto the LORD.” (Leviticus 27:28)

Have you ever felt God calling you to offer something to Him that was very valuable to you? I remember the time in my own life when God called me to be willing to give Him my family, my home, and my job, and to be willing to support my husband in his call to go into full-time ministry. This was not an easy consecration for me to make, and I struggled with it for some time. I tried to argue with God and with my husband that this was not the best thing for our children.

The day I said yes to God was a turning point in my life. I had to put everything I held dear into God's hands, and trust Him to work out all the details according to His will. From that day forward, there was no turning back or taking that consecration off the altar. Over the years since that day, I have seen how God has worked in our family and provided for our every need, and I can see that obeying God's direction in my life was a very wise choice.

The offerings described in Leviticus picture aspects of the consecrations of believers today. God does ask us to make consecrations to Him. When we offer our lives to the Lord, He wants us to yield our all to Him—our service, efforts, time, money, plans, families—our everything. He wants us to hold with a loose hand the things in this life that He allows us to have so that we are willing to relinquish them to Him if He asks us to. God wants us to be willing to serve Him wherever and however He needs us.

When God asks us to make these consecrations, they may seem difficult. We may wonder why God even asks us to surrender them to Him. Yielding to Him and obeying will bring blessings. But holding back our consecrations and being unwilling will stifle our Christian walk and eventually prove disastrous.

If God is asking you to yield something to Him today, no matter how hard it may seem, make the consecration. You will be glad you did!

BACKGROUND

This chapter deals with vows and consecrating certain possessions for the Lord's work, as well as the principle of substituting money for something dedicated to the Lord such as a person, animal, or piece of

property. The priest put a value on the gift according to the rules given by God, and the money given was used by the priests for the upkeep of the sanctuary. When the Israelites gave money in exchange for the actual gift, this was called “redeeming” the gift while still fulfilling the vow. These vows of dedication were voluntary to show gratitude to God and were separate from the required tithe offerings.

Verses 1-8 explain the dedication of a person. An Israelite could dedicate himself, a family member, or one of his servants to serve the Lord and the sanctuary for life. Since the Levites were specially trained to carry out the Lord's service, it was generally expected that the offering Israelite would redeem the person with money. The different monetary amounts for various ages and sexes did not indicate that certain people were more valuable than others. The valuation was based on how much work that individual would have been able to do. A shekel was equal to approximately one month's income. A male 20 to 60 years old had to pay four years' worth of income to redeem himself.

Verses 9-13 give instructions for dedicating animals to the Lord. When an animal was dedicated, it was considered holy or “set apart” for the Lord. If the owner decided he wanted to change the original animal for an inferior animal, then both animals would belong to the Lord. If the donor wanted to redeem the animal for money, he had to add 20 percent to the priest's estimated value.

Verses 14-25 explain the dedication and redemption of property. If the owner wanted to redeem the property, he was to add 20 percent to the valuation. If a man sold the land after donating it to the Lord, the penalty was forfeiture of the land to the priests at the Year of Jubilee, in which case it could never be redeemed. It was a serious thing to make a vow to the Lord and not keep it.

Certain things were considered “unredeemable” (verses 26-34). The firstborn beast always belonged to the Lord and was used for a burnt sacrifice. These could not be redeemed with money. However, if the firstborn beast was an unclean animal or blemished, it could be redeemed by paying the evaluated price and adding 20 percent.

The difference between a possession that was “sanctified” to the Lord and one that was “devoted” to the Lord was in how the vow was stated. If a person dedicated himself or a family member, an animal, or a piece of property to be totally devoted to the Lord's service, that offering could not be changed or redeemed with money.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

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c. The tithe (27:30-34)

NOTES



Overview for Numbers

Author: Commonly accepted to be Moses

Date Written: Approximately 1450 B.C. – 1410 B.C.

Setting: The Desert of the Sinai region, as well as the area just south and east of the Land of Promise

Prominent Characters: Moses, Aaron, Miriam, Joshua, Caleb, Balaam

Objective: To provide the account of the pilgrimage of the Children of Israel as they prepare to enter the Promised Land

Central Passage: “Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice; Surely they shall not see the land which I swear unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it” – (Numbers 14: 22-23).

Comments: The Book of Numbers, the fourth writing of Moses, resumes the narrative of God’s people that stopped in Exodus. (Leviticus, placed between Exodus and Numbers, details Israel’s legislation.) It is a book of transition; the people aged twenty and above were excluded from the Promised Land because of their unbelief and replaced by a new generation. It is also a book of wanderings; the Children of Israel who were not allowed to enter the Promised Land were destined to wander from place to place until the younger generation came of age.

The Hebrew title for this book means simply “in the wilderness.” The Greek name, “Numbers,” was given because the book contains a record of the numbering of the Children of Israel. The book opens with the nation of Israel camped at the foot of Mount Sinai. The people had received God’s laws, and were

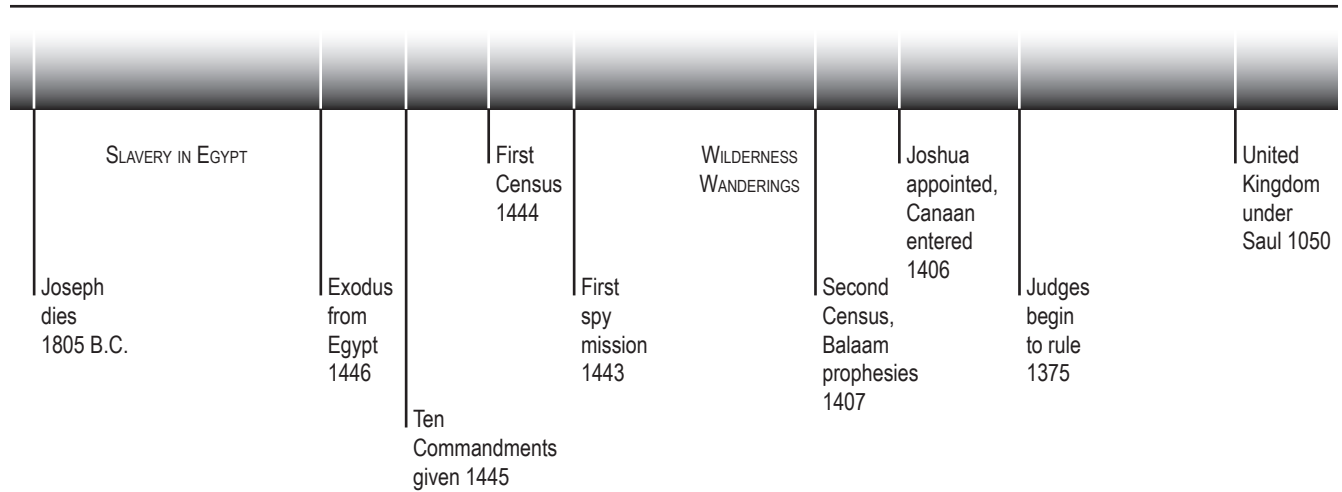
preparing to move. At this point, a census was taken to determine how many men were fit for military service. They were again numbered nearly thirty-nine years later on the plains of Moab. This numbering or census taken at Mount Sinai showed 603,550 males above age twenty who were fit for military service. The second census showed 601,730. Both numberings excluded the Levites.

Numbers is not intended to be a continuous narrative. There is a gap of approximately thirty-eight years between chapters 19 and 20 of the book, covering the interval between their first stop at Kadesh (Numbers 13:26), and their final departure from Kadesh for the Promised Land. Their first stop ended with the discouraging report from ten of the spies. Their second stop preceded their final departure for Canaan. Significant events, rather than the extent of time, are the emphasis.

The Book of Numbers is also noted for recording the murmurings of the Children of Israel. They complained about the journey, the food, the giants, Moses, and desert life in general. In spite of their murmurings, God faithfully sustained the Children of Israel with daily manna, water, and quail. In addition, He guided them with the visible sign of the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. In spite of their failures, He protected, preserved, and provided for these people.

Numbers concludes as it began, with the people in a state of preparation. The new generation of Israelites are gathered and sanctified. After defeating a number of enemy armies, they occupy the east side of the Jordan River. As the book closes, they are preparing to face their greatest challenge yet: that of crossing the river and possessing the beautiful land God had promised them.

Timeline



Outline

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A complete amplified outline of this book is available on our website at www.apostolicfaith.org.*

- I. The preparation for the journey from Sinai (1:1—10:10)
 - A. The census and arrangement of Israel's men of war (1:1—2:34)
 - B. The census, arrangement, and duties of the Levites (3:1—4:49)
 - C. The measures for the maintenance of purity in the camp (5:1—6:27)
 - D. The measures for the maintenance of worship in the camp (7:1—10:10)
- II. The journey from Sinai to the plains of Moab (10:11—21:35)
 - A. The journey to Kadesh-Barnea (10:11—12:16)
 - B. The stay at Kadesh-Barnea (13:1—14:45)
 - C. The wanderings in the wilderness (15:1—19:22)
 - D. The journey to Moab (20:1—21:35)
- III. Events on the plain of Moab (22:1—36:13)
 - A. The encounter with Balaam (22:1—25:18)
 - B. The preparation for entering Canaan (26:1—36:12)
 - C. Conclusion (36:13)



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“But thou shalt appoint the Levites over the tabernacle.”(Numbers 1:50)

I looked out over a sea of raised hands, and listened to a cacophony of shouting voices.

“Choose me, Miss Lambert! Please!”

“No, don’t choose him! Choose me!”

“You chose her last time! I want a turn!”

There was a job to be done, and everyone in the class wanted to do it. As I looked around the room, I was searching for a student with specific qualities. I wanted someone I could trust to behave responsibly, do the job well, and return to the classroom without disrupting the other students. I knew each of my students well enough to determine who was best suited for the job at hand. I considered each one, and chose a student who was sitting quietly with his hand raised. Unlike the rest of my noisy bunch, he was showing that he was responsible enough to trust me to choose.

In the Book of Numbers, we see that God chose specific people for each position that needed to be filled. Maybe some of those men did not feel capable of leading an army. Maybe some of the Levites felt under-qualified for the special holiness required for their job. It did not matter how they felt; God knew what each one could do with His help.

In the same way, God knows all of His children today. He knows what calling we are best suited to do. As our Creator, He has given each of us the qualities that we will need in order to do His will. Sometimes we do not feel like we are capable of doing what God calls us to do. That’s when it gets exciting! It is in those times, when we do not trust ourselves, that we must learn what trusting in God really means.

BACKGROUND

At the beginning of the Book of Numbers, the Israelites were just beginning their forty years of wandering in the desert. Because of disobedience, God had excluded all of the people from twenty years of age and older from seeing the Promised Land. Over a forty-year time period, the disobedient generation died and the younger generation replaced them. During those years, the Israelites were transformed from a large band of nomads into a great nation. With nationhood came increased need for organization, government, and military service. The Book of Numbers serves primarily as a record of the census and some of the laws and organization of the nation of Israel.

In the opening chapter of Numbers, God directed Moses to take a census of all of the families of the Children of Israel. He was told to count all of the men by their tribal lineage. The main purpose of this census count was to determine who was eligible for military service. However, by naming each individual family, the census list highlights the fact that each individual was important to God’s service. The details of the census even named which family members were to lead each tribe in battle, and specified where they were to pitch their tents when they were in camp.

One tribe, Levi, was not to be included in the count for military service because they were set aside to be the caretakers of the Tabernacle. Their duties involved putting up and taking down the Tabernacle every time the camp was moved, and caring for all of the items used in worship. This duty was not to be taken lightly. The Levites alone were consecrated for this special service.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- I. The preparation for the journey from Sinai
 - A. The census and arrangement of Israel’s men of war
 - 1. The numbering of Israel’s men of war (1:1-54)
 - a. The command (1:1-19)
 - (1) The declaration (1:1-4)
 - (2) The assistants (1:5-16)
 - (3) The registration (1:17-19)
 - b. The census (1:20-46)
 - (1) Reuben (1:20-21)
 - (2) Simeon (1:22-23)
 - (3) Gad (1:24-25)
 - (4) Judah (1:26-27)
 - (5) Issachar (1:28-29)
 - (6) Zebulun (1:30-31)
 - (7) Joseph (1:32-33)
 - (8) Manasseh (1:34-35)
 - (9) Benjamin (1:36-37)
 - (10) Dan (1:38-39)
 - (11) Asher (1:40-41)
 - (12) Naphtali (1:42-43)
 - (13) Summary (1:44-46)
 - c. The Levites (1:47-54)

A CLOSER LOOK

- 1. How many tribes were counted, and how were they listed?

2. Why do you suppose God wanted the Levites to be set apart to care for the Tabernacle? What reasons might God have had for excluding them from military service?

[illegible]

*Use me, Lord, for Thy glory,
Use me, only use me,
If to go or stay I would tell love's story
Use me, Lord, O use me.*

[illegible]

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And the children of Israel did according to all that the LORD commanded Moses.” (Numbers 2:34)

Speed along with that lawnmower—never mind if a few blades of grass are missed. Pull up the covers on the bed—don’t worry if the sheets are not smooth. Slide the dust cloth over the tables—don’t bother to clean under any books or lamps. Run the water over the dishes—never mind scouring the pans. After all, it’s time for a basketball game, a bicycle ride, or a talk with a friend!

How many times do children rush through their chores, perhaps forgetting a few because something more fun tugs at them? Sometimes parents choose to ignore the omissions or the haphazard performance, understanding that children will act in childish ways. At other times, parents require that the duties be completed more thoroughly, knowing that such discipline contributes to maturity.

God is our Father. He pays close attention to detail: we can see that by reading the second chapter of Numbers. As the Children of Israel traveled, God had a designated area where each tribe was to camp. As opposed to their conduct recounted further on in the Book of Numbers, the last verse of this chapter says they did “all that the LORD commanded.”

What has God given you to do today? We are His children, and He has assignments for us. How often do we rush through a job without doing quality work, or leave something undone because other interests tug at us? The old saying is, “Give it a lick and a promise.” How easy it is to fulfill a responsibility quickly and tell ourselves that we will do a better job next time, or to think that some task is unimportant and leave it undone. At times, our Heavenly Father may choose to ignore these attitudes, understanding our humanity. On other occasions, He may discipline us, knowing that correction is necessary for our spiritual maturity.

How good it would be if today we did “all that the LORD commanded” us. Think how pleased our Heavenly Father would be! Let us challenge ourselves to do what He wants us to do.

BACKGROUND

The events recounted in the first part of the Book of Numbers took place shortly after the Children of Israel left Egypt, where they had been slaves. They

had not been allowed to govern or direct themselves, so it was no wonder God put such emphasis on their discipline and order.

The census shows the Children of Israel had over 600,000 fighting men at this time. When the women and children are added to this number, we can surmise that this camp was probably three million people strong. Many commentators suggest that their camp would by necessity have been spread over at least twelve square miles. Perhaps the tents were arranged in precise order, making roads to reach other tents. Clearly, there was a need for organization.

In today’s text, God directed the layout of the camp, instituting something similar to a flag system. Each major tribal group had a banner or flag. Individual tribes had another ensign—probably a smaller flag. Families and households had yet another flag.

God directed that the Tabernacle be in the center of the camp. The priests and Levites, including Moses and Aaron, camped around it. The other tribes camped around them in their assigned positions, and those people were not allowed to come within a specified distance of the Tabernacle.

The tribes of Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun camped to the east. This put the largest number of soldiers (and therefore the strongest protection) in front of the entrance to the Tabernacle, and also at the front of the line when they marched. The tribes of Dan, Asher, and Naphtali were the second largest group, and they were the rear guard, also providing stronger protection.

A traveling city of three million people and all their belongings! What a sight it must have been!

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- I. The preparation for the journey from Sinai
 - A. The census and arrangement of Israel’s men of war
 2. The arrangement of Israel’s camp (2:1-31)
 - a. The command (2:1-2)
 - b. The distribution (2:3-31)
 - (1) The east side: Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun (2:3-9)
 - (2) The south side: Reuben, Simeon, and Gad (2:10-16)
 - (3) The center: Levites with the tent (2:17)
 - (4) The west side: Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin (2:18-24)

- (5) The north side: Dan, Asher,
and Naphtali (2:25-31)
3. Summary (2:32-34)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. How did the Children of Israel receive their directions for setting up the camp?

2. Why do you think the Children of Israel were instructed to pitch their tents a distance from the Tabernacle?

3. What motivated the Children of Israel to follow God's directions at this time?

4. How do we receive directions for what the Lord wants us to do? What are the benefits to us of following through in obedience?

CONCLUSION

God is a God of detail. He had an exact plan for the Children of Israel to follow as they traveled and when they camped. He also has an exact plan for each of us every day. Are we doing all that the Lord has commanded and following that plan?

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“Bring the tribe of Levi near, and present them before Aaron the priest, that they may minister unto him.” (Numbers 3:6)

What comes to mind when you think of the word *minister*? Many of us immediately picture the preacher who stands in the pulpit and brings us a portion of God’s Word. This certainly is an important ministry. A broader definition of *minister*, however, is “one who gives help.” By this definition, the one who cleans the church on Monday is a minister. So are those who serve as ushers, musicians, Sunday school teachers, and a host of other roles. However, Christian ministry is not confined within the walls of the church.

Perhaps even more important than the roles within the church are the roles of ministers in the home and the community. Those who invite people to the services, those who call someone with a word of encouragement, those who visit the sick and afflicted, and those who pray for the family of God are also ministers. This is only a partial list. For every pastor, there are a great many supporting positions. To a large extent, the success of a particular body of believers depends on how well each of these jobs is carried out.

In today’s text, duties were outlined for the tribe of Levi. Can you imagine trying to direct more than twenty-two thousand workers—without a single cellular phone at your disposal? By the same token, our pastor is in charge of our local church body. However, if the job is to be done in the proper way, he relies on those who willingly and enthusiastically shoulder responsibilities.

As Christians, our attitude should be concern with what we can do for others, not what we can get from them. Someone once remarked, humorously, “Our church is a willing group of believers. Five percent of the people are willing to work, and the other ninety-five percent are willing to let them!” We may chuckle at this, but let us make sure that we are not part of the ninety-five percent! Rather, let all of us be looking for ways in which we can minister to others. With that attitude, the Lord will find a good way to use us.

BACKGROUND

At the time of the ten plagues of Egypt, God in effect “purchased” the firstborn of Israel by sparing their lives through the provision of the blood over the doorposts. At the time of today’s lesson, God revealed a new phase of His plan. From that point on, rather

than using the firstborn in his service, God instead used the males of the tribe of Levi. A male Levite began training for his particular role at age twenty-five, and was ready for independent service at age thirty.

The first and most obvious job of the Levites was that of the priesthood. A relatively small number of people were required for this role, and they were to come exclusively from the family of Aaron. He and Moses were of the Levite tribe. As the years passed, the family of Aaron expanded. By the time of the birth of Jesus, a particular priest (for example, Zacharias) would serve only for a limited time before relinquishing his role to another qualified participant.

At the time of today’s text, Moses, Aaron, and their families were to camp immediately to the east of the Tabernacle. Other than the family of Aaron, the Levites were grouped according to the three major families: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. The Gershonites were to camp to the west of the Tabernacle and were responsible for the service of the Tabernacle, including the related coverings. Think of the effort involved in the orderly dismantling, transporting, and reassembling of this every time God directed them to move. The Kohathites were to camp to the south of the Tabernacle. The Kohathites’ charge concerned the holy objects within the tabernacle. With every move, all of these were to be covered and transported in a specified way so that they would be handled with dignity and respect. Finally, the family of Merari camped north of the Tabernacle, and was responsible for specified parts and implements of the Tabernacle such as the bars and pillars.

Clearly, Aaron and his sons were in charge of the entire operation. Yet, they needed the help of the many within the ranks if the job was to be done smoothly and effectively.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
Used by permission per WORDsearch

- I. The preparation for the journey from Sinai
 - B. The census, arrangement, and duties of the Levites
 1. The generation of the priests (3:1-4)
 2. The tribe of Levi (3:5-37)
 - a. Their ministry (3:5-10)
 - b. Their uniqueness (3:11-13)
 - c. Their census (3:14-37)
 - (1) The command (3:14-15)
 - (2) The genealogical summary (3:16-20)
 - (3) The sons of Gershon (3:21-26)

- (a) Their number (3:21-22)
 - (b) Their camp (3:23-24)
 - (c) Their duties (3:25-26)
- (4) The sons of Kohath (3:27-32)
 - (a) Their number (3:27-28)
 - (b) Their camp (3:29-30)
 - (c) Their duties (3:31-32)
- (5) The sons of Merari (3:33-37)
 - (a) Their number (3:33-34)
 - (b) Their camp (3:35)
 - (c) Their duties (3:36-37)
- 3. The place of Moses, Aaron, and Aaron's sons (3:38)
- 4. The census totals (3:39)
- 5. The separation of the Levites (3:40-51)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. Make a list of some of the jobs that had to be done if the camp were to function effectively.

2. Make a list of things that need to be done within a local body of believers.

3. How can you help carry the load? Has the Lord been laying something on your heart lately?

CONCLUSION

Christianity is about what God can do for us and what we, with His enabling, can do in His service.

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“This shall be the service of the sons of Kohath in the tabernacle of the congregation, about the most holy things.” (Numbers 4:4)

When you see a company name that includes the words “& Sons” (such as Taylor & Sons Plumbing), you likely assume that the business has been around for more than one generation. If you needed plumbing services, you might consider hiring such a company, since along with the “& Sons” comes an expectation of more experience than a younger company. This company has some history. It has tradition behind it.

I visualize the sons of such a company having grown up around the business. They might have been out there helping dad—learning aspects of the trade very early on. No doubt their father would tell them of his personal experiences and thus pass on to them what he has learned.

The implied advantage in using a business with a family tradition is that the younger ones can learn from what the older ones have been through. This business has been an ongoing part of their life and heritage and likely each subsequent generation would continue to benefit from their history.

This concept was likely the case in the assignments discussed in this chapter of Numbers. The families that descended from Levi were assigned particular roles in the camp of Israel—all relating to the care and service in the Tabernacle. They had the opportunity to pass on to their sons the experiences related to the responsibilities assigned to them. Thus, this family from the tribe of Levi had quite a heritage and a rich family tradition.

As Christians, we also have a rich and wonderful heritage. Whether or not our parents or grandparents were believers, the Christians before us in the family of God have provided us with examples of wisdom that definitely help us in our Christian walk. We can learn by paying close attention to what these individuals pass on to us.

The inclusion of “& Sons” in a company’s name or being the member of a particular tribe was not a guarantee of more experience. It merely indicated that the opportunity for experience existed! Whether or not advantage of the opportunity was taken was a personal choice. The same is true related to a Christian heritage. Let us ask God to help us to benefit by the wisdom and experience of those who have gone before us!

BACKGROUND

When the Israelites left Egypt, they still observed the ancient manner of worship, with the eldest son of each house inheriting the priest’s office. At Sinai the first change in this ancient practice was made. A hereditary priesthood in the family of Aaron was instituted (Exodus 28:1).

It was not until that terrible scene in connection with the sin of the golden calf, however, that the tribe of Levi stood apart and began to occupy a distinct position. The religious heritage was then conferred on this tribe, which henceforth was devoted to the service of the sanctuary.

Levi had three sons: Kohath, Gershon, and Merari. Moses and Aaron were descendants of Kohath. Aaron was established as the first high priest, and only the sons of Aaron were allowed to minister at the altar.

At this point, the remaining Levites (identified by clans as the Kohathites, Merarites, and Gershonites) had other specific responsibilities concerning the Tabernacle assigned to them, and these duties are outlined in Leviticus 3 and 4. They were selected for this purpose because of their zeal for the glory of God, and as the tribe to which Moses and Aaron belonged, they would naturally stand by the lawgiver in his work.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
Used by permission per WORDsearch

- I. The preparation for the journey from Sinai
 - B. The census, arrangement, and duties of the Levites
 6. The service of the Levites (4:1-45)
 - a. The Kohathites (4:1-20)
 - (1) Their census (4:1-3)
 - (2) Their work (4:4-20)
 - b. The Gershonites (4:21-28)
 - (1) Their census (4:21-23)
 - (2) Their work (4:24-28)
 - c. The Merarites (4:29-33)
 - (1) Their census (4:29-30)
 - (2) Their work (4:31-33)
 - d. The numbers for service (4:34-45)
 - (1) Of the Kohathites (4:34-37)
 - (2) Of the Gershonites (4:38-41)
 - (3) Of the Merarites (4:42-45)
 7. Summary (4:46-49)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. What type of animal skin was used for a covering for the Tabernacle?

2. Why were the descendants of Levi selected to work in the Tabernacle and assist the priests?

3. For what reasons might the age requirements for service (thirty to fifty years) have been established?

4. What services could you and your family do together for the Lord?

CONCLUSION

Just as the Levites had a heritage of Tabernacle service that spanned many generations, we Christians also have a long, rich heritage that we can follow. Unless we choose to take advantage of the examples left for us, however, we cannot receive the benefits!

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“The LORD bless thee, and keep thee: The LORD make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.” (Numbers 6:24-26)

Has someone prayed a prayer of blessing for you? If you are married, no doubt the minister who performed the ceremony prayed for your marriage. Sometimes parents choose to have a dedication service for their babies, and the minister prays for God’s blessing upon the child and the parents. Maybe in a time of grief or need, one of your friends prayed with you, asking for God’s help and grace to sustain you.

Perhaps without your knowing it, you have been the subject of someone’s private intercession. One minister of the Gospel printed names on a long strip of adding machine tape. Upon his death, that paper was worn from the many times he had read down that list, praying for each person individually.

In the focus verses, we read a prayer of blessing that the high priest was to recite for the Children of Israel. A classic prayer that has been quoted hundreds of times, its words can bring peace and comfort.

Any of us who have been the recipient of someone’s prayer of blessing know what a treasure such prayers are. We should consider whether we have done our part to pray prayers of blessing for others. Our prayers for our best friend, our loved ones, or our brothers and sisters in Christ can include these words.

However, what about the person who is not particularly our friend? Perhaps there is a neighbor, a classmate, or a co-worker who has been difficult. These people may have even brought a little grief into our lives. How do we pray for them? According to the Bible, we are to bless rather than curse them, and a good pattern is found in these verses. Try praying for that one who has been a thorn in your side. Pray that the Lord will bless him and keep him and cause His face to shine upon him and give him peace. The Lord knows how to answer and extend blessings to the needy, and in the meantime, His blessings will spill over onto you as you pray in this manner.

BACKGROUND

God wanted His people to live clean and pure lives, and today’s Scripture passage opens with a discussion of how this was to be accomplished in daily living. Also, following God’s commands helped keep the Israelite camp free from disease at a time long

before the role of germs and viruses in the health process was understood. Those with communicable diseases were to be kept outside the encampment as long as their disease or wound persisted. Those who had come into direct contact with the dead were also to be kept outside for a designated period of time. While all of this helped keep the camp healthy, it also worked as a reminder to Israel that God wanted His people to be pure and holy in every aspect of their lives.

Restitution was included in God’s instructions for right living. The guilty person was to pay full value plus twenty percent to the victim.

In the second portion of chapter 5, God instituted a test for adultery. Its purpose was to reveal sin and to relieve unfounded jealousy. God himself determined the guilt or innocence of the woman involved. Because this was a public occurrence that took place at the Tabernacle door, it must have acted as a deterrent to adultery. No doubt, a man thought long and hard before he began this process, for what if his wife proved to be innocent? And the women were surely careful that their actions did not make it necessary for them to have this test.

Chapter 6 details the Nazarite vow—a vow of consecration—which could be taken voluntarily by either men or women. It lasted for varied periods of time up to a lifetime. The vow included three regulations: no drinking of the fruit of the vine, no cutting of the hair, and no contact with a dead body. A person under this vow could not even attend a family member’s funeral. God also gave instructions on what was to be done if the vow was broken, and the steps for the completion of the vow were detailed. The point of the vow was to demonstrate dedication to God.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
Used by permission per WORDsearch

- I. The preparation for the journey from Sinai
 - C. The measures for the maintenance of purity in the camp (5:1—6:27)
 - 1. Regulations concerning separations (5:1-4)
 - 2. Regulations concerning personal cleansing (5:5-10)
 - 3. Regulations concerning marital unfaithfulness (5:11-31)
 - 4. Regulations concerning personal dedication (6:1-21)
 - a. The vow (6:1-8)
 - b. The cleansing (6:9-21)
 - 5. The blessing on cleansed people (6:22-27)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. When you pray according to the focus verses, what six things are you asking God to accomplish?

2. What type of circumstances or thoughts might have prompted some Israelites to take the Nazarite vow?

3. God required the Israelites to live clean and holy lives, and He requires that of His people today. How do we maintain a clean and holy life today?

[illegible]

CONCLUSION

God wants to bless us, and He wants us to pray for the blessing of others as well.

NOTES

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

**“They brought their offering before the LORD.”
(Numbers 7:3)**

Offering of our resources to the Lord may entail personal sacrifice. While preparing for the life of a missionary, Hudson Taylor purposed to live frugally and in dependence upon God alone. One day he found himself with only one coin left in his pocket, and at that juncture, was asked by a poor man to go and pray with his wife who was dying. When he entered the squalid room where the woman lay, he observed that several half-starved children were with her.

The woman’s pathetic condition, along with Taylor’s own limited circumstances, led to a spiritual conflict like he had never before experienced. He tried to pray but he could not. He felt it would be mocking God to ask aid while he withheld his own money, and yet that was all he had! If he had possessed two coins, he would have given half, but he had only one, so it was all or nothing. In vain he tried to speak words of comfort. Finally he rose from his knees, only to have the distracted father say to him, “If you can help us, for God’s sake do.”

Taylor yielded. Thrusting his hand into his pocket, he drew out his last and only coin, and gave it to the man. The struggle was over, and joy flooded his soul. Later he wrote, “Not only was the poor woman’s life saved, but my life had been saved too. It might have been a wreck—probably would have been as a Christian life—had not grace at that time conquered and the striving of God’s Spirit been obeyed.” He went home that night with a light heart, and one that was resounding with praise. In the morning, the postman delivered an envelope containing a pair of gloves, out of which fell half-a-sovereign.

Are you faithful in bringing your offerings to God? There is nothing we can do to repay the Lord for giving us the blessings of salvation, but this is one way we can express our gratitude to Him. There is great joy in so doing!

BACKGROUND

The Israelites were in preparation for the move from Sinai to the Promised Land. It had been just two years since they fled Egypt. Moses had erected the Tabernacle, anointed it, and sanctified it and all the contents, including the altar.

The princes, or leaders, of each tribe approached Moses and wanted to give offerings for the altar and

the Tabernacle. First they brought two wagons and oxen. God told Moses to accept the offering, and use it for the provisions of the Levites. Then they brought an offering for the dedication of the altar. God told Moses to accept that offering too, but gave specific instructions as to how they were to give the offering. The order of their coming with their gifts corresponds exactly with the arrangement of the tribes around the Tabernacle (Numbers 2:3-31).

It is interesting to note that the name of each prince is recorded in the text, and the offering he brought, even though each one of them brought exactly the same thing. God knows our individual names, and cares about each one of us. Our names are even recorded in His Book of Life, when we give our lives to Him.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- I. The preparation for the journey from Sinai
 - D. The measures for the maintenance of worship in the camp
 - 1. The dedication offering for the altar (7:1-89)
 - a. The gifts (7:1-88)
 - b. The approval (7:89)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. Why was the tribe of Kohath excluded from receiving the gift of a wagon and oxen?

2. What was the significance of each tribe bringing the exact same gift?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on its right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.

David said, “Neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing” (2 Samuel 24:24). True sacrifice comes with some cost attached. When we give of our lives and resources to the Lord, it will cost us something. However, when we consider the great sacrifice Christ paid on Calvary, the sacrifice we make pales in comparison. What is the Lord asking of you today? Are you willing to pay the price?

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And Aaron did so; he lighted the lamps thereof over against the candlestick, as the LORD commanded Moses.” (Numbers 8:3)

Reading this verse caused me to reflect back to scenes from my childhood. I remember watching my parents take the old oil lamp from its mounted position on the wall. They would refill the lamp with oil, carefully trim the wick, and then clean the chimney. When the lamp was put back in its mounted position in an area near the dinner table, it glowed brightly as the evening darkness set in around our home.

As children, we did not take care of the lamp: that was the responsibility of our parents. Care had to be taken to avoid wasting the oil or breaking the chimney. If that happened, there would be no light! There were other duties inside and outside our house that were also the responsibility of our parents. Our duty, as children, was to be obedient and submissive to our parents. And of course, we had some chores which were our responsibility also.

Lighting the lamps in the Holy Place was one of the assigned duties of the priest. In the same way, God has called our spiritual leaders today to perform specific duties. The priests and Levites may be taken to represent the pastors, ministers, teachers, and missionaries who have been set apart for the service of God. These leaders will minister according to the leadings of the Lord. Surely, they must “keep the lamp burning” and be a light to all those who come to the house of the Lord. Their duties may range from the routine to the sublime, but they are duties assigned by God.

To accomplish their assignments successfully, spiritual leaders need the guidance and strength of the Lord. We can be an encouragement to them by offering them our obedience, respect, and support.

How can we do this? Just as children in a family have chores, all of us in God’s family also have some responsibility that God wants us to fulfill. Our duties may not be those of leadership but each one is still important. Our spiritual leaders will be encouraged when we are faithfully in our places and doing what we are asked to do.

Another way to support our leaders is to pray for them. Regular attendance in the prayer room, an uplifting testimony in a church service, and heartfelt amens (meaning, “so be it”) during sermons will also encourage our ministers. Why not challenge yourself to pray extra for your spiritual leaders today?

BACKGROUND

In this chapter, God spoke to Moses about two important matters. One was caring for the lamps (8:1-4) and the second was dedicating the Levites (8:5-26).

It was the obligation of Aaron, the high priest, and his sons and their descendants, to light the seven lamps on the golden candlestick in the holy place. They had the solemn responsibility of caring for the candlestick, trimming the wicks, adding the sacred oil, and making sure the light was shining. There were no windows in the holy place; the candlestick that stood to the left of the incense altar was the only source of light. Without it, the priests could not see to minister in the holy place. It was a symbol of God’s presence, and pointed ahead to Jesus, the Light of the world.

Aaron and his sons were the official clergy in the camp, and the other Levites were designated to be their assistants. The Levites were separated from among the other tribes of the Children of Israel and became chosen people of the Lord. In turn, God gave them to the priests as His special gift. The Levites’ duties were to care for the Tabernacle, take the structure down before each march, carry it, and erect it again at the new location.

Called to serve the Lord in this capacity, the Levites had to be set apart for the Lord. First, they had to be cleansed by water, shave their bodies, and wash their clothes. The leaders of the tribes put their hands on the Levites as an act of dedication, presenting them as living sacrifices to God. In turn, the Levites put their hands on the two young bulls: one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering. Cleansing by blood as well as purifying by water were requirements, indicating total dedication to the Lord.

The Levites’ role is a picture of the ministry’s role in our church today. God chooses and equips His people for spiritual service. First, the Blood of Christ must purge away sin before the believer is equipped to serve. His life must align to the sacred precepts of God’s living Word. God’s servants serve the Lord by serving His people, but their orders must come from God.

Both the Levites and priests were obligated to protect the sanctuary of God from intruders, and the leaders in the church today must be diligent to protect the flock from those who would destroy it. Dangerous enemies could arise from outside the church or even from within the congregation. Thus, it is vital that God’s leaders be ever on the alert and courageous to confront those who oppose God’s truth.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah's Bible Outlines
Used by permission per WORDsearch

- I. The preparation for the journey from Sinai
 - D. The measures for the maintenance of worship in the camp
 - 2. The consecration of the Levites (8:1-26)
 - a. The lighting of the lamps (8:1-4)
 - b. The purification of the Levites (8:5-22)
 - c. The charge concerning the Levites (8:23-26)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. What purpose did the seven lamps serve?

2. Why did the Levites need cleansing before they could serve? What can we conclude regarding the necessary preparation for those who minister in our day?

3. How do we receive cleansing today?

CONCLUSION

God has ordained spiritual leaders for His people, and they should be respected and obeyed. We will be blessed as we support them in their work for the Lord!

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“At the commandment of the LORD they rested in the tents, and at the commandment of the LORD they journeyed: they kept the charge of the LORD, at the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moses.” (Numbers 9:23)

I clearly remember considering marriage with my girlfriend. For some years, my prayer had been that if it were God’s will for me to marry, I wanted someone who was a solid Christian. This young lady easily fit the bill. I decided to talk with one of the ministers for advice on how to approach this correctly.

He knew us both but did not tell me what to do. Instead, he posed a series of questions about our individual spiritual priorities as well as our personal relationship with each other. The minister did not want me to answer all the questions for him, but rather proposed them as a means of establishing whether the matter was settled in my heart before God.

There were many positive reasons to proceed, but still I agonized over the decision, realizing the life-time impact. I prayed earnestly, and wished that God would speak out of Heaven or do something obvious to let me know which way to move.

There was no such lightning bolt. However, I soon realized that many small details, including an internal peace about the matter, led to the answer. Over time, a sequence of events clearly pointed to God’s leading. One evening, time seemed to stop as I posed the big question. My girlfriend paused for a moment and then said, “Yes!” I was ecstatic!

Christians today do not have a cloud by day or a pillar of fire by night to show us God’s perfect will, as the Children of Israel did. After sufficient prayer, we must look at indicators to determine what direction God would have us go. Some questions honestly answered can help us find that direction.

- What Biblical precepts apply, and what do they say regarding this decision and its timing?
- In the most careful and honest frame of heart, what is the still, small voice of the Holy Spirit saying?
- How do other saints of God feel about the options and timing?
- Do the circumstances indicate this is God’s direction? Do the doors continue to open?

God still leads, when we are willing to seek His guidance and then follow. My wife and I have been married over ten years and are still happy about it!

BACKGROUND

The first portion of this chapter deals with the celebration of the Passover. This passage in Numbers records the only instance where Israel observed the Passover during the whole time they wandered in the wilderness. At this time, Moses faced the problem of what to do about people who desired to partake of the Passover but were forbidden to do so because they had touched a dead body. The solution was that another Passover would be held one month later for these people.

The Children of Israel were pilgrims and strangers in the land through which they traveled, and they constantly needed the guidance of God. For this purpose, the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night were given. The Lord ordered the movements of the pillars, and whenever they moved, either at daytime or nighttime, the people had to be ready to pack up and follow.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- I. The preparation for the journey from Sinai
 - D. The measures for the maintenance of worship in the camp
 3. The celebration of the Passover (9:1-14)
 - a. The command (9:1-3)
 - b. The observance (9:4-5)
 - c. The provisions in case of defilement (9:6-14)
 4. The reality of the presence of Jehovah (9:15-23)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. When was the Passover Feast to be celebrated?

2. Why did God use a human leader (Moses) even though the cloud and fire clearly signaled when the people were to move or stay?

[illegible]

God carefully led the Israelites by clear means. Although the signs may be different, God still provides clear means of guidance today.

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And Moses said unto Hobab, the son of Raguel the Midianite, Moses’ father in law, We are journeying unto the place of which the LORD said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good: for the LORD hath spoken good concerning Israel.” (Numbers 10:29)

“Come with us, and we’ll do you good,” is a universal Gospel invitation, though the way it is extended may be varied.

One student says to another, “Come with me to our youth group tonight. You’ll like it.”

An employee tells a troubled coworker, “Come to church with me. God can solve your problems.”

A parent says to a child, “You need to keep coming to church with our family. You can see that it pays big benefits to serve the Lord.”

The minister tells the person who comes for counseling, “Come to church regularly and seek God with us at our altars of prayer. You’ll be blessed.”

The invitation is not a new message, for we see it in today’s focus verse when Moses invited Hobab to continue traveling with the Children of Israel, rather than returning to the land of Midian. Moses knew that Hobab, because of his wilderness knowledge and experience, could be a help to them. Moses also knew that God had made great promises to the Children of Israel, and that they would be a blessed people. Hobab would benefit from those blessings if he would travel with them. The God of the Children of Israel would do Hobab good.

As Christians, we know that we have the best promises available. We know that God has the answer to any question, the solution to any problem, and divine control over every situation. We know that we have been blessed by following Jesus, and others will also be blessed if they will come with us. We long to help them see the value of traveling with God. The one requirement for extending this invitation is that we must be traveling with God ourselves in order to invite someone to join us.

Who might you meet today who needs to be invited to come with you to serve God? Walk with God so that you can say, “Come with us, and we’ll do you good.”

BACKGROUND

The Children of Israel had camped at Mount Sinai for nearly a year. Now God was preparing to

start them marching toward the Promised Land. He instructed Moses to make two silver trumpets which would be used to signal the tribes. These trumpets, each made of a solid piece of silver, were different than the rams’ horn trumpets used later at Jericho. They were sounded only at designated occasions.

- The trumpets summoned the people. If one trumpet blew, only the leaders assembled. If both trumpets blew, everyone came to the Tabernacle.
- The trumpets sounded the call to march when it was time to move. The Children of Israel could see God directing by the movement of the pillar of fire or the cloud. They could also hear God’s direction when the priests sounded the trumpets.
- The trumpets sounded an alarm in the case of an attack and also sounded to call the armies to prepare for battle. Verse 9 indicates that their blast was a prayer for and a reminder of God’s protection.
- The priests blew the trumpets for appointed religious feasts.

The Children of Israel had arrived at Sinai as a disorganized and undisciplined group. In the eleven months they had camped there, their tribes had been organized so everyone knew their appointed place, the Law was given, the Tabernacle was constructed, the priests and Levites were consecrated, and the soldiers had been counted. Then they were ready to move!

No doubt the Children of Israel had become somewhat comfortable at Sinai. They had established daily patterns and were not experiencing the rigors of a march. They remembered the great victory God had given them over Egypt, and God reminded them of His blessings by sending manna each day. However, their inheritance was the Promised Land, not Mount Sinai.

Most commentators agree that Hobab was Moses’ brother-in-law. Because Moses knew that Hobab would be blessed by joining them, Moses added a little pressure to his invitation by telling Hobab that he could be helpful to them. God was directing the Children of Israel and choosing their startings and stoppings. However, it is very possible that Hobab’s wilderness expertise could prove helpful in matters such as locating water and shade.

It is unclear, and commentators are divided, on whether or not Hobab chose to go with the Children of Israel. His descendants are mentioned in Judges 1:16 and 4:11. If he chose to go with Moses, we can be assured that it was a good choice.

The last two verses of this chapter give Moses' prayers at the beginning and at the end of the march. It is probable that Moses repeated these prayers, which were something like an invocation and a benediction, for every march. God's help was essential to these people, and Moses wanted them to remember that.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah's Bible Outlines
Used by permission per WORDsearch

- I. The preparation for the journey from Sinai
 - D. The measures for the maintenance of worship in the camp
 - 5. The use of the silver trumpets (10:1-10)
- II. The journey from Sinai to the plains of Moab
 - A. The journey to Kadesh-Barnea
 - 1. The journey commenced (10:11-36)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. How far did the Children of Israel travel on this first part of the trek?

2. Why do you think Hobab said he would go back to his own land? Why might people today choose to "go back" rather than accept the invitation to follow God?

3. What in our lives might the enemy use to tempt us to "go back"? What can we do to resist that temptation?

CONCLUSION

If we follow God's directions, we will be blessed, and other people will also be blessed when they accept our invitation to join us in serving God.

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And I will come down and talk with thee there; and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone.” (Numbers 11:17)

“I can’t hold this sheetrock up any longer!”

“You have to. I can’t hold it alone!”

“But it’s too heavy for me!”

“Please, just a while longer. It’s almost secured!”

Screwing sheetrock to a ceiling is a task in itself. Add to that, my only available help was merely five feet tall and she just happened to be my wife.

As a handyman, I have learned that having the right tools goes a long way in getting the job done in a timely manner. One particular evening, though, I had opted not to rent the sheetrock hoist because I figured that, since there were only a few sheets, my wife and I could easily and more economically accomplish the task. I failed to take into consideration her height and the fact that you lose strength in your arms when they are held above your head for extended periods of time—thus slowly weakening them.

I muscled the four-by-eight-foot sheets to the back of the house, and once I had the correct measurements and cuts made, I called on the help of my wonderful wife. Like a trooper, she climbed on the ladder while I stood on the floor (I’m six feet four inches). The ceiling in the sunroom was low, so I figured we could hold it while I quickly secured it in spots—surely that wouldn’t take long. That’s when the weight of the sheet hit me. I failed to account for the full weight of that sheet resting on my one arm and my vertically-challenged wife. After trying several times to get one sheet in place, and lots of verbal encouragement along the lines of, “Don’t move,” and “Hold it right there,” we decided that I needed some additional support. I enlisted a friend of mine to help with the remaining sheets later in the week. The weight of the sheetrock hadn’t changed, but we were able to share the load and the job went much better.

Moses carried an incredible burden while leading the Children of Israel from Egypt. It seemed that no matter how much God blessed, the majority of the people chose to complain—about their diet, of all things. They failed or chose not to enjoy their new-found freedom but, instead, they heaped such a tremendous burden on Moses that it led to the passage we read today.

Moses realized that the burden was too great. Instead of trying to carry it alone, he went to the Lord and told Him, “I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me.” God fully understands our human limitations and frailties, and He is always ready to provide what we need. In this case, the seventy elders were called before the Lord and He literally transferred to them a portion of the burden Moses was carrying. With the lighter responsibilities, Moses was able to better perform his role as leader.

We, too, face a myriad of burdens in life. We were not designed to carry such heavy loads on our own, and when we go to God for help, He is ever faithful to provide the support we need. Sometimes the help comes from someone in the family of God who helps shoulder our cares. Other times, the Lord provides a new perspective, which enables us to view our burden in a new light. Sometimes He simply provides more grace to endure. Whichever way He chooses to provide, we can rest secure in knowing that He will.

BACKGROUND

Chapter 11 opens with the consuming fire of God falling on those in the “uttermost parts of the camp.” Despite God’s providential care, the Children of Israel had found cause to complain, and Moses had to implore the Lord to spare their lives. A study of the wilderness wanderings reveals an almost continuous complaining about problems and difficulties encountered along the way by this newly freed people, and Moses’ prayerful intervention for them. Time and again, God affirmed Moses’ leadership by responding to his prayers.

Over a year had passed since God answered their need for food by miraculously providing manna from above. Initially, Israel welcomed this wonderful gift and ate with grateful hearts. The manna provided all the necessary vitamins and minerals to sustain life. Still, the Children of Israel had grown tired of the same diet, even though it was miraculous, and began longing for the various foods they had eaten while in Egyptian bondage.

Verse 4 mentions the mixed multitude that was traveling with the Children of Israel. One commentator says that the word in the original resembles our “riff raff” and denotes a mob of people scraped together. These people accompanied the Jews when they left Egypt, possibly out of fear of more judgments to come, or as an opportunity to get out of slavery and servitude while their Egyptian masters were busy burying their dead.

Moses had a choice to make. As leader, he could have crushed the complaint authoritatively, or he could have intimidated them into internal submission. He also could have joined with the complainers and thus forfeited his role as leader. It is noteworthy that Moses chose none of these options. Instead, he took the situation to God, who initiated a shared responsibility of leadership, appointing seventy elders who aided Moses in meeting the numerous needs of the Children of Israel.

God knew that Moses possessed the strength of character necessary to share the load of leadership. When we read of Joshua's counsel to Moses to stop Eldad and Medad from prophesying, we encounter the humble response from Moses, "Would God that all the LORD's people were prophets, and that the LORD would put his spirit upon them!" There was no envy in the heart of Moses. He wanted the best for the people of God and if that meant shared responsibilities, he did not question the Lord's decision.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah's Bible Outlines
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- II. The journey from Sinai to the plains of Moab
 - A. The journey to Kadesh-Barnea
 - 2. The complaining at Taberah (11:1-3)
 - 3. The failure at Kibroth-hattaavah (11:4-35)
 - a. The manna rejected (11:4-9)
 - b. Moses' complaint and request (11:10-15)
 - c. The appointment of seventy elders (11:16-30)
 - d. The provision of quail and plague (11:31-35)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. What did the Israelites crave? Why?

2. Why were the people plagued as they ate the quail the Lord provided?

3. Name some ways you can be used by the Lord to help bear someone else's burden.

CONCLUSION

Burdens and stresses of life come to all of us. As we acknowledge our need of the Lord, He is ever faithful to provide the support we need. Let us learn to take our problems to the Lord first, and to be content with the solution He provides.

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee.” (Numbers 12:13)

Rees Howells, the son of a Welsh coal miner, was a man taught of God about prevailing prayer. Early in his Christian experience, the Holy Spirit laid a burden on his heart for a young man named Will Battery. Liquor had a hold on Will, and his life had gone from bad to worse until even his sanity was in question. When Rees became acquainted with him, Will had not slept in a bed for two years, but spent his nights on the boilers at the tin mill. He was dirty and unshaven; he wore no socks and never tied his shoelaces. The Welsh revival had spread through the district and hundreds had been converted, but no one had reached Will. It was for this man that Rees Howells found the Holy Spirit urging him to intercede.

In later years, Rees told of this experience. “It wouldn’t have come to my mind to love him,” he said, “but when the Holy Ghost comes in, He brings in the love of the Saviour. It seemed as if I could lay down my life for this man; there was a love pouring out of me that I never knew before.” Rees made this man his friend, and spent his free time with him. He had more joy in seeking to win this one, he said, than at chapel in the company of other believers. The work was not done in a few weeks or months, but eventually prayer prevailed and Will Battery became a child of the King.

Like Rees Howells, Moses chose to love the unlovely, and to pray for those whom man might have deemed unworthy. In today’s text, Moses’ own brother and sister turned against him and criticized his choice of a wife and his leadership. God punished Miriam by smiting her with leprosy. Moses responded in a manner consistent with his meek and humble spirit—he “cried unto the LORD” on her behalf. God answered his prayer, but though Miriam’s leprosy was healed, she still had to pay a penalty for her wrongdoing.

Are we willing to be intercessors for God? If we are faithful to Him, we can count on Him to hear and answer the prayers we pray. All may win the commendation for faithfulness that Moses received.

BACKGROUND

Moses had endured the criticism of the people of Israel on various occasions. However, in today’s text block, his sister Miriam and his brother Aaron, his two closest associates, turned against him. God

himself had chosen Moses to be the leader of this great people, but jealousy crept into the hearts of Aaron and Miriam. Though Aaron was Israel’s high priest, and Miriam was a prophetess, they wanted more honor. Since they could not find fault with the way Moses was leading the people, they chose to criticize his wife.

The fact that Moses, a man who had withstood the Pharaoh of Egypt and had led a multitude to freedom, would quietly take the taunts of his brother and sister indicates the transformation that had taken place in his character. Apparently, Moses took no notice of Aaron and Miriam’s complaint, but God heard and called Aaron and Miriam to account for their actions. They learned that their own special standing did not entitle them to criticize and rebel against Moses, the one called to lead Israel and to receive divine revelation. Aaron submitted and cried out, confessing that they had done foolishly and sinned. Miriam was punished with leprosy, showing the seriousness of her sin of speaking against a servant of the Lord, to whom God had revealed Himself in a uniquely intimate manner.

Moses proved his character by immediately interceding for Miriam, praying, “Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee” (Numbers 12:13). God answered Moses’ prayer and Miriam was healed.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- II. The journey from Sinai to the plains of Moab
 - A. The journey to Kadesh-Barnea
 - 4. The rebellion at Hazeroth (12:1-16)
 - a. The murmuring of Miriam and Aaron (12:1-3)
 - b. The appearance of the Lord (12:4-8)
 - c. The judgment upon Miriam (12:9-10)
 - d. The confession of Aaron (12:11-12)
 - e. The intercession of Moses (12:13-16)

A CLOSER LOOK

- 1.** What did God say to Aaron and Miriam about Moses?

[illegible]

Moses sought God's benediction even for those who criticized him. May God help us, like Moses, to model grace under fire and a willingness to pray for those who despitely use us.

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we.” (Numbers 13:31)

On April 14, 1912, a gigantic ocean-going vessel raced full speed across the North Atlantic on her maiden voyage from England, heading for New York. Then the unthinkable happened. The most luxurious ocean liner of her day, the Titanic, grazed an iceberg on her starboard side and began to take on water. In less than three hours, she vanished into the sea.

The Titanic had 2,227 passengers on board, but the ship carried lifeboats for only 1,178. This ship was thought to be unsinkable! In 1912, regulations did not require a vessel to carry enough lifeboats on board to cover every passenger, and so more than 1,500 people perished.

Can you imagine the trauma to the survivors in the lifeboats? Many were separated from their loved ones as most of the men agreed to forego their places on the lifeboats so that the women and children could be spared. Many must have been in the pit of despair as the huge liner sank before their eyes. Would they die too? Negativism was probably the attitude of most of the people on the lifeboats. A watery grave seemed inevitable. Who could think positively in such dire straits?

On board the Titanic was a colorful millionairess from Denver, Colorado, named Margaret Tobin Brown. She took charge of the lifeboat she was in and turned the negative attitude into hope that they would make it. She declared that she was unsinkable. Her courage helped the people in her lifeboat to take heart and not give up their hope of rescue.

Caleb must have been a man with similar courage. Ten of the twelve spies he had been commissioned with seemed overwhelmed with what lay ahead. They feared what they had seen, and were convinced they could not conquer the giants in Canaan. It seemed hopeless to think of winning over the odds. How different their attitudes might have been if they had only remembered what God had already done for them.

The ten spies acknowledged that the land flowed with milk and honey, but they added the word “nevertheless.” This word means “in spite of that; however.” They saw the land was a good land and all that God had promised, but they also saw the giants, which dimmed the view of what good they had seen. The bad outweighed the good, or so they thought. They forgot

that God was on their side. Doubt led to unbelief and unbelief to rebellion.

If we want to receive God’s blessing in this life, we must believe God’s promises. As we fight the good fight of faith, we must look to God; He goes before us to help us conquer every foe. Our faith will help us to see that the battle is not ours, but His. He will fight for us and, in the end, we will have the victory, and we will enter our heavenly promised land. Let us take God at His Word, for faith brings blessings!

BACKGROUND

As the Children of Israel neared the Promised Land, the place of milk and honey, God instructed Moses to send spies to search out the territory. Moses chose one man from every tribe to make up a team to determine what it was like, and to discover whether the people who dwelt there were strong or weak, few or many. They were to find out if the land was good or bad and whether the people lived in cities or dwelled in strongholds.

These twelve spies went into the land of Canaan and discovered that it was truly a good land. However, ten of the spies came to a negative conclusion, discounting what God had already promised and what He had already done for the Israelites. They returned to Moses and told him that the land flowed with milk and honey, but in the next breath they mentioned the giants in the land. They doubted what God could do.

Those ten spies looked at the obstacles as an unconquerable foe, disregarding the fact that God had promised them the land. They had forgotten the victories won in the wilderness, the parting of the Red Sea, the destruction of the Egyptians, the water given out of the rock, the manna from Heaven, the quail for meat, the clothes and shoes that did not wear out. Their lack of faith led to unbelief and then to outright rebellion.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah's Bible Outlines
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- II. The journey from Sinai to the plains of Moab
 - B. The stay at Kadesh-Barnea
 - 1. The inspection of the land (13:1-24)
 - a. The command (13:1-2)
 - b. The spies (13:3-16)
 - c. The route (13:17-24)
 - 2. The report of the spies (13:25-33)

A CLOSER LOOK

- 1. How many spies went into Canaan?
-

2. Why did ten spies bring back an evil report?

3. What three characteristics did the ten spies have that would ultimately lead to their death?

4. What should you do when circumstances around you seem hopeless?

CONCLUSION

In this life, we face many trials, problems, and barriers. How do we handle them? Do we just give up and say, “It’s hopeless”? Or do we look to God, knowing that with Him on our side, “we are well able” to overcome any obstacle that comes our way?

NOTES

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness!” (Numbers 14:2)

A story is told of two men who met on a dusty road deep in farm country. One was a visitor from the city, the other a farmer growing many types of crops. It was a wet day when they first met. The visitor commented, “Mr. Jones, this rain must be great for your grass crop.” “Yes,” said Mr. Jones, “perhaps, but it is bad for the corn and will keep it back. I don’t believe we will have much of a crop.” A few days later, when the sun was shining hot, the visitor said, “Fine sun for your corn.” “Yes,” said the farmer, “pretty fair, but it’s awful for the rye. Rye wants cold weather.” The visitor returned to visit later in the fall. On a cold morning, he said to the farmer, “This must be capital for your rye crop.” “Yes,” the farmer said, “but it is the very worst for the corn and grass. They want heat to bring them forward.”

The Israelites were a lot like that farmer. They would not be satisfied with the obvious good the Lord had for them in the Promised Land. All they could see were the high-walled cities and the giants. They murmured against God’s chosen leaders, Moses and Aaron. They thought that being captives in Egypt would be better than entering the Promised Land. When Joshua and Caleb tried to give them godly advice, they even rejected them. They chose to look at what they could not do rather than what they could do with God’s help.

How often we are like Israel in our text. We cheat ourselves out of God’s blessing on our lives by choosing to murmur and complain about the trial He has allowed to come our way, or the seemingly impossible task ahead. We become like the Israelites and walk by sight and not by faith.

Someone once said, “The will of God will not lead us where the grace of God cannot keep us, or the power of God protect us.” Walk by faith, not by sight, and see what great things the Lord will do for you.

BACKGROUND

The Israelites had come a long way in their journey from Egypt. Many times, they had seen God work in miraculous ways, but they had a history of grumbling and complaining. They complained because they

thought Pharaoh’s army was going to kill them at the edge of the Red Sea; they complained about not having the same food they had in Egypt; they complained about having no water.

In today’s text, the people were at the edge of the Promised Land. The twelve spies had returned from spying out the land (chapter 13) with a mixed report. The majority of the spies were against entering the land, but Caleb and Joshua gave encouraging, godly advice to the people, saying that they were well able to enter. Once again, the people could not seem to trust God for the victory, so they began to murmur and complain.

In spite of repeated counsel from Caleb and Joshua, the people rebelled and wanted to go back to Egypt. God was angry with them and wanted to disinherit them, but Moses interceded for them and asked for their pardon. God pardoned them, but the people were sent back into the wilderness for forty years of wandering. Only their children would be permitted to enter the land.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- II. The journey from Sinai to the plains of Moab
 - B. The stay at Kadesh-Barnea
 - 3. The rejection of the opportunity (14:1-45)
 - a. The rebellion of the people (14:1-10)
 - b. The intercession of Moses (14:11-19)
 - c. The answer of Jehovah (14:20-38)
 - d. The presumption of the people (14:39-45)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. What were the four reasons Moses gave God to spare the Israelites?

[illegible]

Complaining robs us of God's blessing. Let us cultivate the same spirit that Caleb and Joshua had, and move with confidence in the power of God to possess the spiritual land He has for us!

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And the priest shall make an atonement for all the congregation of the children of Israel, and it shall be forgiven them; for it is ignorance: and they shall bring their offering, a sacrifice made by fire unto the LORD, and their sin offering before the LORD, for their ignorance.” (Numbers 15:25)

We are responsible for adhering to the laws of our country, whether they are traffic laws, local city ordinances, or IRS regulations. Ignorance is “no excuse.” A violator would not find much sympathy in traffic court if his defense was, “I never read that page of the Drivers’ Manual.” In numerous cases, courts have found individuals and companies guilty on the basis that they should have known. Perhaps such individuals truly may not have known, and possibly some of them actually had never been exposed to the information. They were guilty nonetheless.

There is a root relationship between the words *ignorance* and *ignore*. There is, however, an immense difference in our understanding of these two words. We interpret *ignorance* as “unknowing” and can easily assume that it is innocent. The word *ignore*, on the other hand, means “to disregard,” and our interpretation is that it is done knowingly.

A number of years ago I was talking to a man about the Gospel and what I viewed as God’s plan for our lives. He interrupted me and said, “Don’t tell me any more. I don’t want to be responsible for knowing that.” He was really choosing ignorance—hoping he wouldn’t be held accountable for what he didn’t want to know.

For those under the Mosaic Law, neither ignorance nor purposely ignoring was excusable. When errors occurred or God’s commandments were not kept, sacrificial obligations were required. Although animal sacrifices are no longer necessary in our day, we will someday be accountable to our Creator and Judge. All errors, transgressions, and violations will be addressed in the Day of Judgment whether or not we didn’t know or we chose not to. Let us purpose to learn what God wants us to do, and then do it!

BACKGROUND

Throughout their history, the Israelites were rebellious, although not necessarily always with the same level of intensity. At times this rebellion manifested itself openly toward the leadership of the nation. It also appeared to be directed toward God’s commandments

and protocol. Perhaps it was rebellion-caused indifference that led to the ignorance that was addressed in Numbers 15:24 and 25. Whatever the reason for the infringement, the Law required sacrifices when God’s laws were not followed. This penalty was imposed even if people or the community were unaware or “ignorant” of the regulation.

This chapter documents God’s directions concerning how the Children of Israel were to bring offerings to the Lord when they came to the Land of Canaan. These offerings included meat offerings, drink offerings, burnt offerings, vow offerings, and peace offerings. The quantity of flour, oil, and wine was proportional to the size of the sacrifice with which it was offered.

These instructions may well have been given at this time for two reasons. God wanted the people of Israel to understand that the Law, which was given at Mount Sinai, was still in effect even though the entry into the Promised Land had been delayed by their unbelief. Perhaps He also wanted to extend hope to the younger generation by reminding them that someday they would go into Canaan.

The judgment of the man who gathered sticks on the Sabbath day was an object lesson and reminder to the Israelites that rebellion would be punished. This man could not have taken the sticks in ignorance. If nothing else, the camp would have been quiet, and the lack of activity noticeable. So his act was one of rebellion and defiance against God and the requirements He had set down.

Even though God blessed Israel with many miracles, and they saw His presence in the pillar of the cloud and the fire, they had a strong tendency to go their own way. God wanted them to remember His laws and follow Him. The blue cord and fringes on their garments were also visual, ever-present reminders of God’s commandments. God did all He could to help them stay focused on Him and on what was important in their lives.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- II. The journey from Sinai to the plains of Moab
 - C. The wanderings in the wilderness
 - 1. Miscellaneous legislation (15:1-41)
 - a. Concerning offerings in the land (15:1-31)
 - b. Concerning Sabbath breaking (15:32-36)
 - c. Concerning the blue cord (15:37-41)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. What sacrifice did God require of the Children of Israel when His commandments were violated through ignorance?

2. What is meant by the phrase “without the knowledge of the congregation” in reference to sins or errors committed through ignorance?

3. What steps can you take to prevent spiritual ignorance within your sphere of influence?

[illegible]

CONCLUSION

We have an obligation first to keep God's Law. Second, we cannot ignore or be ignorant of our obligations to help lead others to Christ. Are we doing our part?

NOTES

This image shows a single page of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, leaving small margins at the top and bottom. There are no vertical margin lines, and the page is completely blank except for the lines themselves.



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the LORD, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them?” (Numbers 16:9)

Have you ever felt that a task you were asked to do was insignificant? Have you ever wondered why other people seem to have more advantages or benefits than you do? You may even have thought, *Life’s just not fair*.

It pays to guard against a discontented spirit. In Numbers 16, we read of a man with complaints similar to these, and the result was punishment from God. Korah had a place in the service of the Tabernacle. As a Levite, he ministered to Aaron, the high priest, but he became dissatisfied. He desired the kind of attention that Moses and Aaron received. Discontentment turned to rebellion, and tragedy was the result. Judgment was poured out, and the earth swallowed up Korah and the rebellious men who agreed with him. When the Children of Israel began to murmur against Moses and Aaron for killing “the people of the LORD,” God sent a deadly plague upon them.

What about us? Each of us has been called to do some service for God. It may not seem to be an important job in our eyes, but to the Lord it is important. Perhaps we were asked to be an usher, clean the church sanctuary, organize supplies for Sunday school, or to pray for others. Does it seem a small thing that God has given us such an opportunity?

Church ushers welcome and help people into services. An usher may be the first person a visitor sees when he enters the church. The impression made on that visitor can have a great impact. Those who help keep God’s house clean provide a pleasant environment for worship. Keeping Sunday school supplies organized and readily available gives the teachers resources to dynamically tell their students about salvation. Those weekly lessons could be the very thing that draws their hearts to the Lord. Serving God at an altar of prayer is a high calling: helping people pray is an awesome privilege and challenge.

To be used of God and to have a part in His service is no small thing! As we yield our lives to Him and joyfully and appreciatively do whatever He asks us to do, we will find that His blessing and favor is upon our lives, and our efforts will count for eternity.

BACKGROUND

No matter how much God did for the Children of Israel, and no matter how much He taught them, it seemed they were not a spiritually-minded people. They had wandered in the wilderness for some time and had never had a problem that Moses could not solve with the help of the Lord. However, a coalition of Levites and community leaders opposed Moses and Aaron.

Korah, a Levite in the family of Kohath, must have been a distinguished leader to be able to enlist the support of 250 “men of renown” from among the other tribes. He, along with others, suggested that Moses was not doing his job correctly, seemingly thinking that they could do a better job. Korah’s public complaint was that Moses and Aaron were not giving the people opportunity for input; he wanted more democracy in the camp. Usurping Moses’ authority, he claimed that the entire congregation was holy and that the Lord was with them. The hidden reason was that Korah was not satisfied to be assisting the priests; he wanted to *be* a priest.

Moses, a humble leader, fell on his face before the Lord. He did not argue with Korah or attempt to persuade him that he was doing well in his position, because he knew Korah’s aim was to assume the authority of the priesthood—something that God would never permit. God would have to show Korah and his followers how wrong they were. Moses proposed a simple test that would reveal the truth: they were to bring their censers to the Tabernacle the next morning and see if God would accept them.

God had chosen Moses to be the leader of the Israelites, and Aaron to be the high priest; resisting this arrangement was rebellion against the will of God. It brought serious division within the camp, and because of the rebellion of Korah and his followers, God caused the earth to open and they and all that pertained to them (their wives, children, houses, and all their goods) went down into the pit alive. Fire consumed the 250 who had been in the rebellion with them.

In spite of having seen such remarkable events, the people of Israel still accused Moses of killing “the people of the LORD.” In wrath, God said He would consume them, and a plague began in the camp. Once again, Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before God to intercede for the people. Quickly, Aaron “made an atonement” and the plague was stopped, but not before 14,700 people died.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah's Bible Outlines
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- II. The journey from Sinai to the plains of Moab
 - C. The wanderings in the wilderness
 - 2. The rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram
 - a. The insurrection (16:1-3)
 - b. The action of Moses (16:4-19)
 - c. The punishment (16:20-35)
 - d. The work of Eleazar (16:36-40)
 - e. The rebellion of the people (16:41-45)
 - f. The intercession and the stayed plague (16:46-50)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. What charge did Korah and his supporters bring against Moses and Aaron?

2. Why do you think God destroyed all that pertained to Korah and the other rebellious men, and not just the men themselves?

3. How can we evidence an attitude of honor and respect toward our spiritual leaders?

CONCLUSION

Inappropriate ambition may actually be greed in disguise! Let us be content and appreciative of the responsibilities God has given us.

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And it shall come to pass, that the man’s rod, whom I shall choose, shall blossom: and I will make to cease from me the murmurings of the children of Israel, whereby they murmur against you.” (Numbers 17:5)

In my first years of school, I heard an interesting story about a man and his wife. The man, who went to work each day, complained about his daily routine. He felt that his wife, who stayed at home cooking, tending the house and laundry, watching the baby, and milking the family cow, had the better life. One day, his wife gave him the opportunity to stay at home and she went to his workplace. Upon returning home that evening, she found an unhappy man. He had discovered through firsthand experience that satisfying a crying baby, keeping the cow in the pasture, washing clothes, and cooking dinner all at once, was not as easy or exciting as he had expected. He had a newfound respect for the difficult job his wife was doing—he was ready to go back to his job and let his wife continue in her former role!

Today’s focus verse tells how God indicated His choice of spiritual leader for His people, following the murmuring of the Children of Israel against the position that Moses held. Korah, Dathan, and Abiram had died because they desired greater stature and influence over the Children of Israel. Don’t we see a similar mindset in society today? People jockey for higher positions in their place of employment—possibly jobs that carry a little more authority or prestige. Self-promotion is commonplace as people strive to attain positions that they deem desirable.

Sadly, this way of thinking can infiltrate the Christian realm. The Apostle Paul warned about proud people who would seize authority in the local church and promote themselves (Acts 20:28-31). Rather than reaching for a position of authority, let us yield to the authority of God’s Word as well as the authority of God’s appointed leaders. In so doing, we will find ourselves to be submitted to God and to His will. Unless we do so, we cannot successfully claim our inheritance in Christ.

We read in Scripture that God takes the weak things of earth to confound the mighty. God’s choice of persons to fill leadership roles may not be whom you had expected, but as you honor, support, and respect those the Lord has appointed, He will bless you accordingly.

BACKGROUND

God chose a simple test to prove once and for all that He had chosen Aaron and his sons to serve as priests. The leader of each tribe gave Moses a rod (stick) bearing the tribal name, so that every man might know his own and to prevent contests. Aaron’s name was upon the rod of Levi. Moses laid the rods in the Tabernacle of the congregation and told the people that the rod that sprouted would belong to the man that God had chosen to be the nation’s priest.

When Moses brought out the rods the next day, only Aaron’s rod had produced life. It had not only sprouted, but had budded, blossomed, and produced almonds. This was unquestionably miraculous, and proved that Aaron was divinely appointed by God.

At this point, God repeated to Aaron His full instruction concerning Aaron’s office, a place of the highest responsibility. Both the priests and the Levites were to bear the iniquity of the sanctuary. If the sanctuary was profaned by the intrusion of strangers or unclean persons, the blame would lie with the Levites and priests, who were instructed to keep them out. If they neglected any part of their work or permitted other persons to take their work out of their hands, they would bear the blame for it. If they did not follow God’s instructions, they might die themselves.

God also outlined instructions as to how the Levites were to be supported by the people of God through the sacrifices, offerings, and tithes of the people. Other remunerations were received by the redemption of the firstborn of man and the firstborn of unclean beasts. Some of the food from the offerings could be eaten only by the priests, but much of it could be shared with their families. Whoever in the priest’s family ate of the sacrifices given to God had to ceremonially clean and treat the food with reverence because it had been sanctified by being presented to God.

The Levites were given the tithes that the people brought to God’s sanctuary. In turn, they were to give a tithe of what they received to the high priest. This could be considered paying a tenth part as tithes.

It was not for the sake of their personal merits above other Israelites that the priest and Levites had these tributes paid to them, but purely for the sake of the office to which they were appointed and anointed by God. While it could be considered a small remuneration for their services, it kept them independent and comfortable so that they could wait on the Lord’s work without distraction.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

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- II. The journey from Sinai to the plains of Moab
 - C. The wanderings in the wilderness
 - 2. The rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram
 - g. The high priest divinely authenticated (17:1-13)
 - (1) The command (17:1-7)
 - (2) The vindication (17:8-13)
 - h. The priesthood divinely confirmed (18:1-32)
 - (1) Approval on the priests' service (18:1-7)
 - (2) Allotment for the priests' service (18:8-32)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. How did God prove to the people that Aaron was the appointed priest?

2. What responsibilities were given the priests and the Levites, and why was this structure implemented?

3. How should we respond to and support the ministry today?

CONCLUSION

Ministers entrusted with the charge of caring for souls have a great task to perform and a great deal to answer for. Let us be faithful to honor and support those whom God has appointed as the leaders in His Church.

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.” (Numbers 20:12)

Actions and words can be irrevocable. Their consequences can be unchangeable. Have you ever pounded a nail into a board or wall, and then decided you wanted the nail in a different place? You can remove the nail, but what does it leave? Under some circumstances, you might be able to fill the hole, and it might look pretty good. At other times, any repairs you make will be less than satisfactory.

Our lives are like that. Sometimes we may say or do things that we should not. When we see our error, we need to go quickly to the Lord and ask His forgiveness. If we ask honestly, He will forgive, but that forgiveness may not change the consequences of what we said or did. Perhaps we will need to ask forgiveness of others or make restitution. Such steps are vital and ensure us a proper relationship with God, but they may not remove the consequences.

In our focus verse, Moses and Aaron failed to follow God’s exact directions, and the consequence was that they would not enter into the Promised Land. No doubt Moses and Aaron sought God’s forgiveness, and we know that forgiveness was granted. (If we needed proof, Moses was with Jesus at His transfiguration.) However, the consequence of their action was irrevocable. Aaron’s death is described in this chapter, and while God allowed Moses to view the Promised Land from afar, He did not allow him entrance with the Children of Israel.

Does this mean that we should hide away in our homes in fear of saying or doing something we should not? Of course not! What it does mean is that we should start each day with the knowledge of how important it is to do and say the right thing.

Can we always speak and do right by our own will and in our own strength? Absolutely not! However, we can earnestly ask God each day for His help and direction. God has promised to always be with us, and He wants to control our actions and words. Let us give Him that control.

BACKGROUND

Chapter 19 details the procedures the Children of Israel were to follow when they became ceremonially

unclean. Without following these procedures, a person could not offer sacrifices and worship God. Why did God institute the rituals? God wanted them to remember that He is holy and He desired them to be holy. To refuse to be purified was a serious offense—a death sentence. Defiled people defiled the camp. God’s own presence was in Israel’s camp, and so it was vital to keep the camp holy.

In chapter 20, the Children of Israel came again to Kadesh. Thirty-seven years before, their first spies had gone to the Promised Land. It had been forty years since they had left Egypt. History seemed to be repeating itself:

- Again they faced difficulty—this time they had no water.
- Again they harassed Moses and wished to be back in Egypt. Difficulties will make us better or worse, and our response will show what is in our hearts.
- Again Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before the Lord.
- Again God came through with instructions. Almost forty years before, God had used a rock to provide water.
- Again He sent Moses and Aaron to a rock (the Hebrew term means a high cliff rather than a boulder), but this time He told them to speak to the rock.

Angered by the continual complaining and unbelief of the Children of Israel, Moses called the people rebels and struck the rock twice instead of just speaking to it. The Bible calls Moses the meekest man in the earth, yet he was human. At this time he may well have been weary from the years in the wilderness. Verse 1 of chapter 20 tells of his sister Miriam’s death, so he may have been grieving. The people had provoked him to anger. (See Psalm 106:32-33.) However, in spite of the factors contributing to his action, God held Moses accountable for not honoring and obeying Him.

Beginning with verse 14 of chapter 20, we read how Moses requested permission for the Children of Israel to pass through the land of Edom. The Edomites were descendants of Esau, thus the reference to “brother.” Moses promised that the people would stay on the highway and purchase any water they used. However, Edom denied the request. Moses accepted that answer, and Israel took another route, but Edom’s refusal was never forgotten. Their refusal is referred to numerous times in the Old Testament, and in very strong terms.

Chapter 20 ends by telling about the death of Aaron at 123 years of age. This marked an ending and a beginning for Israel—a beginning of a new generation in the office of high priest, and an end of their wanderings. After this, they either marched or stopped, but they did not wander.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah's Bible Outlines
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- II. The journey from Sinai to the plains of Moab
 - C. The wanderings in the wilderness
 - 2. The rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram
 - i. The purification from defilement in the plague (19:1-22)
 - (1) The ordinance (19:1-10)
 - (2) The purpose (19:11-22)
 - D. The journey to Moab
 - 1. The death of Miriam at Kadesh (20:1)
 - 2. The sin of Moses at Kadesh (20:2-13)
 - a. The rebellion of the people (20:2-6)
 - b. The divine communication (20:7-8)
 - c. The sin of Moses and the result (20:9-13)
 - 3. The futile negotiations with Edom (20:14-21)
 - 4. The death of Aaron at Mt. Hor (20:22-29)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. What was Israel's complaint to Moses and Aaron when they had no water?

2. Why do you think the Children of Israel made this complaint when they had seen God work so many miracles for them?

3. Have you ever complained when you should have praised? How might you prevent that from happening in the future?

CONCLUSION

As with the Children of Israel, our actions have consequences, so let us open our hearts to God, get His direction, and keep on marching!

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that everyone that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.” (Numbers 21:8)

Many situations in life necessitate immediate action. If your child falls and hits his head, and the blood is gushing out, you know he needs medical attention. If the oil light on your car dashboard starts flashing, you know to stop immediately and call for mechanical help. If you hear your garage door open in the night and you see someone getting into your van to steal it, you know to call the police. If a water pipe breaks in your house and a flood is pouring into your basement, you know to turn off the water supply and call a plumber. Some of the situations we face can be life-threatening. Others may be expensive or just inconvenient. Yet, we know to take action!

In our text, the Children of Israel faced a situation that was life-threatening. When the fiery serpents bit the people, they died. There was no help until God instructed Moses to make a serpent of brass and put it on a pole where all the people could see it. If those who had been bitten looked at the serpent, they were healed immediately. If they refused, they died.

The brass serpent pointed ahead to the death of Jesus Christ on the cross as a remedy for the sins of mankind. To be “lifted up” referred to crucifixion. The comparison between the brass serpent in Moses’ day and the Cross of Christ helps us better understand the meaning of God’s grace in salvation. All of us come into this world infected by sin and will one day die and face judgment, but if we look by faith to Christ, He will save us and give us eternal life. It is our only hope of eternal life, and action needs to be taken immediately!

BACKGROUND

After Aaron died, the Israelites completed their mourning for him, and then went back on the road and into battle. In verse 1 of the text, we see that some Israelite spies were taken prisoner. This prompted Israel to vow to God, and God was with them in the battle that followed.

Yet, soon after their victory, the people became impatient because of the difficulty of the march, and started complaining again. Eventually they spoke harshly against the Lord and Moses. It was a familiar complaint: Moses had brought them out of Egypt to

die in the wilderness, and there was nothing to eat except manna. In the difficulties of the daily march, they had forgotten that God had promised to give them the Promised Land.

As punishment for their rebellion, the Lord sent “fiery serpents” to bite them. Many of the people of Israel died. The Israelites recognized their sin and went to Moses and confessed it, asking that he pray for them. When Moses prayed for the people, God told him to make a serpent of brass and put it on a pole. Moses obeyed, and as God had said, all those who looked at the serpent of brass lived. Of course, the serpent on the pole did not heal them. It was God who healed them when they demonstrated their faith and obedience by following the instruction to look.

The brass serpent prefigured Christ bearing the judgment of our sin (on the Cross). It was the only cure available, and each person had to look for himself—just as Jesus’ Blood is the only cure for sin and each sinner must repent for himself.

Verse 17 says that Israel sang a song, which was certainly better than complaining. This was the first song that we are told of them singing since their song after they were delivered from Egypt. What a long time without a song to the Lord!

The last of the chapter addresses two more enemy encounters. Israel asked the Amorites, as they had earlier asked the Edomites, for passage through their land. Permission was denied and a military attack ensued. God gave Israel the victory, and the Amorites were defeated. When they faced King Og and his forces, God told Moses the victory was theirs even before the battle began.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah's Bible Outlines
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- II. The journey from Sinai to the plains of Moab
 - D. The journey to Moab
 - 5. The defeat of Arad at Hormah (21:1-3)
 - 6. The murmuring and the serpent (21:4-9)
 - 7. The journey to Pisgah (21:10-20)
 - 8. The victory over Sihon (21:21-32)
 - 9. The victory over Og (21:33-35)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. What sins did the people confess to Moses when they asked him to entreat the Lord for the removal of the serpents?

2. Why was God so angry when the people of Israel complained?

3. How can we prevent complaining from taking hold and growing in our lives?

CONCLUSION

In the wilderness, the people had only to look, and they lived. Looking to the bronze serpent saved people from physical death, but looking to Christ saves us from eternal death.

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And God said unto Balaam, Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people: for they are blessed.” (Numbers 22:12)

All of us appreciate clear directions. Maybe we have purchased an “easy to assemble” toy or piece of furniture and then tried to put it together without consulting the instructions. The task may not have been as easy as we supposed! Perhaps there were screws or small pieces left over, or maybe the article came out looking totally different than it was supposed to.

At other times we may look at directions and find them completely incomprehensible. Maybe the instructions were translated in another country and the translator was not completely familiar with our language. Or perhaps we were trying to read a computer or technical manual. The directions were no help because we did not understand them.

Sometimes we have clear instructions but we think we can change them. Maybe we have tried to alter a recipe and came out with a culinary disaster. Or perhaps, when traveling by road, we have taken a “shortcut” rather than following directions, and we ended up going the wrong way or getting lost.

Clear directions are important, and following them is just as important. Balaam had clear directions from God, but he did not want to follow them. He wanted the prestige and possessions that Balak offered him. We, too, may desire our own ways at times, but there are always consequences to going against God’s will. Balaam would have lost his life had it not been for the mercy of God.

God used a donkey to get Balaam’s attention and to spare his life. What might God need to use to get our attention? It is always best to obey God and keep His commandments. That is the sure way to have a happy life. It may look to us as if we are forfeiting some of life’s pleasures, but we can never out-give God. Anytime we obey Him, He will make it up to us in a much greater measure — if not here, then in eternity.

Today, is God giving you some directions that you do not really want to follow? Yield to Him, and you will be glad you did!

BACKGROUND

Balaam, the prophet, was from Pethor of Mesopotamia (Deuteronomy 23:4), the district of west Asia between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. Balak was

the king of Moab, a country located near the Dead Sea. Balak had become fearful because of the great host of Israelites who were marching near his territory. He wanted Balaam to come and place a curse on the Israelites, so he sent messengers to get Balaam and bring him to Moab. When the messengers arrived, God told Balaam not to go. Balak’s messengers came a second time, and Balaam, wanting to get great honor from Balak, asked God again.

Though God allowed Balaam to go, with the understanding that he would do only what God told him to do, God was angry at Balaam’s greedy urges. Balaam desired to have his way instead of heeding what God had already said. Balaam loved the “wages of unrighteousness” (2 Peter 2:15), but the incident with the donkey seemed to teach him a lesson, at least for a while. At that point he must have realized that God meant business.

Balaam finished his journey and went to Balak. He found that Balak wanted him to curse the Israelites, but Balaam told him he could only say what God wanted him to say. Therefore, he blessed the Children of Israel and did not curse them. Although Balaam was offered great honor, he must have feared for his life if he failed to obey God — an important lesson.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

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III. Events on the plain of Moab

A. The encounter with Balaam

1. The summons of Balaam (22:1-41)
 - a. Balak’s call (22:1-20)
 - b. Balaam’s journey (22:21-35)
 - c. Balak meets Balaam (22:36-41)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. Why did Balak send for Balaam?

2. What did Balak promise Balaam if he would curse the Israelites?

[illegible]

It is always best to obey God, and He will work out every situation for us. If God's way is perfect, why should we desire to walk in any other?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on its right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?” (Numbers 23:19)

Have your children ever asked you for something, and then asked again, and then asked again, and then asked . . . ? Sometimes it's called begging! Perhaps, to bring an end to the pleading, you have responded with, “You heard my answer the first time, and it hasn't changed.” Often, children do not understand the reasons their requests are not granted. It is difficult for children to comprehend that the things they ask for may be too dangerous, impractical, or too expensive. Telling a child “no” is usually not something parents enjoy doing, but when it is in the child's best interest, it must be done.

In today's text, neither Balaam nor Balak were satisfied with God's first answer. Balak wanted Israel to be cursed, and Balaam was attracted by the rewards Balak offered if he would curse them. Although God had made His intentions for the Israelites very clear, both men kept pushing to have their own way.

As Christians, we might sometimes be guilty of begging God—asking repeatedly with the hope that He will change His mind. There is a time to seek God's will in matters not specifically spelled out in Scripture. Examples might include employment, where to live, and selection of a life mate. Yet, even in those situations, the principles by which God wants to guide our lives are given in His Word.

We need to be especially careful when dealing with situations that are clearly spelled out in the Bible. If we know what Scripture says on a subject but “self” prefers an easier way, it is dangerous to keep seeking God's will about the matter. It is possible that if we pray long enough—when we already know what God's desire or direction is—that we will “feel” God has let us have our own way. However, operating upon such feelings will only be to our hurt. While an in-depth study of how to find God's will is beyond the scope of this lesson, one thing is sure: God will never lead us to do anything which is not consistent with the Bible.

It is profitable to examine our own lives. Are we begging God about something? Are we pushing for our own way? Let us remember that God's ways are always based on His complete love for us, and we are greatly benefited by submitting to His will.

BACKGROUND

The seven altars and sacrifices that Balaam had Balak prepare were, no doubt, a pagan ritual. Even though his approach was in a heathen fashion and his heart was not right with God, Balaam did receive God's answer—he predicted blessings rather than curses.

Balaam was an interesting character. At times, throughout Numbers 22 through 24, he seemed to be seeking God's will, and would not do anything that was not allowed by God. Yet, another part of him would have liked to cause trouble for the Children of Israel, although he could not do so as long as they remained true to God. God had blessed them, and all the efforts of Balak to have Balaam curse them came to naught.

Ironically, it was Balaam himself who was responsible for bringing the judgments of God upon the Israelites. He revealed his true colors in the events of Numbers 25. Although Balaam is not mentioned specifically in that chapter, it is clear from other places in Scripture that Balaam was the instigator of this trouble. Revelation 2:14 tells us that Balaam “taught Balak to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel,” and Numbers 31:16 also reflects this thought. Being unable to turn God against the Israelites, Balaam suggested to Balak how he could turn the Israelites against God—with predictable results. By enticing the Israelites into sin through a mixture of idol worship and sexual promiscuity, Balaam caused the judgments of God to fall upon these people.

Balaam wanted to die the death of the righteous, but the *death* of the righteous follows the *life* of the righteous.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah's Bible Outlines
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- III. Events on the plain of Moab
 - A. The encounter with Balaam
 - 2. The prophecies of Balaam (23:1—24:25)
 - a. The first prophecy (23:1-12)
 - b. The second prophecy (23:13-26)
 - c. The third prophecy (23:27—24:9)
 - d. The fourth prophecy (24:10-25)
 - 3. The influence of Balaam (cf. 31:16) (25:1-18)
 - a. Israel's sin (25:1-5)
 - b. Phinehas' action and reward (25:6-13)
 - c. Judgment on the Midians (25:14-18)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. In Numbers 22 through 24, how many times did Balaam approach God with the intention of trying to cause Him to send some sort of judgment upon the Children of Israel?

2. Why did God allow Balaam to speak truth even though his heart was not right?

3. How can we distinguish between cases where it is right to continue bringing a petition before God (perseverance), as opposed to other cases where it would be wrong to do so?

CONCLUSION

Maybe you are facing a situation today where doing God's will seems difficult. Purpose to follow God and ask Him for grace. He will be with you, and you will be blessed.

NOTES

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“To many thou shalt give the more inheritance, and to few thou shalt give the less inheritance: to every one shall his inheritance be given according to those that were numbered of him.”

(Numbers 26:54)

In the early history of Canada, the provincial government periodically had the municipalities number their residents. It was a governmental policy to grant money to areas based on the number of residents living within the boundaries of that community, town, or city. The larger the population, the greater the grant; conversely, the smaller the population, the smaller the grant. Could it be that the idea originated from the time when the Children of Israel were about to enter the Promised Land? As we read in our text, they were numbered so that their inheritance could be divided according to how many people were in each tribe.

Today, as Christians, we are heading for our Promised Land—Heaven. It will be rewarding to be counted in the number who endure and enter in. Each of us can qualify for an inheritance there. In that Promised Land, the rewards will not be divided according to certain tribes or groups.

Perhaps you feel that if the Christians in your school, workplace, or neighborhood were numbered, the count would be one—you! Maybe you look at your fellow employees or students and realize that although your work or classes may cause you to spend a great deal of time with them, you do not fit in because you are a Christian. Perhaps no one else in your family is serving God. One young woman who was kept out of church when she was a teenager would have a private church service in her bedroom, and God would meet her there. Even if you are alone in standing for God, you can receive a reward if you do your best to live for Him.

Let us be like Joshua and Caleb, and be among those who were numbered when starting out and among those who were numbered when entering the Promised Land. If we contemplate what the inheritance will be for those who make it to the end, we can understand why the songwriter wrote, “Lord, I want to be in that number, when the saints go marching in.”

BACKGROUND

After wandering in the wilderness for nearly forty years, the Children of Israel were about to enter the

land of Canaan—the Promised Land. In today’s text we read that Moses and Eleazar were commanded to take the sum of the Israelites in the plains of Moab by Jordan near Jericho. The first year after the Children of Israel came out of Egypt, they were numbered at Mount Sinai (Numbers 1 and 2), so this was the second census that God had commanded to be taken. The purpose for the census at this point was to preserve the distinction in families, to regulate the tribes prior to their entry into the Promised Land, and to ascertain the portion of land that should be allotted to each tribe. Although the whole land was divided by lot, God ordained that the portions that went to large tribes were larger inheritances.

Moses waited to number the people until God commanded him to do so. God instructed Moses and Eleazar to use the same rule that they had used in the former numbering, counting only those who were able to go forth to war—the men who were twenty years of age and older.

In the census, a register of the tribes and families was taken, with the number and sum of each, and the sum total of all. This count showed an overall decrease of 1,820 from the previous census. That in itself was a miracle. The whole adult population of the nation, except Joshua and Caleb, had died during the forty years in the wilderness because of their disobedience and unbelief, yet the number of the adult population at this time was close to what it had been at the start.

The tribe of Levi was to have no inheritance with the rest of Israel in the land of Canaan, and therefore that tribe was numbered by itself. Specific instructions were given in other chapters for how cities and land were to be allotted to this tribe. As seen so often before, God’s attention to detail was manifested in the counting of the people and His instructions regarding land allotment.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

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III. Events on the plain of Moab

B. The preparation for entering Canaan

1. The second census (26:1-65)
 - a. Of the congregation (26:1-57)
 - (1) The command (26:1-4)
 - (2) The census (26:5-50)
 - (3) The totals (26:51)
 - (4) The inheritance (26:52-57)
 - b. Of the Levites (26:58-62)
 - c. The conclusion (26:63-65)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. Why was it so important to have the census taken for each tribe, rather than just finding a total of all the Israelites?

2. Although their parents had all died in the wilderness, this generation of Israelites was anticipating an entrance into the Promised Land. What do you think kept that hope alive in their hearts as they grew from childhood to adulthood?

3. Sometimes we may feel as though it will take a lot of marching before we get to Heaven. What can we do to keep that hope alive in our hearts?

CONCLUSION

The Promised Land was divided by lot to the believing Israelites. God determined the inheritance as He saw best. None of the people had any claim on or right to it, except as God gave it to them. The Kingdom of Heaven is given by the good will of God to those who have repented, believed, and obeyed Him. Will you be counted in that number?

NOTES

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

**“And Moses brought their cause before the LORD.”
(Numbers 27:5)**

When my youngest sister was about eight years old, she decided that she would like to have a rabbit as a pet. The first thing she did was ask our parents if they would get her a rabbit. They felt that we already had enough animals, and gave her a negative answer. Her response was that she would ask Jesus to help her get a pet rabbit.

Imagine my father’s astonishment the following morning when he discovered that someone had dropped off an entire family of rabbits in the state park where we lived! Jesus had indeed rewarded my sister’s childlike faith with not just one rabbit, but the whole family: a mother, a father, and three darling little half-grown baby rabbits! Her response to this turn of events was that “Jesus sent rabbits because I asked Him to.” Of course, since the Lord had so generously answered my sister’s request, our parents assured us that we would be allowed to keep them.

In today’s account, we read how the daughters of Zelophehad went to Moses with a similar faith: They were not forward or demanding, but confident that Moses would intercede with the Lord on their behalf. Their faith was rewarded when God told Moses that if a man did not have sons, his possessions could pass to his daughters (Numbers 27:8).

This request was made “before Moses, and before Eleazar the priest, and before the princes and all the congregation, by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation” (Numbers 27:2). In this way the Lord ensured that this question of inheritance was not limited to one isolated case. For a people who had not been able to own land for generations, this was an important issue that needed resolution.

It is interesting to consider that these sisters asked about the inheritance even *before* God had delivered the land to the Children of Israel. Their confidence in God’s ability to fulfill His promise to His people was so great that they wanted to make sure the inheritance matter was taken care of even before the allotments were made.

What a lesson in faith this should be to us! From this account we learn that we can claim the promise before we see the final answer. Just as an earthly father will provide for his children’s needs when they ask, our Heavenly Father will honor our faith and provide for our needs as we seek His will for us.

BACKGROUND

This exchange occurred immediately after the census of the Children of Israel was taken a second time. As Moses and Aaron prepared to cast lots to determine what land was to be occupied by each tribe, it was necessary to have an accurate number of the population so that the amount of land required for each tribe could be determined. This census also served a second purpose: to make sure that all of the older generation had passed away, in fulfillment of the Lord’s judgment of them at Kadesh (Numbers 14:20-23).

By this point in time, Moses was approaching 120 years of age, and he would soon go and be with the Lord. Because of his past disobedience at Meribah, God let him know that he would not enter the Promised Land. Moses’ true devotion to his people was seen in his request that God choose a successor, that the “congregation of the LORD be not as sheep which have no shepherd.” God’s choice was Joshua, a man who had begun his adult life as a military commander (Exodus 17:8-14).

In the culture of that time, it was very important to maintain the family inheritance from generation to generation, with land and possessions passing from father to son. If there were no sons, a man’s property would pass to his nearest male relative. A daughter was never allowed to inherit property. Instead, she would receive a dowry when she married and went to live with her husband’s family. This dowry served as her inheritance.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

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- III. Events on the plain of Moab
 - B. The preparation for entering Canaan
 - 2. Miscellaneous instructions
 - a. The law of inheritance for women (27:1-11)
 - b. The appointment of Moses’ successor (27:12-23)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. How did Moses deal with the request of the daughters of Zelophehad?

2. Based on the outcome of the request of these women, what type of request will God answer?

3. How can we take steps to put faith into action and see the Lord work on our behalf?

CONCLUSION

Is there a need in your life that you would “bring before the LORD?” Ask a trusted friend or family member to help you pray about the matter. Exercise your faith and believe that God will hear your prayer and provide the answer that you need.

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Command the children of Israel, and say unto them, My offering, and my bread for my sacrifices made by fire, for a sweet savour unto me, shall ye observe to offer unto me in their due season.” (Numbers 28:1-2)

I like to cook. One time, I was going through a stage of baking all sorts of breads and sweet rolls. Imagine my chagrin one day when, upon tasting a beautiful batch of caramel nut cinnamon rolls still warm from the oven, we found them to be absolutely tasteless. Upon careful review, I found that I had somehow omitted the salt. Strange that only two teaspoons of salt omitted from a large batch of dough would have such a devastating effect. We even went so far as to try to sprinkle the rolls with a little salt. No good! It was too late. As I recall, that batch was consigned to the garbage can.

What does this have to do with Numbers 28? Basically, if we are going to please God and get His blessing upon our lives, we must follow His directions precisely. In Old Testament times, God set down the required sacrifices for the various occasions: daily, Sabbath, monthly, and for the various religious festivals. To a priesthood familiar with these requirements, none of these should have proved difficult. God would have been displeased if the priest had chosen to deviate from His plan—perhaps using three tenth deals of flour instead of two, or a third part of an hin of oil instead of a fourth part. Obedience to God’s command was actually more important to Him than the sacrifice itself. “To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams” (1 Samuel 15:22).

Today, we are no longer expected to offer burnt sacrifices to the Lord. We are saved by faith in the atoning provision of Jesus Christ. Some people take this out of context, however, assuming that after salvation, a Christian can get away with almost anything and still remain saved. Not so, according to the Word of God.

As Christians, we are to walk carefully before the Lord, following His will for our lives as He reveals this to us. We do not do this in a spirit of fear and bondage. Rather, it is our joy to walk as the Lord would have us to walk. We have grasped at least in a measure, the injunction of Romans 12:1, which says, “Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”

BACKGROUND

A “meat” sacrifice was not necessarily an animal sacrifice. For example, Numbers 28:12 reads, “And three tenth deals of flour for a meat offering.” Elsewhere in the Old Testament we also find meat offering to signify the offering of flour.

In this chapter, God revealed His requirements for various sacrificial offerings: those that were offered daily, on the Sabbath, monthly, and for the religious festivals of “The Feast of Unleavened Bread” and the “Festival of First Fruits.” Scripture does not explain why God chose the different amounts and types of animals and other components for the various sacrifices. We do know, however, that blood sacrifices were a temporary means of atonement for the sin of the people until the day when Jesus would die on the Cross—providing the ultimate sacrifice for sin.

In addition to atonement for sin, sacrifices were a way for the people to show their love, respect, and need for the God of Heaven. As long as the people continued to offer these sacrifices in an attitude of willing service and appreciation, God would continue to bless them.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

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- III. Events on the plain of Moab
 - B. The preparation for entering Canaan
 - 2. Miscellaneous instructions
 - c. The regulations concerning various offerings
 - (1) The daily offerings (28:1-8)
 - (2) The Sabbath offerings (28:9-10)
 - (3) The monthly offerings (28:11-15)
 - (4) The Passover offerings (28:16-25)
 - (5) The Feast of Weeks offering (28:26-31)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. When and how was the Passover Festival to be celebrated?

[illegible]

God wants a close personal relationship with His children on earth. That is why He created mankind in the first place. To attain this close walk, we must sacrifice our wills to Him—willingly and completely. Let us do so today!

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And on the fifteenth day of the seventh month ye shall have an holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work, and ye shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days.” (Numbers 29:12)

When I was nineteen years old, the Lord saved me. I had gone to church all my life but never knew that God could make a change in my heart or that He cared about me as an individual. At that time, I worked two jobs, seven days a week. A minister told me about our yearly two-week church camp meeting, which took place in Portland, Oregon. He said that it was like “Heaven on earth” and by going, one could set aside the cares of life and draw closer to God without the interruptions of daily routine. For me to go to camp meeting would take a lot of preparation. I had to get time off from both jobs, but I made the effort and succeeded.

As I walked onto the campground that first time, I felt like I needed to take my shoes off. There was a clear sense that I was on holy ground. People from all over the world were there for the same purpose as I was: to focus on the treasures of God, and to worship with God’s people. We were inspired to set aside cares and concentrate on the riches of the Gospel. I heard about the precepts of God’s Word, and felt encouraged to stand fast in the faith. For me, it was the start of learning about the deeper precepts of God and His love. It was a time to renew my commitment to the Lord, and I realized that camp meeting was the perfect opportunity to take a “spiritual holiday” at least once a year.

How easy it is to be caught up in the busyness of life! We may feel that we run from one appointment and activity to another. Where does God fit in all that busyness? Truly knowing God will take effort on our part. It will have to be the first priority in our lives. We will need to set aside some other activities and cares of life, and make a conscious effort to focus on Him. What will be the results of those efforts? Just like my camp meeting experience, we will find it well worth the investment, and the blessings will far outweigh any sacrifices.

BACKGROUND

Continuing the instructions given to Israel prior to entering the Promised Land, chapter 29 deals with offerings that were to be given at the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles.

Chapter 30 details requirements for vows made to the Lord.

Holy convocation means, “A sacred assembly or calling together of the people of Israel for rest and worship.” Whenever the word *convocation* appears in the Bible, it is preceded by the word *holy*.

Israel’s special festivals, like the weekly Sabbath, reflected a pattern of sevens—pointing back to God setting the seventh day apart as a special day at creation. These times were ordained by God, and were times of celebrating with Him.

God’s sacred assemblies for the Israelites were designed to instruct them in holiness, remind them of their covenant relationship with God, and provide them with opportunities for worship. These holy convocations or assemblies were appointed for specific times and were to be observed by all Israelites. The feasts and festivals of Israel were community observances. The poor, the widow, the orphan, the Levite, and the sojourner or foreigner were invited to most of the feasts. The accounts of these feasts suggest a “potluck” type of meal, with some parts of the meal reserved for the priests and the rest given to those who gathered at the Temple or the altar for worship.

The Day of Atonement was a recognition of the people’s inability to make any atonement for their sins. It was a solemn, holy day accompanied by elaborate ritual. The Seventh Month festival was introduced with the blowing of trumpets, the cessation of labor, and sacrifices. All of the feasts were marked by thanksgiving and joyous feasting. The purpose of the festivals was spiritual: a great and glorious meeting of God and His people.

In chapter 30, Moses reminded the leaders of the tribes of Israel that if a man made a vow to the Lord, he must not break his word, but do all that he had vowed.

Moses gave two situations where vows were not binding. First, under the Law, parents could overrule their children’s vows—a provision that would discourage young people from making unwise commitments. Thus, the father of an unmarried daughter could disallow (dismiss) a vow at the time it was made. However, if he heard it but said nothing, the unmarried daughter was bound to fulfill it—the father could not dismiss it later. Secondly, if a married woman made a vow and her husband heard the vow, the husband could disallow it. However, if he said nothing when the vow was made, the woman was bound to fulfill it. These two situations where exceptions were allowed were not intended to suppress either children

The vows of a widow or divorced woman were to be kept.

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B. The preparation for entering Canaan

c. The regulations concerning various offerings

- d. The regulations concerning vows
(30:1-16)

- ## A CLOSER LOOK

[illegible]

Do you feel tired and far from God? Try taking a “spiritual holiday!” Separate yourself from your daily routine and concentrate on renewing your commitment to God. God wants you to set aside special days for Him, to rest, to worship, and to remember with thanksgiving all that He has done for you.

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“Moses and Eleazar the priest did as the LORD commanded Moses.” (Numbers 31:31)

As I drove down the highway a few years back, a bright florescent sign caught my attention: “Click it or ticket. Mandatory seat belt law in effect, \$86 fine.” These signs are posted at regular intervals alongside our Washington State highways to remind motorists of the state seat belt law. The advertising slogan, “Click it or ticket,” prompts drivers to buckle their seat belts or face a ticket and fine.

The nation of Israel had faced severe consequences over the years for failing to obey God’s commands. They had not paid a fine, but had been punished severely for their disobedience, not the least of which was wandering about in the wilderness for forty years. Now their descendants were about to enter the Promised Land.

Moses had also learned obedience the hard way. He was about to die without entering the Promised Land due to his own disobedience years before. Yet, there was no bitterness or complaining on his part. There was no letting down from his responsibility; he was not looking back at the disappointments of life, but was pressing on to do what God had called him to do. He had purposed in his heart he was going to obey God until the day he died.

When Moses found out that Israel had brought back “spoils of war” after defeating the Midianites, he had no second thoughts about obeying God. He and Eleazar the priest oversaw the disposal of the spoils, in obedience to God’s Word, and it is recorded in our focus verse that, “Moses and Eleazar the priest did as the LORD commanded Moses.”

Maybe God is calling you to a closer walk of obedience to Him. Do not look back to past defeats. Look forward in anticipation of what God is going to do in your life! As you move forward in obedience to God, you can be assured of God’s blessing.

BACKGROUND

The descendants of Abraham and Keturah (the wife he took after Sarah died) were the Midianites. Their homeland was south of Canaan. As nomads, these people roamed far, and a group of them were encountered at this time by Israel.

The Children of Israel were about to enter the Promised Land. The last assignment God gave them through Moses was to destroy the Midianites. The

obvious reason was because of Israel’s sin at Peor. The army returned victorious, but Moses was angry when he saw they brought back impure spoils of war, including Midianite women. The chapter details the cleansing of these spoils, including the deaths of many women who had led the Israelite men into sin. The soldiers themselves also had to be cleansed.

The spoils from this battle were large — over 800,000 animals and much gold. This wealth was divided; half went to the soldiers and half to those who remained in the camp. Both groups gave some of the spoils to the Lord.

Upon their return from the battle, the officers took a head count and found that, miraculously, not one Israelite soldier had been lost. The officers brought a special offering in appreciation.

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III. Events on the plain of Moab

B. The preparation for entering Canaan

3. The war against Midian (31:1-54)
 - a. The divine command (31:1-2)
 - b. The conflict (31:3-12)
 - c. The cleansing (31:13-24)
 - d. The spoil (31:25-47)
 - e. The offering (31:48-54)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. Whose counsel did Moses blame for Israel’s sin at Peor? What happened to the one who gave that counsel?

2. Why was obedience to God’s commands so vital to Israel, especially at this stage of their journey?

[illegible]

We can be thankful Christ set the ultimate example of obedience for us. We read in God's Word, "Yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Hebrews 5:8-9). Praise God, we can receive the blessing every time if we utilize our faith and obey God's Word!

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And Moses said unto the children of Gad and to the children of Reuben, Shall your brethren go to war, and shall ye sit here? And wherefore discourage ye the heart of the children of Israel from going over into the land which the LORD hath given them?” (Numbers 32:6-7)

Misunderstandings happen. A number of years ago I heard that someone was upset with me for something I had said. At first, I could not remember saying anything that could have been interpreted wrongly. Then it came to me. I recalled a certain comment that could have been misconstrued, and realized the individual had likely misinterpreted my intention. From that point, it was easy to go and straighten out the issue. But what if I had not heard about and attempted to resolve the issue? Perhaps the misunderstanding would have continued to bother the other individual for a long time.

The devil is intent on stirring up trouble in the family of God. It is our job not to let him do this. If you have reason to believe that a misunderstanding has occurred between you and a brother or sister, go to him or her quickly and straighten it out. In the great majority of cases, you will find there never was a problem. Even if there was, with good will on both sides, it can be resolved and the devil's attempt to create friction will be foiled.

In today's text, a misunderstanding occurred. The tribes of Gad, Reuben, and the half tribe of Manasseh came to Moses asking that they be given the land to the east of the River Jordan as their portion of territory in the Promised Land. Moses mistakenly assumed they made this request in order to avoid fighting alongside their fellow Israelites in conquering the people to the west of Jordan, where the majority of the Israelites would dwell. He thought they were saying, “We've fought enough and suffered enough already. We just want to settle down now where we're at.” He knew this attitude would discourage the other tribes from fighting for the full territory God had promised them.

However, when Moses expressed his concern to the leaders of Gad, Reuben, and Manasseh, they quickly assured Moses that the tribes they represented were perfectly willing to do their share in the conquest of Canaan. This was not a ploy to avoid fighting; they merely wanted to have the eastern land as their portion of the national inheritance. Once this

misunderstanding was cleared up, Moses agreed to their request.

As believers, we must work at maintaining unity. Relational challenges will occur from time to time—our spiritual enemy will see to that. Misunderstandings between fellow believers can lead to discouragement and division, and we do not want that to happen. One way we can help to preserve unity is to remedy any confusion that occurs as quickly and completely as possible.

BACKGROUND

Chapter 32 covers the request of the tribes of Gad, Reuben, and the half tribe Manasseh to settle on the east side of the Jordan River, Moses' reaction to their request, and the ultimate resolution of the issue.

The land east of the Jordan, described in verse 1 as “the land of Jazer, and the land of Gilead,” had already been conquered by the Israelites. It was ideal grazing land and the tribes of Reuben and Gad had much cattle, so they requested it be given them as their inheritance. This was a legitimate request based on God's covenant with Abraham; since this area was west of the Euphrates River, it was part of the grant given by God to Abraham for his descendants.

The patriarch Jacob, whose name God later changed to Israel, had twelve sons in all. Throughout the years until the time of this text, the offspring of these sons had multiplied to the extent that they numbered perhaps three million people. During that period, the people still retained the identities of their founding fathers. Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, had been granted equal status with the eleven other sons of Jacob (see Genesis 48:5). Additionally, God had selected the tribe of Levi for a special role as priests and assistants for the worship of God. Therefore, unlike the other twelve tribes, the Levites were not given a specific portion of land in Canaan, but rather were to be spread throughout Israel, living in and near the various cities.

There were two “half tribes” of Manasseh because the sons of Manasseh had aligned themselves into two groups—one group opting for land east of the Jordan River, and the other for a portion in the main area to the west.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

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III. Events on the plain of Moab

B. The preparation for entering Canaan

4. The distribution of the Transjordan (32:1-42)

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-
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NOTES

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And Moses wrote their goings out according to their journeys by the commandment of the LORD: and these are their journeys according to their goings out.” (Numbers 33:2)

Recently, my husband and I made a first-time trip to Boston. We were eager to visit the many historical sites in that city—Bunker Hill, the USS Constitution, the place where Paul Revere began his famous ride, the cemetery where Ben Franklin and John Hancock are buried—but of course we had no idea of where these places were in relation to where we would be staying. So before our departure date, I went on the Internet and mapped the location of our hotel and the surrounding streets. We found that little map was a very important part of successfully navigating an unknown area!

Have you ever been without a map and not known which direction to take? Maybe you considered asking someone for directions, but you were embarrassed and thought you could figure it out yourself. Or maybe you asked directions, and then discovered they were incorrect.

All of us are on a journey spiritually. We want to be certain that we are going the right way on the right road. God gives us instructions in His Word. If we follow the road signs contained there, they will lead us to the destination we all hope to reach one day—Heaven.

The Bible has the route all mapped out for us. All we have to do is read and obey it. God will not get us lost or tell us to turn left when we need to turn right. His directions are perfect. Our responsibility is to seek His instructions and then journey as He directs.

There are blessings in taking God’s path in this life. The rewards may not always be tangible right away, but we can know God is taking note of what we do every day—whether we are on the right path or going the wrong direction. It is always wise to follow His bidding and make the right turn in the road of life. We will be a blessing to others when we go in the direction God wants us to go, and we will also receive a blessing ourselves. Our spiritual journey will be a success, and one day we will reach our destination—Heaven—and be forever with the Lord.

BACKGROUND

The Children of Israel were on their way to the Promised Land. God gave Moses instructions on how

to get there. The most important thing was for them to follow God’s direction and go where He led them. God knew how they had grumbled and complained in the past, and here He specifically told them what journeys to take. He spoke to them through Moses, and Moses told the people what God had commanded. There is no record that they tried to go another trail or tried to get ahead of God’s plan.

God spoke to them of their goings out. It took much preparation to move out of camp. The entire Tabernacle had to be disassembled and carried with them wherever they traveled. All of their possessions had to be packed up and moved. They seemed willing to obey and follow God’s plan explicitly. In chapter 33, over fifty cities are listed where they journeyed. Life must have had regular upheaval for them, as they moved so often in their forty years in the wilderness, but they obeyed as they were instructed by Moses.

Israel was also warned not to do as the Canaanites had done or God would also give them judgment. They were given specific instructions of what to destroy, including the Canaanites’ images and places of worship. God wanted Israel to do as they were told because then they would be blessed and go in and inherit the land.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- III. Events on the plain of Moab
 - B. The preparation for entering Canaan
 - 5. The summary of the journey from Egypt (33:1-49)
 - a. From Egypt to Sinai (33:1-15)
 - b. From Sinai to Hazeroth (33:16-17)
 - c. From Hazeroth to Kadesh (33:18-36)
 - d. From Kadesh to Moab (33:37-49)
 - 6. The instructions for the conquest and boundaries of the land
 - a. The command to exterminate the Canaanites (33:50-56)

A CLOSER LOOK

- 1.** What were the three things that God told the children of Israel to destroy?

2. Why was it important for the Israelites to follow God's instructions?

3. What types of things might be in our lives that God would like us to destroy? Why?

CONCLUSION

As God gave the Israelites guidelines to follow, He has also given us guidelines in the Bible. If we follow His leading and pay attention to His signs, we will head in the right direction and will not get lost along the way.

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“This is the thing which the LORD doth command concerning the daughters of Zelophehad, saying, Let them marry to whom they think best; only to the family of the tribe of their father shall they marry.” (Numbers 36:6)

Freedom . . . with boundaries. We are all familiar with it. We tell our elementary-age children, “You can fix whatever you want for lunch. Just be sure it’s not only cookies and cake.” We caution our teenagers, “Go and have a fun time, but be careful!” Our employer says, “Work this in when you can—but it needs to be done by the end of next week.”

Moses instructed the daughters of Zelophehad to, “Marry the person you want—within your tribe.” There was a reason for those boundaries. God had given detailed instructions on how the Promised Land was to be allocated. Marriage within the appropriate family would ensure proper inheritances. By reading verse 10, we see that these women obeyed.

God also gives us freedom with boundaries. Some of those boundaries are written in His Word. For example, the Bible tells us that marriage is good, but that a Christian should not marry an unbeliever. Fellowship is beneficial, but not with the scornful. We are to be good stewards of our assets, but not to love money.

Other boundaries are given by the still, small voice of the Spirit to our hearts. We may feel prompted to travel a different route to our destination: go, but don’t go this way. We may sense strongly that God wants us in a specific career, but He may not wish us to apply for a job with a particular company: this occupation, but not here. Perhaps we need to secure a different car, but we don’t feel clear about the one we are considering: buy, but not this one.

Sometimes we know the reasons for God’s boundaries. Other times we do not. Some boundaries are vital to our eternal salvation. Others may be only for our comfort. The important issue isn’t whether or not we understand why God puts the boundaries there. It is our obedience that counts!

Each of us makes choices about obedience every day. Are we tuned in to the Spirit and then following God’s instructions? Will we be obedient today?

BACKGROUND

God knew exactly what land He wanted to give the Children of Israel, and He gave Moses the details. Since survey crews were not readily available in those

days, the landmarks were cities and geographical features. The area God promised was large, showing His generosity. However, the Children of Israel never did possess all of it, except for perhaps a short time during the reigns of David and Solomon.

The particular land areas were given to the tribes and families as an inheritance—God’s gift to them. These were determined by lot, and appointed individuals supervised the process.

The Levites were Israel’s ministers. They were given cities scattered throughout the land so everyone could be touched by their religious influence. Also, they received land for their flocks and herds.

Six of the Levites’ cities were designated as cities of refuge. Israel did not have a police system, so a victim’s family punished a murderer. A man who had killed someone could run to a city of refuge. The elders there heard his case and also heard the witnesses. If he was found guilty of murder, he was put to death. If the killing was accidental, he stayed in the city of refuge until the death of the current high priest, and then he could return home. He was protected only as long as he stayed in the city.

Punishment for murder was sure and severe, for the shedding of innocent blood would pollute the land. Numbers 35:34 says that God himself dwelt among the Children of Israel; therefore He did not want it defiled.

Since it was evident that God was concerned about the inheritance of each tribe, the problem put forth in chapter 36 was a valid one. If these women married men from other tribes, their inheritance would pass to the tribe into which they married. Moses took the problem to the Lord, and the Lord gave an answer. These women complied with the answer.

Covering thirty-nine years, Numbers ends with the Children of Israel on the edge of the Jordan River with the Promised Land in view. God’s instructions were in place. It was time to possess the land.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

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- III. Events on the plain of Moab
 - B. The preparation for entering Canaan
 - 6. The instructions for the conquest and boundaries of the land
 - b. The boundaries of the land (34:1-12)
 - c. The men to apportion the land (34:13-29)
 - 7. The instructions concerning Levitical and refugee cities (35:1-34)

- ### C. Conclusion (36:13)

1. How was a decision made about the number of cities each tribe should give to the Levites?

[illegible][illegible]



Overview for Deuteronomy

Author: Commonly accepted to be Moses, except for the last chapter, which was probably written after Moses' death

Time Period Covered: 37 days in 1451 B.C.

Date Written: About 1407 B.C. – 1406 B.C.

Setting: East side of Jordan; in view of the land of Canaan

Prominent Characters: Moses, Joshua

Objective: To remind the Children of Israel of God's blessings and encourage them to recommit their lives to Him

Key Verse: "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live." – Deuteronomy 30:19

Comments: Deuteronomy, taken from the Greek word that means, "second giving of the law," is a book of remembrances, written for the Children of Israel to help them realize that they were following a mighty, living God. This fifth and final book of the five that are called the Pentateuch is primarily sermon in character; it contains the record of three public addresses Moses made to the people in the eleventh month of the fortieth year of their wanderings. The Book of Deuteronomy ties the five books together by building upon what grows out of the previous books.

The book opens with Moses preparing the sons and daughters of the older generation to possess the Promised Land. This group of individuals was not of age when the Law was first handed down at Mount Sinai. Because of unbelief and their refusal to obey, the older generation wandered for nearly thirty-nine years and died in the wilderness without entering the

Land of Promise. As Deuteronomy begins, the younger generation was poised on the east side of the Jordan River, which separated them from their westward conquest.

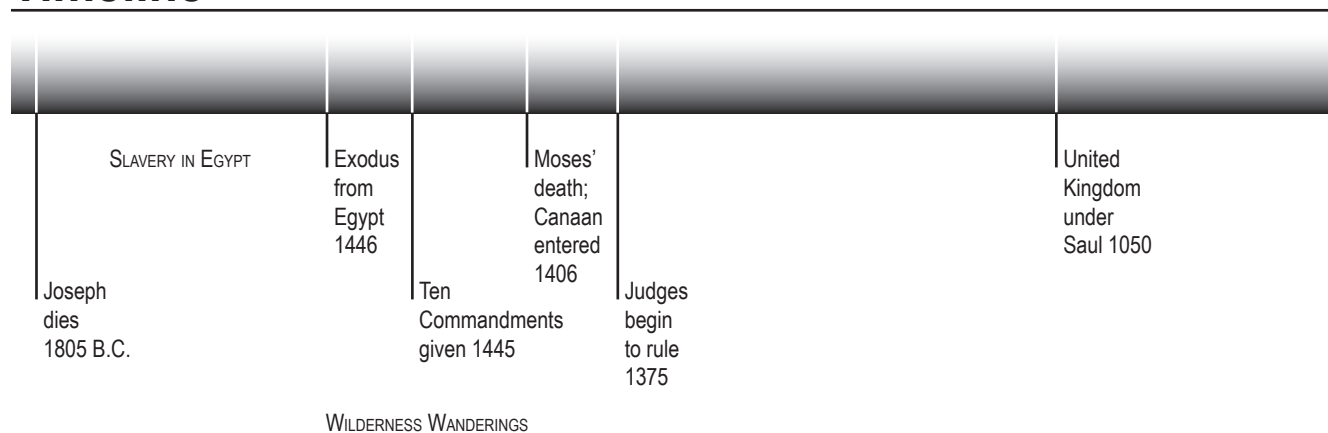
Moses reminded the people of the many mighty miracles God had performed on their behalf, and reviewed the Law given to them by God. He also restated the covenant that God had made with His chosen people, and reiterated many of the circumstances through which God had taken them, exhorting them to rededicate their lives to God. He orated and explained the law as it was originally given, omitting details such as the priests' service, laws of sacrifice, and the building of the house of God. Since these were Moses' last instructions prior to climbing Mount Nebo to view the Promised Land before his death, his words expressed his life's purpose.

Reading through this book, several lessons become clear. Because of what God had done, the Children of Israel should have had hope and willingly followed Him; because of what God expected, the people should have listened and obeyed; because of who God was, they should have loved Him completely. Only when they learned those lessons would they be prepared to possess the Promised Land.

The book concludes with the change of leadership. Moses had led the people for forty years, but because of his disobedience (Numbers 20:12) he would not enter the Promised Land. Just before Moses died, he climbed Mount Nebo to Pisgah; from that mountain peak, he was allowed to see the beautiful land God had promised His people.

We can learn many of life's lessons from the study of Deuteronomy. Remember how God has shown His love and care in your life. Rehearse these accounts and tell them to your children in hopes that they, too, will have hope and confidence in a God who has the future under control.

Timeline



Outline

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A complete amplified outline of this book is available on our website at www.apostolicfaith.org.*

- I. The first discourse: Historical review (1:1 —4:43)
 - A. Introduction (1:1-4)
 - B. The wilderness sojourn (1:5 —3:29)
 - C. An exhortation to obedience (4:1-40)
 - D. The selection of the cities of refuge (4:41-43)
- II. The second discourse: exposition of the Law (4:44 —26:19)
 - A. Introduction (4:44-49)
 - B. The exposition of the Decalogue (5:1 —11:32)
 - C. The exposition of the principle laws of Israel (12:1 —26:19)
- III. The third discourse: ratification of the covenant (27:1 —30:20)
 - A. The establishment of the Law (27:1-26)
 - B. The responsibility of keeping the Law (28:1-68)
 - C. The renewal of the covenant (29:1 —30:20)
- IV. Historical appendices (31:1 —34:12)
 - A. The final injunctions of Moses (31:1-29)
 - B. The song of Moses (31:30 —32:47)
 - C. The sight of the land by Moses (32:48-52)
 - D. The blessing of Israel by Moses (33:1-29)
 - E. The death of Moses (34:1-12)



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“Behold, I have set the land before you: go in and possess the land which the LORD swore unto your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give unto them and to their seed after them.”

(Deuteronomy 1:8)

After living in the same community for over thirty years, my family moved to a different state. There were many new things for us to experience. We had a different house, different schools, a different church, and even different weather. Not knowing how long we would live in the area, we decided to “see what there was to see” while we had the opportunity.

Even before we were completely settled, we began to ask questions concerning geography, events, activities, and special sites we should investigate. Soon, our family began to experience wonderful things. We visited enormous trees, walked on pristine ocean beaches, beheld the view from mountain peaks, ate delightful foods, and encountered many other exciting wonders simply because we took advantage of the opportunities available to us in the new area.

Since then, our family has moved a number of times. In each location we have purposed to see what there is to see while we have the opportunity. We have had rich experiences, and yet, a question always comes to mind: Why do those who live here take these wonderful things for granted? How could one live in Paris, France, and not experience the view from atop the Eiffel Tower? How could one live in upstate New York, USA, or southern Ontario, Canada, and not visit Niagara Falls? How could a beautiful Caribbean beach seem ordinary?

Today’s text reminds us of Israel’s failure to take advantage of the wonderful opportunity to possess the Promised Land. God’s promise to us is for a life fulfilled by a relationship with Him. This opportunity is offered to each of us, yet, it seems, it can be much too easy to ignore, neglect, or even refuse to recognize and take advantage of on a daily basis. To know Him and to live in His perfect plan for our lives is the greatest opportunity that will ever come our way. Take time to listen for His voice.

BACKGROUND

The Book of Deuteronomy is a series of sermons or addresses given by Moses to the Israelites just prior to his death and their possession of the Promised Land. This is the generation whose parents had died

as punishment for their refusal to obey the instructions of the Lord concerning possession of the same land. It is this generation that would be led by Joshua across Jordan and on to defeat Jericho.

Israel had made a covenant with God on Mount Sinai (Horeb) (see Exodus chapters 19 through 24). The beginning of the covenant concerning the possession of this land was with Abram and is recorded in Genesis 12:7. Moses reminds this generation of the surety of the initial covenant with Abraham as the binding nature of the covenant established with them on Sinai. Exodus and Leviticus focus on God giving the Law to Moses. Deuteronomy tends to be Moses retelling and reminding the next generation of the covenant nature of the Law and its practical application, particularly as they enter the Promised Land.

This first address by Moses continues through the first 4 chapters of Deuteronomy. Primarily, it is a historical review reminding Israel of God’s blessings to them. In this sermon, Moses encouraged the people to remember God’s many promises to them and be confident that He would be with them in the future as He had been in the past.

It is interesting to note that Deuteronomy is quoted in the New Testament nearly one hundred times. Jesus also quoted more from this book than from any other Old Testament book.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- I. The first discourse: Historical review
 - A. Introduction (1:1-4)
 1. The setting (1:1-2)
 2. The time (1:3-4)
 - B. The wilderness sojourn
 1. From Horeb to Kadesh (1:6-46)
 - a. The instructions to leave Horeb (1:6-8)
 - b. The selection of elders (1:9-18)
 - (1) Their choice (1:9-15)
 - (2) Their duties (1:16-18)
 - c. The events at Kadesh-Barnea (1:19-46)
 - (1) The mission of the spies (1:19-25)
 - (2) The rejection of the people (1:26-33)
 - (3) The wrath of God (1:34-46)
 - (a) Loss of privilege (1:34-40)
 - (b) Cause for defeat (1:41-46)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. Moses reminded Israel that God carried them in the wilderness. What example or simile did he use to illustrate this?

2. Why do you think Moses spoke to the new generation of Israelites about God's instructions to the twelve spies who searched out the Promised Land?

3. What can you do to avoid missing the opportunities God has given you to walk closer to Him today?

[illegible]

CONCLUSION

What promise or opportunity has God given you today? Will you possess it or miss it? Thank God for His promise to you and determine to “see what there is to see” in His kingdom!

NOTES

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“Ye have compassed this mountain long enough: turn you northward.” (Deuteronomy 2:3)

My husband tells of a time when, as a young man on vacation with his family, he and his younger sister left their camping spot and began climbing the sand dunes nearby. He quickly became disoriented; after crossing the tops of a few dunes, he no longer could tell which way he had come. He felt very vulnerable in the vast wasteland. In the sea of sand with no compass in hand, he was doomed to wander until he could come upon something to give him his bearings. He felt nauseous and fearful in the pit of his stomach at being foolishly lost, while his little sister was angrily refusing to follow him any longer. Fortunately, after some time he stumbled upon some other hikers who directed them back to the safety of their camp.

The Children of Israel wandered for forty years. They had lost their forward momentum after doubting that God was able to lead them into their Promised Land. In today’s text, at God’s command, Moses challenged them, “Ye have compassed this mountain long enough: turn you northward.” Finally, it was time to possess their land.

Sometimes we can “wander” in our spiritual walk. Days, months, even years can go by and we make no headway. We might be resisting God’s call to give up a certain thing, or perhaps we may “fail to head northward” because of refusing to do something or go where God is leading. Each time, while kneeling in prayer, this obstacle appears with God’s whisper, “Ye have compassed this mountain long enough: turn you northward.”

God would have us move forward spiritually. It is up to us to take the action that He is showing, and “move northward.”

BACKGROUND

Moses began this exhortation to the younger generation by recounting to them the principal occurrences of the forty years in the desert. All of the preceding generation had died in the wilderness according to God’s command that none of them, except for Joshua and Caleb, would enter into the Promised Land because of their disbelief upon hearing the spies’ report of Canaan. This was the first of Moses’ “sermons” that make up Deuteronomy; it retold the past, while later ones encouraged the people to prepare for the present, warned of the consequences of disobedience,

and looked to the future as he told this younger generation of God’s great power to lead and deliver them.

In this chapter, Moses recounted how God told him to respect His promises to Esau and Lot and avoid conflict with their descendents. Even though those promises had been given hundreds of years before this time, God had not forgotten them. However, Sihon, king of Heshbon, was to be utterly destroyed. Verse 25 shows a bigger picture of how God intended to use this victory. He not only planned to destroy these Amorites, but He wanted to put fear into the hearts of the other nations that Israel would eventually fight against. The fame of their God-given victories would travel ahead of them.

Verse 7 contains a strong reminder to Israel of God’s faithfulness and power. Through all of their wanderings, they “lacked nothing.” A God who could take such excellent care of them was certainly able to help them win victories in the days ahead.

Some people may wonder why God chose for whole nations to be destroyed. Their religions were extremely wicked. Child sacrifice and prostitution were part of their rituals. Years before, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had walked through these lands, and by their lives had given a testimony of God. These people also knew about Sodom and Gomorrah and the destruction of those cities, indicating they were not without some knowledge of the true God.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- I. The first discourse: Historical review
 - B. The wilderness sojourn
 2. From Kadesh to Moab
 - a. The conduct toward Edom (2:1-8)
 - b. The conduct toward Moab (2:9-15)
 - c. The conduct toward Ammon (2:16-23)
 - d. The conquest of Sihon (Amorites) (2:24-37)
 - (1) The command from God (2:24-25)
 - (2) The obstinance of Sihon (2:26-31)
 - (3) The defeat of Sihon (2:32-37)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. What river were the Children of Israel told to pass over on their way to beginning to possess the land?

[illegible]

Could there be a situation or problem in your life that condemns you to wander in a spiritual desert? Yield to the Savior and do what He asks you to do. You will be “headed north” and coming into your “promised land” of blessings and answers to prayer.

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“Then we turned, and went up the way to Bashan: and Og the king of Bashan came out against us, he and all his people, to battle at Edrei. And the LORD said unto me, Fear him not: for I will deliver him, and all his people, and his land, into thy hand; and thou shalt do unto him as thou didst unto Sihon king of the Amorites, which dwelt at Heshbon.” (Deuteronomy 3:1-2)

Have you ever had a task that seemed impossible? A few years back, my brother-in-law built a house and did some tile work in it. Then he put a little advertisement in the yellow pages of the telephone book: “Ben’s Tile Work.” The first job he received was for a five-story hotel building downtown. It had two hundred rooms! After the first day, I went down there to check on him, and he was overwhelmed. The job had not gone well that day, and he was discouraged. Successfully completing that job seemed unlikely. However, we enlisted some friends to help, and pretty soon he had a system going. It took some time, but room by room and floor by floor, he completed the job.

In today’s passage, the Children of Israel faced something that, no doubt, seemed an impossible task. They had advanced to the Jordan River and ahead of them was the well-trained army of Og, the powerful Amorite king of Bashan. This king had conquered the northern half of Gilead and all of Bashan. By any military standards, the Israelites hardly stood a chance. However, God encouraged them not to fear this mighty king, because they would defeat Og just as they had defeated Sihon earlier—and they did! They won the battle because God fought for them.

What kind of problem or impossible situation are you facing today? When God says, “Fear not,” we can have confidence, because He fights on our side. No matter how insurmountable the obstacle may seem, remember that God is sovereign, and He will keep His promises. Furthermore, conquering in an “impossible” situation will help us grow spiritually. The victory over Og opened fertile and beautiful pasturelands to the Israelites, including Hermon and Gilead. When we triumph in the Lord, new vistas of opportunities and expanded usability in God’s service will be ours!

BACKGROUND

In Deuteronomy 1, God speaks through Moses saying, “Ye have dwelt long enough in this mount.” Chapter 2 of this book of remembrances begins with:

“Then we turned, and took our journey into the wilderness . . .” After leaving the mount, and going through the wilderness, the Children of Israel conquered Sihon, king of Heshbon, and destroyed all of his cities and his people.

Today’s text begins, “Then we turned, and went the way up to Bashan . . .” where the Israelites faced the giant king named Og and his army. These wicked neighbors of God’s chosen people were without excuse. They had heard of the power that the God of Israel possessed and how He fought for them, but they continued to sacrifice their children to false gods and include promiscuity in their worship. If they had not been exterminated, Israel would have likely been tempted to sin and more souls would have been lost.

The word *Bashan* means “soft and level.” Archaeological finds have proven the existence of strong, fortified cities in that territory, verifying Moses’ words in verse 5 about cities with “high walls, gates, and bars.”

This passage records the commission of Joshua to take Moses’ place. The commission came from God; He appointed the man who would succeed Moses as leader of the people. Moses challenged his successor to vigilance; Joshua was reminded of the victories he had seen and was encouraged by God’s promise to help him win every battle.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- I. The first discourse: Historical review
 - B. The wilderness sojourn
 2. From Kadesh to Moab
 - e. The conquest of Og (Bashan) (3:1-11)
 - f. The settlement of Transjordan (3:12-20)
 - g. The commission of Joshua (3:21-29)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. How many cities did the Lord deliver into the hands of the Children of Israel?

2. How do you think Moses was feeling as he spoke the words recorded in verses 23-27?

3. What steps can you take to possess the spiritual “territory” that God has promised?

CONCLUSION

Our leader today is not Moses, but Jesus Christ. Let us remember that whatever we face, the battle is the Lord’s. We can complete our earthly assignment through His power and strength.

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of the LORD your God, which he made with you, and make you a graven image, or the likeness of any thing, which the LORD thy God hath forbidden thee. For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God.”
(Deuteronomy 4:23-24)

Have you ever thought the word *jealous* could have a positive connotation? Consider one of its meanings: “very watchful in guarding.” I used to think that being jealous was always a bad thing—until after I was engaged to my husband. Earlier in our relationship, he had studied in Paraguay, South America. While there, he did not hesitate to tell everyone he met about me, so his acquaintances in that country knew about me although we had never met. Since we were not engaged at that time, he could not tell them for sure that he was going to marry me.

We became engaged following his return. Not long afterward, he received a letter from a woman he had met in Paraguay, telling him not to marry me because she wanted him to come back there single. When my fiancé showed me the letter, I firmly told him not to correspond with her anymore. My fiancé jokingly said, “You’re jealous, aren’t you?” Without mincing words, I said, “Yes, I am.” He was shocked at my response because he assumed I would try to explain my reaction without openly admitting to jealousy. He said, “Wow! You are not even ashamed of it!” I responded, “Of course, I am not ashamed of it. Do you want to marry a woman who does not care about you?”

The jealousy that is defined as being watchful in guarding is actually a good thing. I reacted jealously towards a situation that I knew could entrap my fiancé. I loved him enough to guard against anything hurting our relationship, which he knew God had led him into.

Because God loves and cares for us, He is jealous when we engage in or even seem to be “flirting” with sin and the devil. He knows the consequences of our damaging our relationship with Him, so He warns us continually, as He did the Children of Israel. He is jealous precisely because of His love and compassion for us. He does not want us to be destroyed by the enemy of our souls who is constantly trying to lure us away from Him.

Does God seem to be jealously guarding His relationship with you by admonishing you through His Word, His people, and His Holy Spirit? Pay attention to these warnings. They will do your soul a lot of good.

BACKGROUND

In the previous chapters of Deuteronomy, Moses rehearsed the many victories that God had accomplished for Israel in its brief history. In chapter 4, he began a long review of the commandments of God, for without obedience to God, continued victory is impossible.

Moses introduced this review of God’s Law by reminding Israel of the urgent necessity of keeping God’s commandments after his passing. All that Moses said can be summarized in these points:

- Those who keep God’s commandments shall live and prosper.
- Those who fail to keep the commandments will be destroyed.
- Israel was more privileged than any nation because God himself was their ruler.
- They were to teach God’s commandments to their children and grandchildren.
- All of their greatness as a nation would be directly related to their closeness to God and His Law.

Israel’s need to obey God was made especially poignant by Moses’ account of his own experience. He reminded them of the time that their murmuring pushed him to strike the rock of Marah and thus disobey the Lord’s instruction. As a result, Moses was judged by God for disobedience and not allowed to enter the Promised Land, while the people of Israel would themselves be allowed to enter. How much they would lose if they disobeyed God’s commandments! It was deeply important to Moses that his people not squander the privilege that he himself would never enjoy.

In the midst of all these dire warnings, there was also a wonderful message of mercy. Moses told the people that even if the Israelites were to betray God and be scattered abroad over the earth, God would have mercy upon them and return them to the Promised Land if they would turn back to God.

In closing, the chapter lists all the victories God had won for Israel, thus reminding the people of the greatness of God and the unique privileges accorded to a nation that was close to Him.

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- 4. What are some practical ways you can teach this heritage to your children and grandchildren?**

CONCLUSION

God demands our total allegiance to Him. He is a jealous God, but we should always remember that His jealousy is a reflection of His love for us.

2. Why did Moses remind the Israelites that they never saw the likeness of God?

3. What has God done in your life to make you want to keep His Commandments?

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And Moses called all Israel, and said unto them, Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them, and keep, and do them.” (Deuteronomy 5:1)

To “hear” means much more than to simply be aware of an auditory sound. How many times children hear their parents’ voices but simply ignore them, either because they are preoccupied or merely not interested in what is being said!

Growing up, I was a voracious reader. If I had a good book in my hands, the world often went by me completely unnoticed. Many times, my mother would call me to some task or even to dinner and wonder why she got no response since she knew I was just in the next room and clearly within range of her call. It was not that I was purposefully ignoring her voice. The truth was, the plot I was delving into had me so absorbed that I did not respond. I may have been vaguely aware of the sound of her voice, but it did not make enough of an impression to motivate any action on my part.

In today’s text, Moses began his address to the Children of Israel by calling all Israel to “hear” God’s covenant, but the implication was far more than just an admonition to be aware that someone was speaking. He was imploring his listeners to carefully note what was being said and then to follow through in obedience.

How important it is that we carefully attend to and follow the requirements of God! As believers, we find our lives and victories in the Word of God. Unless we know what He commands, we cannot obey Him; but if we know His commandments, believe them, and obey them, then His power goes to work in our lives.

God’s Commandments to us are expressions of His love, assurances of His concern for us, invitations to His blessing, opportunities to grow and bring Him glory, and occasions to enjoy His love and fellowship. Let us purpose to have our ears tuned to His Voice, and be ready to follow through on what He tells us.

BACKGROUND

After reviewing the history of Israel’s journey into the land God had promised them, in today’s text, Moses proceeded to recount the Ten Commandments and the other laws that had been given to the Children of Israel at Mount Sinai. Moses urged the people to

obey the Law and reminded them of the consequences of disobedience.

The four key words of Deuteronomy are part of this address, which is the longest in Deuteronomy. These words are *hear*, *learn*, *keep*, and *do*. Moses began his dissertation by calling Israel to hear God’s covenant. The verb “to hear” is used nearly one hundred times in the book of Deuteronomy. In fact, the traditional Jewish confession of faith is called “The Shema,” from the Hebrew words which mean “to hear, to pay attention, to understand, to obey.” True hearing means that the hearer must pay close attention, understand the message, and then obey the directions.

Scholars have identified a similarity in the treaties between nations in the ancient near East and in God’s covenants recorded in the Old Testament. Treaties were made between a sovereign and his servant, and included: a preamble, a historical prologue, stipulations, witnesses, and a conclusion giving curses and blessings. The Book of Deuteronomy follows this general pattern, and chapter 5 also reflects the first part of this form. The preamble is found in verse 1, the historical prologue in verses 2-5, and the stipulations in verses 6-21.

When God made this covenant, it included every following generation of the nation of Israel, not just those who were gathered that day at Mount Sinai. Most of the people who had been present at that occasion had died in the wilderness, but the covenant of God stood fast.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

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- II. The second discourse: exposition of the Law
 - B. The exposition of the Decalogue
 - 1. The reiteration of the Ten Commandments (5:1-21)
 - 2. The explanation and application of the Decalogue
 - a. The events at Sinai reviewed (5:22-33)
 - b. The exhortation to obey the Law (6:1-3)
 - c. The explanation of the first commandment (6:4-25)
 - (1) The exposition (6:4-10)
 - (2) The ramifications (6:11-25)
 - (a) Concerning themselves (6:11-19)
 - (b) Concerning their sons (6:20-25)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. Who made the covenant to which Moses referred in this address? With whom was the covenant made?

2. What does God's statement, recorded in verses 28 and 29 of Deuteronomy 5, say about His feelings for the Children of Israel?

[illegible]

3. What kind of expectations do you feel God has for your life? How can you best fulfill those expectations?

[illegible]

CONCLUSION

Forced religious exercises and rule-keeping are not what God desires from us. When our hearts and lives are completely dedicated to Him in a love relationship, obedience to Him will be a natural result.

NOTES

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“All the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live, and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the LORD sware unto your fathers.”
(Deuteronomy 8:1)

One afternoon, our eighth grade home economics class was divided into groups of four and instructed to follow a recipe. No problem, I thought—until we started. One of us wrote down the recipe, one gathered ingredients, etc. We all had a job to do.

All was going well until we glanced around the room at the other teams. We noticed a difference in our mixture from everyone else's. While other teams were gently stirring their liquid mixture of what would be cornbread, we were laboring over masses of firm dough. Quickly we checked back and compared notes and discovered that instead of $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of flour, we had added 3 and $\frac{3}{4}$ cups. Our instructor had mercy on us and helped us try and make biscuits out of the mess, but once cooked they became hard as rocks.

One carelessly followed measurement rendered all the ingredients useless. We were not required to explain how the recipe worked or why the oven needed to be a certain temperature—we were following a recipe that had already been proven many times. All we needed to do was follow simple instructions.

As Israel was about to enter the Promised Land, they were given instructions. God said He would drive out their enemies, even though those enemies were greater and mightier than they were (7:1). They did not have to figure out how this was possible; God would do it, if they followed His instructions. When they were tempted to be discouraged over the might of these enemies, God instructed them to remember what He had done for them in Egypt. God had proved Himself.

We can look at those who have been successful in the Gospel and know that they paid close attention to every detail of the “recipe” God gave them. Nothing was left out or changed. They simply followed every instruction. May God help us to see that every ingredient He requires of us is adhered to no matter how insignificant it may seem. Then we too will find ourselves successful in the Gospel.

BACKGROUND

The Israelites had finished their wanderings in the wilderness, and were on the eve of entering into the

Promised Land. They had obeyed what God required, and with anticipation, they looked forward to what was ahead of them. Moses rehearsed the Law before them (*Deuteronomy* means “second law”) and gave instruction regarding this new land they were about to claim.

Over and over in these two chapters, God promised to be with them and do wonders for them. In order to save Israel from idolatry and keep it pure, marriages with these other nations were forbidden. These nations were to be destroyed, and God would do it as He promised. God seemed to desire that Israel would know how important they were to Him, and how much He cared for them. He encouraged them to remember what He had done for them in the wilderness, and to realize how miraculous His care for them really had been. Even though their wanderings were a punishment for their disobedience in not believing the good report of the Promised Land forty years earlier, God showed how they could never have survived if He had not cared for them. He fed them with manna, “their raiment waxed not old, and their feet swelled not,” that they might learn to trust God and follow His Word. He wanted them to understand that He would continue to go before them and care for them, if they would obey Him. What an exciting time was before them, full of promise, blessing, and wonder, as God channeled their hearts and remembrances toward Himself, to the end that their faith would be unwavering on this new adventure.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah's Bible Outlines
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- II. The second discourse: exposition of the Law
 - B. The exposition of the Decalogue
 - 2. The explanation and application of the Decalogue
 - d. The warning toward separation (7:1-11)
 - (1) From the Canaanites (7:1-4)
 - (2) From idolatry (7:5-11)
 - e. The promise of divine assistance (7:12-26)
 - (1) The promise of blessing (7:12-16)
 - (2) The promise of help (7:17-26)
 - f. The warning against forgetfulness of God (8:1-20)
 - (1) The past faithfulness of God (8:1-6)
 - (2) The promised faithfulness of God (8:7-10)

- (3) The peril of forgetting the faithfulness of God (8:11-20)
 - (a) The caution (8:11-18)
 - (b) The consequences (8:19-20)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. List some specific promises God made to Israel if they would follow His commandments.

2. What do you feel Israel learned in the wilderness that caused God to trust them with such a bountiful land?

3. Rehearse a time in your own life when following God's instruction brought a victory to you. What are some of the possible outcomes if you had done things just a little differently than what God had asked of you?

CONCLUSION

The Lord is very specific with us in our personal lives, and gives us instructions that are easy to understand. At times, what He asks of us may sometimes seem of little or no consequence to our spiritual lives, but following instructions always brings blessing.

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“Speak not thou in thine heart, after that the LORD thy God hath cast them out from before thee, saying, For my righteousness the LORD hath brought me in to possess this land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD doth drive them out from before thee.” (Deuteronomy 9:4)

“Please? Please, Daddy? Can I help make the macaroni?” It was a familiar plea our little girl was making, but this day was different. This was the first day our daughter would help me make macaroni for dinner.

She was still very small and very inexperienced in the kitchen, so I was a little wary of letting her cook, but I was willing to make an offer: After I had boiled the pasta and drained it, and added milk and butter, she could pour in the cheese powder to make the cheese sauce. She eagerly accepted the opportunity and poured in the powder. “Now can I stir it?” she asked. “Just a little?” “All right,” I agreed. “Just a little.”

Soon the macaroni was ready, and I had finished cooking the chicken and the vegetables that were also a part of the meal. The table was set; dinner was served. As we enjoyed our meal that evening, our daughter was excited and proud to announce to my wife, “Guess what, Mom? I made the macaroni!”

A little amused, and being a stickler for accuracy in such matters, I asked our little girl, “*You* made the macaroni?”

“Well,” she admitted, “I helped you make it.”

How easy it is for us to do the same thing in our daily walks with Christ! We say, “I earned my degree.” “I landed a new job.” “I found a wonderful spouse.” “I got a great promotion!” Really? *You* made the macaroni? It is God who has provided opportunity for all these things. My daughter could justly take some credit, but can we take any credit for the blessings of God? If we have the wrong attitude, we may even begin to take credit for Christ’s righteousness in our lives and forget that it is by grace that we have opportunity to be saved.

Even if we recognize that our blessings are the result of God’s goodness, we may fool ourselves into thinking that God provides for us because we are His favorite children. This is why Moses told his countrymen that it was not their righteousness that moved God to give them Canaan, but to fulfill His purpose and His plan for the whole world. Likewise, He has

saved us and blessed us, not solely for our own sakes or because we are deserving, but to allow us to fit within a greater plan. With every blessing God gives you, ask Him to show you how to use it for His glory.

BACKGROUND

In previous chapters, Moses rehearsed the Ten Commandments and instructed the people in how to follow them in the new country. In this passage, one theme stands out: the need of the Israelites for grace and mercy.

Moses began by emphasizing that what they were about to do was naturally impossible. Anak was a name given to a race of giants living in Canaan at this time; a foe made up of “nations greater and mightier than thyself,” whom the Children of Israel could never hope to defeat by their own power. Therefore they could not help but know that this achievement would literally be a miracle of God.

Next Moses pointed out that the Israelites had not earned the right to take the Promised Land. God had already called Israel a special, chosen nation. It would have been all too easy for the Israelites to conclude that something about themselves was superior to all other nations and that this was why they were so blessed. God had not given it to them because of any special righteousness on their part; on the contrary, God himself declared them a stubborn, sinful people. Rather, they were God’s instruments of punishment against the Canaanites because of the Canaanites’ wickedness. Thus, their entrance into the Promised Land was an act of God’s grace.

To emphasize this point, Moses told them the account of how they and their forefathers had sinned against God in the wilderness, especially in the making and worshiping of the golden calf. Moses reminded them that they would not be alive, but for the fact that he, Moses, prayed to God for mercy and God granted Israel mercy at Moses’ word. Hence their very lives were an undeserved gift of God’s mercy.

Finally, Moses told the rest of God’s answer to his prayer: not only life for the Israelites, but two new tablets of the Law, a special privilege of service for the tribe of Levi, and a renewed promise to give them the Promised Land.

The Israelites deserved bondage and finally death by God’s wrath for rejecting Him and rebelling against Him. The Israelites received life, health, peace, God’s Law, and the Promised Land for their complete possession. Truly this was an undeserved gift, unmerited favor, and God’s matchless grace.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah's Bible Outlines
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- II. The second discourse: exposition of the Law
 - B. The exposition of the Decalogue
 - 2. The explanation and application of the Decalogue
 - g. The warning against self-righteousness (9:1 — 10:11)
 - (1) The warning (9:1-6)
 - (2) The rehearsal of past failures (9:7-24)
 - (3) The intercession of Moses (9:25-29)
 - (4) The intercession's results (10:1-11)
 - (a) The reiteration of the Law (10:1-5)
 - (b) The privilege of the Levites (10:6-9)
 - (c) The exhortation to possess the land (10:10-11)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. What special privilege was given to the Levites?

2. Why would Moses pray for God to spare the Israelites if they deserved to be punished?

3. What are some areas in your life where you might be prone to take credit? How might you give God the glory for these?

4. How might God expect you to use for others the blessings He has given you?

CONCLUSION

As with the Israelites, we have been blessed beyond our understanding by God's mercy and grace. We must never take credit ourselves for what He has done for us, but acknowledge Him in all our ways, and always recognize our constant dependency on Him for everything.

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, To keep the commandments of the LORD, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?” (Deuteronomy 10:12-13)

Do you remember when you first tried to hit a baseball? In order for the bat to make solid contact with the ball, there were a multitude of things to consider: your stance at the plate, your grip on the bat, the speed and trajectory of the baseball speeding your way, and the mechanics of swinging the bat properly. Perhaps someone gave you the same remarkably helpful advice I was given when I was a young boy standing at home plate: Keep your eye on the ball! That one simple suggestion has helped countless youngsters and uncoordinated adults to successfully hit a baseball. Good baseball players realize that there is no way they can hit the baseball if they can't see it. All the other steps are important, but it is crucial to keep your eye on the ball.

In chapters 10 and 11 of Deuteronomy, Moses gave the Children of Israel many important instructions, and good reasons why they should follow these instructions. In our focus verses, Moses reveals to the Israelites the crucial element in their service to God: they were to love God with all their hearts and souls. In essence, he was saying, “Keep your eye on the ball!” This was the key element.

This principle spans the generations of time. In Matthew 22:37-40, Jesus taught that the greatest Old Testament commandment was to love the Lord with all your heart, soul, and mind. As we strive to live according to God's holy Word, there are many important doctrines to understand, promises to claim, and admonitions to follow. However, we must remember to keep our eyes upon that crucial “ball” — our love for God. If all of our actions are motivated by our love for Him, then every other element in our Christian walks will fall into place.

BACKGROUND

In verses 12-22 of chapter 10, Moses continued his discourse encouraging the Israelites to love and obey God. Verse 12, his summary of what the Lord required of them, is considered by many Bible scholars to be the climax of his exhortation. They were to

fear (reverence) God, walk in His ways, and wholeheartedly love and serve Him.

In chapter 11, Moses compared what would happen in the Promised Land with what had happened in the wilderness: the waters of the Red Sea overwhelmed Pharaoh's army and brought death. In contrast, the Promised Land would be a land flowing with milk and honey that would give provision and life to God's people. In the wilderness, the earth swallowed Dathan and Abiram, but in the Promised Land the land would drink rain from Heaven. Moses reminded the Israelites that their eyes had seen the trials in the wilderness, and then comforted them with the promise that God's eyes would be on them in their new land.

In verses 7-32 of chapter 11, Moses challenged the people to choose between the blessings and cursings of God. They had seen many miracles that demonstrated God's care for them, and they had many promises of God for how He would bless them in the future. However, in order to receive those blessings they had to “observe to do all the statutes and judgments” that God set before them (verse 32).

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

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- II. The second discourse: exposition of the Law
 - B. The exposition of the Decalogue
 - 2. The explanation and application of the Decalogue
 - h. The warning against disobedience (10:12 — 11:32)
 - (1) The admonition to fear and love God (10:12 — 11:7)
 - (2) The reason to fear and love God (11:8-17)
 - (3) The necessity of the instruction of children (11:18-25)
 - (4) The provision of a blessing and a curse (11:26-32)

A CLOSER LOOK

- 1.** What four things did Moses tell the Children of Israel to do in Deuteronomy 10:20?

2. Why do you think emphasis was placed on the instructions given in Deuteronomy 11:18-20?

3. What blessings have you received from God that were dependent upon obedience to Him?

CONCLUSION

Just as God offered the Children of Israel a fundamental choice between blessing and cursing, He offers us a choice. To choose to honor, love, and obey God wholeheartedly will bring us His blessings!

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“Then there shall be a place which the LORD your God shall choose to cause his name to dwell there; thither shall ye bring all that I command you; your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave offering of your hand, and all your choice vows which ye vow unto the LORD.” (Deuteronomy 12:11)

A central theme of this chapter of Deuteronomy is that God wants His people to worship in a place of His choosing. And when individuals listen to God and do what He commands regarding where and how they worship, He promises that it will “go well with thee, and with thy children after thee for ever” (Deuteronomy 12:28). My own family history is proof of this truth.

As a young family man living in Eastern Washington, my grandfather had attended church all his life but had never experienced salvation and had no knowledge that it was possible to live without sinning. In 1924, the Lord showed him that the experience described in 2 Corinthians 5:17, which says that old things pass away and all things become new, had never happened to him. Grandpa prayed and God saved him.

He continued going to the church where he had been brought up for a couple more years, but no longer felt at home there. Finally, he quit attending and began visiting various churches in a search for a people who preached the whole Word of God and lived it.

In the summer of 1929, Grandpa heard from some former neighbors that they were bringing a group of people from the Apostolic Faith Church to hold services in the area, but they did not have a place to meet. My grandpa offered them a little clearing on his property where benches could be set up for open-air meetings, and they accepted.

After sitting in just a few of those outdoor meetings, my grandfather realized that God was calling him to worship with the people of the Apostolic Faith. Just a few weeks later, he put their farm on the market, auctioned off their livestock and most of their household goods, and moved his family across the state to Port Angeles where they could serve God in the church there. My mother was just seven years old at the time, and she was saved shortly after the family moved. Her brother and sister were saved as well, and the whole family served God in this organization for the remainder of their lives.

Today, I am so grateful my grandparents obeyed God’s guidance to worship in “the place which the LORD thy God shall choose” (verse 18). That act of obedience meant that I had the opportunity of hearing the Gospel from my infancy and I, too, gave my heart to God. Today, several more generations of my grandparents’ descendants have proved that “when thou doest that which is good and right in the sight of the LORD thy God” (verse 28), He blesses in amazing and wonderful ways!

BACKGROUND

In this chapter, Moses explained God’s requirements for proper worship and the necessity for worship to occur at God’s appointed place. Reference is made to “the place which the LORD your God shall choose” six times in this chapter (verses 5, 11, 14, 18, 21, and 26) as well as fifteen other places in the Book of Deuteronomy. This chosen place was to be set apart for pure worship by the removal of every heathen altar and idol. It was there they were to bring their offerings, make sacrifices of thanksgiving, bring their tithes, and rejoice before the Lord.

In the cuneiform literature of the ancient Middle East, the concept of “putting one’s name” (verse 5) was used in several ways. It was used to signify ownership or take possession of something; to describe conquests in which monuments to victory were erected; and was inscribed on foundation stones of places of worship.

Verses 15-28 detail several things the Israelites were to do and not do when they were too far distant from God’s central place of worship to go there. Instructions were given regarding the slaying of animals and the treatment of the blood of these animals, as the blood represented life, which is sacred to God. Obedience to God’s commands is shown to be necessary to receive His blessings.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- II. The second discourse: exposition of the Law
 - C. The exposition of the principle laws of Israel
 - 1. Religious legislation
 - a. Law of a central sanctuary (12:1-32)
 - (1) The destruction of false worship (12:1-4)
 - (2) The centralization of true worship (12:5-14)
 - (3) The character of true worship (12:15-32)

- (a) The avoidance of blood (12:15-28)
- (b) The avoidance of ensnarement (12:29-32)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. Based on verses 2-3, how were the Israelites to prepare the place that God had chosen for a place of worship?

2. Why do you think God told the people in verse 30 to “inquire not” about the gods of their heathen neighbors?

3. Verses 7 and 12 mention rejoicing before the Lord during times of worship. What are some ways we can promote a spirit of joy in our worship services today?

CONCLUSION

God’s blessing will rest upon those who obey and honor Him by worshipping in accordance with His instructions.

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And there shall cleave nought of the cursed thing to thine hand: that the LORD may turn from the fierceness of his anger, and shew thee mercy, and have compassion upon thee, and multiply thee, as he hath sworn unto thy fathers.”
(Deuteronomy 13:17)

I could not sleep. Memories spun through my head, filling my heart with sadness. Anna and I were good friends. We had many things in common—our personalities clicked. We had shared a lot of fun times during the past few years.

In one way, however, we differed. It was a fundamental difference: she was not a Christian. I knew what God was asking me to do. He wanted me to separate myself from Anna, who did not believe in Him. In fact, she frequently insulted Christians in my presence. I could not endure the spiritual battle in this close friendship with Anna. I knew I had to pull away, even if it was hard.

In our text, we read about a law that demanded serious consequences if it was not followed. The Children of Israel had the responsibility of ridding themselves of idols and idol worshipers, even if the worshipers were people extremely close to them—even if they were their own family.

God still requires that we separate ourselves from sin and sinners. The influence of someone who is our intimate friend will likely impact us more than that of a stranger. Just as Anna hindered my faith in God, there may be people—even close friends—from whom we must pull away in order to wholly follow God. Is the pulling away easy? Probably not, and God does not promise that it will be. However, He does promise to be with us, and when we are obedient, we are in a position to receive all the benefits of His promises. God will have compassion on us and He will multiply our blessings!

It is worth any price to do what God commands. Is He asking you to distance yourself from someone? Start your obedience today! You will be glad you did.

BACKGROUND

“Deuteronomy” means “second law.” This law was given by Moses to the Children of Israel after they had wandered in the wilderness for forty years. The earlier generations had heard the Law given to them on Mount Sinai. Now, Moses reiterated the Ten Commandments and the Law of God.

The essence of these chapters is purity in worship. Chapter 13 emphasizes the importance of the One worshiped. Israel was to follow the one true God, and Him only. Regardless of popular opinion, Israel was to walk after the Lord, “and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice . . .” They were instructed to reject even the family members who enticed them to turn to idols.

Chapter 14 concentrates on the purity of the worshiper. God demanded Israel to abstain from unclean and unholy meat. In this way, Israel set itself apart from the Gentiles. God instructed them to avoid pagan mourning rites, unclean foods, and pagan rituals.

God expected the Israelites to follow His leading to a separate, holy place to sacrifice to Him. His emphasis was that the Children of Israel should be holy and unblemished before Him.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

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- II. The second discourse: exposition of the Law
 - C. The exposition of the principle laws of Israel
 - 1. Religious legislation
 - b. The laws against idolatry (13:1-18)
 - (1) Conduct toward a false prophet (13:1-5)
 - (2) Conduct toward seducers to idolatry (13:6-11)
 - (3) Conduct toward an apostate city (13:12-18)
 - c. The laws concerning personal holiness
 - (1) The law against disfigurement (14:1-2)
 - (2) The laws concerning dietary restrictions (14:3-21)
 - (a) Certain species of animals (14:3-8)
 - (b) Certain water creatures (14:9-10)
 - (c) Certain fowl (14:11-20)
 - (d) Any animal that dies of itself (14:21)
 - (3) The laws concerning the tithes (14:22-29)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. If the Children of Israel heard of a group of people serving idols, what were they instructed to do before they destroyed them?

2. Do you think Israel had more frequent problems with false prophets or with close family and friends who enticed them to idol worship? Why?

[illegible]

3. In what ways might close friends and family either encourage or discourage you today? What should you do about it?

CONCLUSION

Let us be alert to the company we keep and determine to hold God first in our lives, and choose our friends wisely.

NOTES

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins or other markings on the paper.



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“Thou shalt therefore sacrifice the passover unto the LORD thy God, of the flock and the herd, in the place which the LORD shall choose to place his name there. Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it; seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith, even the bread of affliction; for thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste: that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life.” (Deuteronomy 16:2-3)

The Fourth of July — Independence Day in the United States! What exciting thoughts those words bring to our minds. The parades, picnics, fireworks, and patriotic music thrill us. Hearing or singing our national anthem stirs our hearts. We are thankful to our forefathers who fought for and won our independence and our freedoms.

Perhaps our thanksgiving is even more personal. Many of us have heard our fathers or grandfathers recount “war stories” — accounts of their military experiences. My father told of lying deathly sick in a ripped tent during a typhoon in Japan. In the midst of the driving rain, God gave him a promise, and brought him through. These stories may be some of our favorite family traditions, and they remind us that our freedom came at a price.

Passover was “Independence Day” for the nation of Israel, and its commemoration was steeped in tradition. On that night, God had miraculously freed them from slavery and shown His power over the Egyptian armies and gods. The Passover was to be a time of rejoicing and remembering. The purpose of the traditions was to remind the Children of Israel and their future posterity that freedom came at a price.

Each Christian has a spiritual independence day. Jesus died so that we could have freedom from sin. The day we find forgiveness for our sins is truly our personal independence day. He gives us life, liberty, and true happiness with the promise of eternal life. However, our spiritual freedom also came at a price — a price that Jesus paid when He shed His Blood at Calvary.

There is value in remembering — remembering family stories, remembering those who sacrificed for our freedoms, remembering Jesus’ death. Remind yourself today of the time when God gave you independence, and rejoice in His liberating power.

BACKGROUND

God never overlooks a detail, and He is mindful of the financial situation of every person. He gave instructions to the Israelites that would benefit the people, especially the poor. The seventh year was one of “release.” God, knowing mankind’s tendencies, cautioned the Israelites not to be hard-hearted when they knew the seventh year was approaching. They were to help the needy even if they knew that soon it would be the time of release. While it might have appeared that these instructions were designed for the poor, the rich also were sure to be blessed when they followed God’s commands.

An Israelite who was unable to pay a debt could be indentured for six years in place of payment. His discharge did not necessarily coincide with the year of release, for the six years were served consecutively. The master was told to send the servant out with generous provisions — enough to keep him until he could reestablish himself. This was a reminder that they had been slaves in Egypt, and when God had delivered them, they left with many gifts. If the servant wished to stay in the master’s household, that could be arranged, and the servant signified it by having his ear pierced with an awl.

Three times a year, the Israelite men were to appear before God, in the place He would choose, for specific feasts. The Passover Feast was the beginning of their religious year, and celebrated their release from Egypt. This feast is still celebrated in Jewish homes. The youngest child will ask the father, “Why is this night different from all the rest?” As God instructed, the parents will then carefully explain all that happened on the night of deliverance from Egyptian bondage.

Fifty days (seven weeks) after Passover came the Feast of Pentecost, and this celebration included all of the Children of Israel. It was a time of sharing and rejoicing. The Feast of Tabernacles was celebrated for seven days at the end of harvest, and again everyone was included.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

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- II. The second discourse: exposition of the Law
 - C. The exposition of the principle laws of Israel
 - 1. Religious legislation
 - c. The laws concerning personal holiness
 - (4) The laws providing for the poor (15:1-23)

- 3.** What principles, illustrated by Israel's treatment of servants and the poor, would apply to you today?

A CLOSER LOOK

1. What kind of bread did the Israelites eat during the celebration of Passover?

2. Why do you suppose the Lord required these three feasts each year?

CONCLUSION

What does God see when He looks at the doorposts of your heart? Does He see a person who goes to church regularly or a charitable person who gives money for missions or to help feed the poor? God is looking for more than just deeds. The old Gospel hymn says, “What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the Blood of Jesus. What can make me whole again? Nothing but the Blood of Jesus.”

NOTES

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee, throughout thy tribes: and they shall judge the people with just judgment.” (Deuteronomy 16:18)

A few years ago, my husband and I visited our nation’s capital for a mini-vacation. We had been there once before, but only passing through. This time, we toured the city and visited numerous sights of interest. Although my husband is not originally from the United States, he was moved, as was I, by what we saw and read while touring various monuments.

We were impressed that the laws of this country were founded on a desire for truth and justice. The founding fathers of this country were interested in “justice for all”—for people of all backgrounds and origins. Many of the individuals who have been honored with monuments were willing to give their lives for that principle. Inscriptions on great walls told of their commitment to a system of government where the citizens could trust those in positions of authority.

These important principles are similar to those that God gave to the Children of Israel as they were taking over the Promised Land. He instructed them to appoint spiritual leaders who would guide the tribes with justice and God’s wisdom.

How does this apply to us today? We have a responsibility to vote for and make an effort to appoint leaders who follow the guidelines that God said are important. When it comes time to vote for officials, we should not just assume that our vote does not count. We should cast a vote that supports that which is good and just and pleasing in God’s sight. Above all, we should pray for our leaders.

BACKGROUND

God wanted Israel to have a structure of godly leadership, and He gave them instructions on how to accomplish that in their local areas. Looking ahead, He even gave instructions for the time when they would have a king. This was not because God wanted them to have a king, but because He knew the future; He knew they would one day seek a king. Therefore, God laid out guidelines for choosing a king and also for the king’s conduct after his coronation.

The Levites and priests had both civic and religious responsibilities among the people. The religious duties were similar to responsibilities that our

ministers have today—teaching the Children of Israel about God, living a life of example, taking care of the physical Temple and employees, and distributing offerings. Their civic responsibilities came when matters developed that were too difficult for the regional leadership to settle.

God wanted Israel to worship only Him. He set in place strong punishment—death by stoning—for those who were proven guilty of worshiping other gods. He strictly forbade the types of worship practiced by the heathen nations dwelling near the Children of Israel. These included the ritual of sacrificing children and of witchcraft. Sorcerers (observers of times), witches, mediums (consulters with familiar spirits), or those who called up the dead (necromancers) were not to be found among the Israelite people. God abhorred the occult then, and He continues to abhor it today.

In chapter 18, verse 15, through Moses, God gave a profound prophecy that pointed ahead to Jesus Christ. This verse, and the companion words in verses 18 and 19, are referenced in the New Testament in Acts 3:22-23 and Acts 7:37. Moses (through God’s power) delivered the Children of Israel from Egypt, and interceded before God for them when they sinned. Jesus Christ would one day die to deliver all people from sin, and then He would ascend to God to intercede for mankind before God the Father.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

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- II. The second discourse: exposition of the Law
 - C. The exposition of the principle laws of Israel
 - 2. Civil legislation
 - a. Laws concerning the government of the land (16:18—17:20)
 - (1) Laws concerning the appointment of judges (16:18—17:7)
 - (a) Their appointment (16:18)
 - (b) Their conduct (16:19—17:7)
 - (2) Laws concerning an appeals court (17:8-13)
 - (3) Laws concerning the appointment of a king (17:14-20)
 - (a) His appointment (17:14-15)
 - (b) His conduct (17:16-20)

- b. Laws concerning the rights of priests and the Levites (18:1-22)
 - (1) Laws concerning the rights of priests and Levites (18:1-8)
 - (2) Laws against idolatrous worship (18:9-13)
 - (3) Laws concerning false and true prophets (18:14-22)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. What was the tribe of Levi chosen to do?

2. What did God say would be the Children of Israel's reason for wanting a king? What comparison can you draw between our society today and the Children of Israel in this regard?

3. In what ways can you as a Christian impact our government?

CONCLUSION

God made provisions for the Children of Israel to have a governmental structure that would assist them in dwelling peacefully in future years.

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“As when a man goeth into the wood with his neighbor to hew wood, and his hand fetcheth a stroke with the axe to cut down the tree, and the head slippeth from the helve, and lighteth upon his neighbour, that he die; he shall flee unto one of those cities, and live.” (Deuteronomy 19:5)

Have you ever felt like “fleeing” to a place of refuge? Perhaps life has been a little stressful and you are being pulled in many different directions. Your children require your attention, your spouse is ill, your dog needs to be taken to the vet, and you are facing multiple deadlines on your job. Life is filled with circumstances that stretch our determination and endurance. The daily demands of life can be wearing on our physical bodies and emotionally draining, but God has provided a place where we can go for renewal, release, and refuge.

God has a quiet place, away from the elements that bring us stress, where we can experience the rejuvenating balm of His care and love. In the shadow of His wings, we can find comfort, reassurance, and protection. Besides being a place of shelter, it is a place where we can take our cares to the Lord. It is a secret place where God unfolds His love to us by planting the truth of His promises in our hearts as we delight in His presence.

We may wonder how we can attain such a place of restful comfort. Through Jesus dying on the Cross, God created a clear pathway for us to be able to reach Him through our prayers. Of course, we start by asking Him to come into our hearts and experiencing His saving power. When our sins are forgiven, the weight of sin is gone, and we become new people, with a fresh view of life. Circumstances around us may not have changed, but our perspective has.

When we have been saved, God wants us to maintain a close relationship with Him through prayer. He has many things to teach us and show us. That place of quiet serenity becomes a place of joy where we return again and again for strength for the day, inner peace, protection, and solitude of mind and soul.

BACKGROUND

God commanded the Children of Israel to establish three “cities of refuge,” where anyone who claimed to have accidentally killed someone could find safety until he had a fair trial. If he was found innocent of intentional murder, he could remain in that

city and be safe from those who would seek revenge. The Promised Land was to be divided into three parts, with one city of refuge in the center of each. They were to build proper roads to these cities, and keep them in good repair. If the Lord enlarged their coasts, they were to add three more cities on the other side of Jordan (see also Numbers 35:9-15). Since their practice had been “eye for eye, tooth for tooth,” this was God’s provision to protect the innocent.

God also gave them laws regarding the removal of landmarks, the punishment of false witnesses, war, and sieges. God commanded that they not remove their neighbors’ landmarks to enlarge their own. Since stones or posts marked their property lines, a dishonest person could have easily moved the lines a little at a time and not get caught. However, God warned them against doing that. He also warned them against being false witnesses. The punishment for this was to have the false witness punished as he had wanted done to the other person. For protection, testimonies from two or three witnesses were required to convict a man.

God ordered the priests to encourage the people when they were going to battle. He wanted them to know that He would be on their side and fight for them. The officers were to dismiss those who did not wish to participate because of fear, or for the specific reasons God listed. He also gave them laws on what to do when they approached a city for battle; how to overtake it, and what to do with the spoil. If the inhabitants of a nation outside of Canaan would not surrender, the Children of Israel were to destroy all the males and keep the women, children, and the cattle. However, if they were fighting against a Canaanite city, they were to destroy everything. Nothing was to be preserved.

Though God instructed the Israelites to utterly destroy their enemies, He also taught them to have compassion on those who were too timid to fight. The laws He set in motion were for their protection and showed His infinite wisdom and balance between justice and mercy.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

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- II. The second discourse: exposition of the Law
 - C. The exposition of the principle laws of Israel
 - 2. Civil legislation
 - c. Laws concerning criminal action (19:1-21)
 - (1) Laws concerning the cities of refuge (19:1-13)

- 3. Think of a time when you needed a place of refuge as a Christian. What steps did you take to find it?**

CONCLUSION

Today, God still has laws set in motion for our protection from the enemy of our souls, the devil. Through the Blood of Jesus, His Son, we have access to refuge in times of need. Whether you are having a stressful day, or whether you are surrounded by impossible circumstances, God is in control of your life, and His refuge and comfort is only a prayer away.

A CLOSER LOOK

1. What would disqualify a person from finding safety in one of the cities of refuge?

2. When do you suppose the people of Israel thought about the cities of refuge and their locations?

NOTES

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

**“Thou shalt not see thy brother’s ox or his sheep go astray, and hide thyself from them: thou shalt in any case bring them again unto thy brother.”
(Deuteronomy 22:1)**

It was always funny to receive a phone call letting us know that our pigs were downtown. No, this was not a big city. Downtown consisted of a gas station, restaurant, general store, and a couple other businesses. I worked at a farm supply store just a few blocks off the main road, and we raised pigs on the side. Occasionally, they would find a way under or through the fence, and follow the railroad tracks that led to the main street in town.

Fortunately, it was a close-knit community and our neighbors would help us round them up and guide them back to their pens. If our neighbors had chosen to ignore them or refused to help, the outcome could have been disastrous. The pigs could have endangered themselves and those in vehicles traveling on the main road, or fallen prey to other animals. Assisting someone in need was an expected courtesy in our town.

Even in large cities today, many communities and neighborhoods have organized programs to watch out for one another in order to prevent crime, and to protect children and property. These types of programs help promote friendship among the participants and often make for better neighborhoods.

In Matthew 7:12, the Lord gave us the Golden Rule when He said, “All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.” Just as God expected the Children of Israel to care for one another, He has given His followers today the responsibility of demonstrating His love by helping others in need.

You might never be required to corral somebody’s livestock, but you may be needed to encourage a friend, pray for a co-worker, help a neighbor, tend to an ill person, or assist an elderly person. You will find that the blessing one feels for having done his part in honoring the Lord outweighs the blessing to the person in need.

BACKGROUND

Prior to entering the Promised Land, God gave laws to the Children of Israel, among them certain civil and social laws. In the event of an unsolved murder, procedures were given to deliver the affected community of guilt. The elders took a heifer that had

never been worked into an uncultivated valley. Next to a flowing stream, they cut off its head. This cruel act symbolized the tragedy of the murdered person. The elders then washed their hands over the slain heifer to show the community’s freedom from the guilt and testimony of their innocence.

If an Israelite soldier desired a captive woman, he was permitted to marry her provided certain conditions were met. This protected the captive women and the integrity of the soldiers. One of the conditions called for the woman to mourn for her parents for one full month. This gave the prospective husband the opportunity to re-consider his decision.

Favoritism was an inevitable problem due to polygamous marriages. The eldest son was to be given a “double portion” of the inheritance, regardless of his father’s preference of wives. A rebellious son could be stoned to death if his parents felt unable to bring him under their authority, and this action was validated by the elders of the city. This must have been a powerful deterrent, for no record of this punishment is found in the Bible.

The roof of a house served many purposes. It provided a place for sleeping in the summertime, performing household chores, and entertaining. Because of the danger this created, a protective short wall called a “parapet” was to be built around the outside edge. The homeowner was held liable if an accident occurred and there was no parapet around the roof of his house.

If a man committed adultery with a married woman, both received the death penalty. It is not said by what means this was to be carried out.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- II. The second discourse: exposition of the Law
 - C. The exposition of the principle laws of Israel
 - 2. Civil legislation
 - e. Miscellaneous civil laws (21:1-23)
 - (1) The expiation of an unknown murderer’s crime (21:1-9)
 - (2) Laws concerning the treatment of female captives (21:10-14)
 - (3) Laws concerning the rights of the first born (21:15-17)
 - (4) Laws concerning a rebellious son (21:18-21)
 - (5) Laws concerning the treatment of a criminal’s corpse (21:22-23)

3. Social legislation
 - a. Laws concerning lost property (22:1-4)
 - b. Laws concerning woman's dress (22:5)
 - c. Laws concerning bird-life (22:6-7)
 - d. Laws concerning home safety (22:8)
 - e. Laws concerning common distinctions (22:9-12)
 - f. Laws concerning personal or family morality
 - (1) Concerning sexual sins (22:13-30)
 - (a) The charge of a wife's unchastity (22:13-21)
 - (b) The charge of adultery (22:22)
 - (c) The charge of intercourse with a betrothed virgin (22:23-24)
 - (d) The charge of rape with a betrothed virgin (22:25-27)
 - (e) The charge of rape of a virgin (22:28-29)
 - (f) The charge of intercourse with a father's former wife (22:30)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. Name the three mixtures that the Lord prohibited.

2. Why would the Lord require the death penalty for a son who was found to be rebellious?

3. What obligations do you have to your neighbors?

CONCLUSION

Israel's laws covered a range of topics from the proper handling of a bird's nest to dealing with unsolved murders. This illustrates that God is interested in guiding every aspect of our lives. The blessings of His guidance become a source of blessing to our neighbors as we practice the Golden Rule.

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“For the LORD thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp, to deliver thee, and to give up thine enemies before thee; therefore shall thy camp be holy: that he see no unclean thing in thee, and turn away from thee.” (Deuteronomy 23:14)

Carbon monoxide is a poisonous gas produced by incomplete combustion. It is particularly dangerous because it cannot be seen, smelled, or tasted. When a person inhales excessive amounts of smoke, automobile exhaust, or fumes from poorly ventilated charcoal or gas stoves, carbon monoxide poisoning occurs. The severity of the poisoning depends upon the duration of exposure and the concentration of carbon monoxide in the air. Mild exposure may produce a headache and shortness of breath. Somewhat higher concentrations can cause severe headaches, dizziness, weakness, extreme shortness of breath, and nausea. Greater and/or more prolonged exposure can result in coma, seizures, permanent organ and brain damage, and even death.

Purity of air quality is vital to our physical health. How much more important it is to maintain a spiritually pure environment, allowing no taint of “poison” to contaminate it! In today’s text, it is made clear that purity and holiness were to mark the Lord’s community; the camp of the Lord could have nothing offensive in it. This law of cleanliness teaches us the high value God puts on purity. The filthiness of sin is obnoxious and defiling to God’s people, although, like carbon monoxide, it may be subtle and almost “unnoticeable” at times.

One example of this might be parents who discuss “people problems” and challenges in the presence of their children, unaware that they are slowly poisoning their little ones. The first time the children hear negative attitudes or thoughts expressed, they may forget what was said. The second time, there may still be little impression. However, as negative words continue, there is an accumulative affect, and life long harm to the children’s respect for their church may be the result. Those words may even have a fatal effect on their spirituality.

The first steps in curing carbon monoxide poisoning are the removal of the cause and then the substitution of 100% pure oxygen for the contaminated air. The cure for impure or contaminating influences in the spiritual realm is the immediate removal of those influences, and the substitution of the pure truth and obedience to God’s Word.

How is your environment? Are you guarding against any possible contamination? Ask for God’s help in maintaining the purity that He requires!

BACKGROUND

The laws given to Israel were for the preserving of moral, ethical, and physical purity so that the people could maintain a relationship with a holy God. They were to preserve the purity and honor of the camp by excluding what would be a disgrace to them.

Israel was now encamped and this vast army was ready to enter the Promised Land and settle down as a nation. They were given particular directions for the good of the whole congregation. The charge to them was to be “clean,” and this meant they must take care to keep their camp pure from moral, ceremonial, and natural pollution.

The soldiers were charged to avoid sin when they were encamped away from home. The basic principles were the same as when they were back with their families, because the Lord was with them even on the battlefield. In executing their commission, they were to refrain from malice, covetousness, or uncleanness. They were to keep themselves from idols, or accursed things they found in the camps they plundered. Even those who stayed at home were to keep from every wicked thing, lest by sin they provoke God to withdraw His presence from them.

Instructions for the holiness of the assembly and the camp were dictated by the presence of God in Israel’s midst. The people were taught both to fortify themselves against sin and to encourage themselves against their enemies by trusting in God’s holy presence. The “assembly of the LORD” refers to the people of God gathered in His presence for worship.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- II. The second discourse: exposition of the Law
 - C. The exposition of the principle laws of Israel
 - 3. Social legislation
 - f. Laws concerning personal or family morality
 - (2) Concerning exclusion from the assembly (23:1-8)
 - (a) Those excluded (23:1-6)
 - [1] The eunuch (23:1)
 - [2] The illegitimate (23:2)
 - [3] The Ammonite or Moabite (23:3-6)
 - (b) Those included (23:7-8)

- (3) Concerning the cleanness of the camp (23:9-13)
- (4) Concerning the treatment of runaway slaves (23:14-16)
- (5) Concerning the treatment of prostitutes (23:17-18)
- (6) Concerning interest on loans (23:19-20)
- (7) Concerning vows (23:21-23)
- (8) Concerning a neighbor's fields (23:24-25)
- (9) Concerning remarriage after divorce to the same individual (24:1-4)
- (10) Concerning military exemption of a newly-married (24:5)

g. Laws concerning economic and social injustice

- (1) Concerning a wrong pledge (24:6)
- (2) Concerning kidnapping (24:7)
- (3) Concerning leprosy (24:8-9)
- (4) Concerning pledges from the poor (24:10-13)
- (5) Concerning hired servants (24:14-15)
- (6) Concerning responsibility for criminal action (24:16)
- (7) Concerning justice toward the helpless (24:17-18)
- (8) Concerning care for the helpless (24:19-22)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. What were the Children of Israel instructed to remember about their way of life in Egypt? Why do you think God reminded them of this?

2. Why did the Lord instruct the people to maintain a holy camp?

3. What are some strategies you can employ to prevent spiritual poisoning in your home and in the church?

CONCLUSION

Sinful behavior should never be regarded as a harmless or temporary dabbling in forbidden pleasure. It has consequences! Ask for God's help in maintaining a spiritually pure environment.

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And now, behold, I have brought the firstfruits of the land, which thou, O LORD, hast given me. And thou shalt set it before the LORD thy God, and worship before the LORD thy God.” (Deuteronomy 26:10)

Some of the laws recorded in today’s text concern the subject of giving. I have seen firsthand how the Lord blesses those who help others. The oldest child in our family, my brother Lem, was handicapped from birth. When he was a teenager, the Lord saved him and put a love into his heart that shone out. Nobody had a question about whether or not Lem loved the Lord! When he sat in church, his was the loudest “amen” to be heard—it might not have been very plain, but it was clearly from the heart.

Several years ago, I moved to Woodlake, California, to become pastor of our church there. Lem came to live near us, and I began to understand why Lem had so much joy.

Lem never had much income. In his older years, he received a little check from Social Security and a little money from the government. When I became his pastor, I found out what he was doing with his money. For one thing, he was paying tithes—not just tithes, but double tithes. Then he would come to me and say, “Have you sent the check for Korea yet?” or, “Have you sent my offering for Africa?” An annual youth conference was started in our church in Brooklyn, New York, and Lem was there every time he could make it. After his first trip, he would ask, “Have you sent my contribution to the Brooklyn youth conference yet?” How did he do it on such a little income? I don’t know. Many of us have a hard time giving from our abundance, but Lem had a spirit of giving.

Some young people in our church congregation wanted to play an instrument in the church orchestra but their families could not afford music lessons. Lem came to me and said, “Do you think if I paid for it, they could have lessons?” He did not want them to know who was providing the lessons, but he made sure that those children got them. When one of those young people stood up in Sunday school and played “Jesus Loves Me” on his instrument, Lem was sitting in the back with the biggest smile you ever saw. Lem never played an instrument, but he could help somebody else do so. Why? Because he had a heart of giving; the by-product was joy. Lem was one of the happiest people I have ever known.

Lem was faithful in giving “unto the Levite, and unto the stranger, to the fatherless, and to the widow” (26:13). How is our record in this respect?

BACKGROUND

Laws govern societies that strive to be upright—they are the means by which standards of right and wrong are established and adjudicated. However, the people who influence or enact a nation’s laws may be corrupt, thereby bringing about an unjust law.

In our text, God gave additional social laws to the people of Israel and showed what the true nature of law should be. It is only when law has satisfied the three essential concepts of truth, fact, and righteousness, that justice can be true. Society cannot function rightly without justice; neither can it please God.

Justice was at the heart of this new set of laws that God gave to the Children of Israel. Injustices, whether flagrant or concealed, were sinful before God. Here, God demonstrated to the people that He was interested in “just weight and measures.” He established laws that would eradicate partiality, unfairness, and abuse of power in economic and social life. By giving the laws, God showed the people that everyone was on a level plane before Him; everyone is subject to the same law of righteousness.

The laws recorded in today’s passage dealt specifically with economic and social injustice, and stewardship in giving. It is significant that God himself gave the laws. He did not give man the responsibility of determining the scope of it. In addition, the laws God gave were not developed as a result of lessons learned from past mistakes and infractions, but rather from His principle of holiness.

Oftentimes we refer to the “laws of nature,” which simply means the principle or the way in which the elements work. In a similar way, God has a way or principle. His principle is holiness. It is His holiness that necessitated the giving of His Law.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- II. The second discourse: exposition of the Law
 - C. The exposition of the principle laws of Israel
 - 3. Social legislation
 - g. Laws concerning economic and social injustice
 - (9) Concerning proper judicial punishment (25:1-3)
 - (10) Concerning the care of laboring beasts (25:4)

- #### h. Laws concerning stewardship (26:1-15)
- (1) Concerning thanksgiving and firstfruits (26:1-11)
 - (2) Concerning prayer and special tithes (26:12-15)

1. How many stripes was the maximum that a guilty man could receive as punishment? Why do you suppose that God established a limit?

[illegible]

- [illegible]

Throughout the Bible, people close to God have found that “his commandments are not grievous.” When we obey God’s law from the heart, we find His commandments to be “sweeter than honey and the honeycomb.”

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And thou shalt write upon the stones all the words of this law very plainly.” (Deuteronomy 27:8)

Recently, I had the opportunity to teach a group of people how to extend a greeting in my language, which is Yoruba (a language spoken in Southwest Africa). These people had never spoken a word of Yoruba before. My goal was that, by the time the class was over, they could greet others in this language. If they could not, it would not be because I had not done my part as the teacher.

I started the class by performing the role of two native speakers greeting each other. I wanted them to learn by listening, so I made sure they understood what they were hearing me say. After repeating the greetings three or four times, I wrote the greetings on the board so that they could see the words and learn them visually. Then I repeated what I wrote several times so that they could both hear and see at the same time. Next, I asked them to repeat what they had heard and seen so that they could hear themselves say the greetings as they repeated after me. Then I asked them to write down a dialogue of two people greeting each other, reinforcing what they had learned by having them write greetings on their own. By this time, they had heard, read, spoken, and even written it.

Finally, I paired them up to perform the greetings. This would show me who had learned the phrases and who had not. By this point, none of them could say that he or she did not know my expectations.

Similarly, we have been given every opportunity to learn the instructions God has given us. We can hear His Word, read His Word from the Bible, recite what we have read, and even write it down ourselves. It is now up to us, just as it was for the Children of Israel, to follow every instruction God has given us. Just as the joys of following God’s instructions are real, so are the consequences of not following His instructions. However, like any good teacher who wants his/her student to succeed, God wants you and me to succeed, and the only way to success is to follow all His instructions.

BACKGROUND

This chapter begins the concluding address of Moses in the Book of Deuteronomy. Through Moses’ first and second addresses, Israel had reviewed its heritage and the Law. Then came the final crucial point of instruction: the ratification of the covenant. After

giving one more repeated exhortation to keep the commandments of the Lord, Moses told the people specifically what actions they were to take when they crossed Jordan.

In this chapter, Moses began by emphasizing that “this day thou art become the people of the LORD thy God” (Deuteronomy 27:9). They had become a nation uniquely belonging to God. That high place of privilege and relationship with God brought with it a uniquely great responsibility to obey God and uniquely great disaster in the event of disobedience.

Three main tasks were assigned to the Israelites:

- To write the Law on stones set up at Mount Ebal.
- To build an altar and, on it, present burnt offerings and peace offerings.
- To separate by tribes to two mountains to pronounce blessings and curses.

The blessings and curses were pronounced on two separate mountains. The proclamation from a mountaintop represented the unique high standing of Israel among all nations. As a mountain rises above the land around it, so Israel is lifted above all other people. Yet as a greater height means greater vistas and better protection, it also means greater peril if one falls. To fall from a little height may be nothing; to fall from a mountain is certain and complete destruction. So, too, Israel is thus shown that following God’s commands brings the greatest possible blessing and betraying His commands brings the greatest possible disaster.

The Levites were then to pronounce curses upon those who committed various sins, beginning with the violation of the first of the Ten Commandments, and ending with not confirming the whole Law of God.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- III. The third discourse: ratification of the covenant
 - A. The establishment of the Law (27:1-26)
 - 1. The setting up of the law in the land (27:1-8)
 - 2. The benefit of covenant relationship (27:9-10)
 - 3. The declaration of Israel’s commitment (27:11-26)

A CLOSER LOOK

- 1. What was the name of the mountain of blessing? The mountain of cursing?

2. Why did Moses begin with the list of curses instead of the list of blessings?

3. What are the ways God has provided in the church for learning His Word today? How do you take full advantage of these provisions?

CONCLUSION

God gives us every opportunity to learn His Word so that we can see His plan for our lives fulfilled. His promises are sure, but after we have been born again, we have a duty to maintain His promises in our lives. He provides the grace to follow through. Have you reviewed God's promises to you? How can you be a more active learner of God's Word?

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe *and* to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God.” (Deuteronomy 28:1-2)

I recently signed a loan agreement at my bank to pay for a “late model” car. Reading the entire contract, which was several pages, wasn’t fun. It was important, however, that I did read it, since I would be responsible for all its provisions. We need to understand contracts that we are involved in.

Some contracts are highly complex. However, in their simplest form, they have a few basic parts: obligations of both parties and penalties for default or failure to perform. In the case of my loan, the bank’s obligation was to loan me the agreed upon amount. My obligation is to repay the amount with the prescribed interest, which is their benefit (consideration). Once the bank provided the money, they satisfied their obligation completely; mine extends through the entire term. If I fail to make payments (failed to perform), I am subject to the repercussions (penalty) listed in the contract, which in this case would be repossession, credit problems, etc. If I make all the payments, the car is mine.

In this chapter of Deuteronomy, God’s contract was with the Israelites. Just as with modern contracts, God’s contract stipulated the performance obligations for Him and for the Israelites, and He identified the consideration. The Israelites had to perform in order to realize their benefits; if they did not, they were subject to penalties, which were also spelled out in the contract.

God’s promises can be likened to a contract. In today’s legal world, a contract may be written, verbal, or implied. The validity of a contract is often scrutinized in the court of law. However, God’s contract is of infinitely greater value since His Word is forever “settled in heaven” (Psalm 119:89).

Our part of the “contract” is to believe on His Son, Jesus Christ, and to keep His commandments. Failure to take advantage of God’s provision would subject us to the penalty of sin, which is eternal damnation. Our consideration for performance is eternal life—what a benefit!

BACKGROUND

This chapter delves into the contractual conditions between God and the Israelites. We can categorize the chapter identifying “Covenant Sanctions.” In chapter 28, we find there are two primary parts of the covenant (contract with God). They are as follows:

- Deuteronomy 28:1-14 — The Blessings God Offers (consideration) for the Israelites’ Performance.
- Deuteronomy 28:15-68 — The Curse (penalty) for the Israelites’ Non-performance.

The contractual performance obligation of God is clear. Look how many times the phrase “The LORD shall” appears in the early part of this chapter. The word “shall” provides the contractual hinge to certain performance. If *this* happens, then God *shall* do *that*. It is not an option; it is an absolute. There is contractual certainty. God said He unequivocally would bless the Israelites’ performance.

The portion of the chapter that dealt with curses for their non-performance (which included their being disbursed or scattered) is larger in terms of the number of verses. However, comparing these penalties with all the blessings God offers, there is really not a disparity.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

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- III. The third discourse: ratification of the covenant
 - B. The responsibility of keeping the Law (28:1-68)
 - 1. The blessings for obedience (28:1-14)
 - 2. The curses for disobedience (28:15-68)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. In this chapter, how many performance obligations are listed for God, and how many performance obligations are listed for the Israelites?

2. How many rewards (contractual considerations) are listed in this chapter?

[illegible][illegible]

As with all contracts, we need to know the terms of God's contract and follow them.

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live.” (Deuteronomy 30:19)

The day had finally arrived when it was warm enough to plant flowers outside without fear of frost. I set out eagerly for the garden center, intent on purchasing the young plants that would transform the winter-weary flowerbeds surrounding my home into an oasis of spring. I circled the displays of plants that were offered for sale, searching for those that looked healthy. I hoped that some of them would already be in bloom, so that the addition of color in my yard would come that much sooner. As I carefully inspected each tray of plants, some were rejected because they had broken stems or were dry and shriveled-looking. My attention was attracted to those that were lush and full, with a promise of life and quick growth. Finally, satisfied that I had selected the best that were available, I headed to the cashier so that I could pay for my assortment and head home to get started with my project.

Just as we are inevitably drawn to the healthiest plants at the garden center, the freshest vegetables at the supermarket, or the newest car that has no dents or scratches, God has instructed us to “choose life” in our Christian walks. In the same way that I chose the best plants that day at the garden center, Moses was encouraging the children of Israel to choose the best—to love God and obey His voice, so that they would receive the blessings He had prepared for them.

As anyone who is a parent can testify, young children respond well to the concept of actions and consequences. When my children were small and I needed to take them with me when I went shopping or ran errands, I would tell them where we were going, how long I thought we would be gone, and the type of behavior I expected from them. Then I would promise them that if they were cooperative and obedient, they would be allowed to select a small treat before we returned home. I also let them know that if they did not cooperate, there would be consequences when we returned home! No matter how often we went through this routine, it seemed like the only time we would have significant problems with behavior was when I forgot to remind them of our agreement.

As Moses detailed the consequences (or curses) that would befall the Children of Israel as a result of

sinful, rebellious behavior, he also told them that God would receive them when they were ready to return to Him. Finally, just as an exasperated parent might tell a child to make up his mind whether or not to behave, God let the Children of Israel know that they had two definite choices—they could choose life and good, or death and evil.

Today, God gives us the same choice. He does not leave us without hope, but calls us to make a conscious decision to choose life by fully yielding ourselves to Him.

BACKGROUND

Since there was no written law for the common people, repetition was a very important part of the instructional process for the Children of Israel. God had delivered them from Egypt and entered into a covenant with them forty years earlier at Mount Sinai. In the previous chapters of Deuteronomy, we read where Moses outlined the tangible blessings they would receive if they were faithful to the covenant, and he explained the confusion and frustration that would result from their disobedience. In chapters 29 and 30, he once again explained the consequences of sinful disobedience and the rewards of loving submission to God’s will.

The final remarks in Moses’ farewell address used common sense reasoning to point out the choice of man and the promise of God. One of the key words of this chapter is “heart.” God promised that He would re-gather Israel and restore their nation if they turned from their sins and returned unto the Lord. Moses commanded Israel to “love the LORD thy God with all thine heart” (Deuteronomy 30:6).

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- III. The third discourse: ratification of the covenant
 - C. The renewal of the covenant (29:1 — 30:20)
 - 1. Introduction (29:1-9)
 - 2. The summons to enter into the covenant (29:10-13)
 - 3. The seriousness of adherence to the covenant (29:14-29)
 - 4. The ultimate fulfillment of the covenant (30:1-10)
 - a. The promise of dispersion (30:1)
 - b. The promise of national repentance (30:2)
 - c. The promise of return to the land (30:3-5)

- d. The promise of conversion (30:6)
- e. The promise of judgment on Israel's enemies (30:7)
- f. The promise of blessing (30:8-10)
- 5. The appeal of commitment to the covenant (30:11-20)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. The theme of these two chapters is the covenant between God and Israel. List the several references to the covenant in chapter 29.

2. What do you think will happen to the people who refuse to choose?

3. List examples of areas in life where you make spiritual "life or death" decisions.

CONCLUSION

God did not make His commandments hidden or far off—rather, He gives us a blueprint to follow that will bring us victory. However, those blessings are not automatic, but require that each of us make an individual commitment to Him. Will you choose to seek the Lord's will for your life, and follow it so you may obtain the blessings He has for you?

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“For when I shall have brought them into the land which I swear unto their fathers, that floweth with milk and honey; and they shall have eaten and filled themselves, and waxen fat; then will they turn unto other gods, and serve them, and provoke me, and break my covenant.” (Deuteronomy 31:20)

Get a picture in your mind of a mule. Let's name him Frank. Frank was a stubborn mule. He was so stubborn that he reared his head at any given command and directly did the opposite. His owner, the farmer, was fed up and decided to sell Frank. Just before selling, however, the farmer got an idea. He knew Frank loved coconuts. The world could stop spinning and Frank would be oblivious as long as he had a coconut to chew! So the farmer's plan was this: he took a long stick and to it tied a portion of coconut, and dangled it down in front of Frank. If the farmer wanted Frank to go into the barn, he dangled the coconut towards the direction of the barn. As he had anticipated, Frank went anywhere the coconut went. This plan worked splendidly for several days until the farmer, as a reward, gave Frank the largest chunk of coconut he could find. Soon, it was time to go back into the barn, but Frank was not interested. The farmer dangled coconut in front of Frank, trying to lure him. Frank, his belly full and satisfied, only snorted and walked away.

What about your life? Must you be lured into following God? What happens when prosperity comes? If you are going through a time of suffering, recognize the blessing you can have by drawing closer to God. Adversity may get our attention refocused on God, but unlike the mule, we can choose to remain focused on Him, even when the burden eases. Don't be like the children of Israel, who forgot about God once they were satisfied with temporal substance. Follow God through both good and bad times and you will find unexpected happiness.

BACKGROUND

At the time of today's text, Moses was 120 years old and about to die. He addressed the Children of Israel in a personal manner, delivering to them material about his retirement and death, Joshua's appointment as his successor, and a prophecy of Israel's rebellion.

The Lord frequently reminded the people to listen to His Word and obey. During his long ministry, Moses had kept a record of what God had done and said, and he placed that record with the Levite priests

who carried the ark of the covenant. He commanded the priests to keep the Book of the Law beside the ark in the Holy of Holies. This act meant that they were to be in charge of teaching the Law to the people, and responsible for causing all Israel to obey it. Every seventh year, during the Feast of Tabernacles, the Law was to be read to every man, woman, and child so that they would hear, fear, and obey. The only recorded occurrence of the reading of the Law at the Feast of the Tabernacles is found in Nehemiah 8:13 through 9:38.

Verses 14-22 of Deuteronomy 31 recount God's final instructions to Moses. God called Moses and Joshua to the Tabernacle to give Joshua the official appointment of duty to take over for Moses and lead the people. Joshua's final appointment to the office of Israel's new leader is recorded in verse 23. When Moses finished writing the Book of the Law, he gave it to the Levites to place in the ark.

The Lord had commanded Moses to write a song and teach it to the Children of Israel to warn them not to turn to other gods. He wanted the people to learn the song, and be reminded against idolatry whenever they sang it. At the close of this chapter, Moses gathered together all the congregation of Israel to present his final song to them.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah's Bible Outlines
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IV. Historical appendices

- A. The final injunctions of Moses (31:1-29)
 - 1. Moses' final charge to Israel (31:1-8)
 - 2. The Law written and delivered to the priests (31:9-13)
 - 3. The Lord's words to Moses (31:14-22)
 - 4. The commission of Joshua (31:23)
 - 5. The prediction of apostasy (31:24-29)
- B. The song of Moses
 - 1. Setting (31:30)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. How did God arrange for Israel to know to return to Him when troubles came due to their wickedness?

[illegible][illegible]

Although God warned His people that they would turn away from Him, He still gave them a choice to serve Him. Jesus prophesied that in the last days, there would be a great falling away, yet we are still given a choice. Are you serving Him?

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them.” (Deuteronomy 33:27)

Tragedy struck Chicago in the year 1871, as fire ravaged the city. Horatio Gates Spafford, a lawyer who had invested much of his money in downtown Chicago real estate, was one who lost a great deal to the fire. Adding to the trauma, his only son died about the same time. Still, Spafford laid aside his own troubles and did what he could to assist the homeless, impoverished, and grief-stricken people whose lives had been impacted by the fire.

After two years of such work, Spafford decided to join his friend, Dwight L. Moody, on an evangelistic crusade in Europe. He sent his wife and four daughters ahead, planning to join them on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean. Their ship never arrived at its destination. It collided with another vessel off the coast of Newfoundland, and sank within 20 minutes. Spafford's wife, Anna, was able to cling to a piece of wreckage and her life was spared, but their four daughters drowned. She cabled her husband just two heart-breaking words: “Saved alone.”

Spafford boarded the next ship to be near his grieving wife, and his ship passed the very spot where his daughters perished. During those days of overwhelming grief, he penned the words to one of the most beautiful of hymns, “It Is Well With My Soul.” When Spafford and his wife finally connected with Dwight L. Moody, Spafford's words were simply, “It is well. May the will of the Lord be done.”

Our world is one of continual change. Though we may never suffer a loss like that of the Spaffords', the relationships, hopes, dreams, and plans in all of our lives are impacted by circumstances over which we have no control. Comfort comes from knowing that God does not change! In a time when much around us seems to be unstable, it is natural to long for a secure refuge. No one is immune to life's heartbreaks, but no matter what is going on in our lives, we can find comfort in God.

Our focus verse refers to God as a refuge. Webster defines *refuge* as, “shelter or protection from danger or distress; a place that provides shelter or protection; a means of resort for help in difficulty.” God's arms are everlasting: He has promised that they will shelter

and protect all who trust in them. They cannot weaken or fail.

The Psalmist speaks of the earth being removed and mountains being carried into the midst of the sea, waters roaring, and mountains shaking. In the midst of turmoil, God remains our secure place of refuge. We can be still in our hearts and know that He is God, that He is eternal and forever the same, and that it is well with our souls.

BACKGROUND

Moses was not only an anointed leader and prophet, he was also a song leader! After instructing people in a sermon, he changed the form of his message to singing. In these chapters, the song that God commanded Moses to write (Deuteronomy 31:19) is recorded. Its words contain an abundance of pictures, metaphors, and poetic expressions that illustrate the feelings of God. The song gave a brief history of Israel, reminding the people of their past mistakes, and warning them to avoid repetition of those mistakes. Although at that point, Israel was obedient to God, the song also provided a prophetic glimpse of future judgments.

Moses' words told the people how God was with them and how He would take care of them if they would obey Him. Moses spoke of how the eagle watches over her eaglets and how God would do the same for them, keeping them secure in His everlasting arms of protection. In their wilderness wanderings, the people needed God's protection and provision, for there was no other source they could rely on for help.

Moses exhorted the Children of Israel to set their hearts upon the words of God. By doing this, God would bless and prosper them. The people were to teach these words to their children so that, in turn, they also would teach the words to their children. God wanted the message passed on to each generation.

Moses also blessed Jacob's descendants. All twelve sons were mentioned, and he told of the blessings that they, along with their children, would receive. It allowed the people to take a glimpse into the future and see a small portion of the blessings that the Lord had in store for them. This must have been a great source of encouragement for them and their descendants.

These words were given to Moses to give to the twelve tribes before he died. Moses left them a heritage, something to look forward to if they would follow the Lord.

Hannah's Bible Outlines
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- B. The song of Moses
 - 2. Introduction (32:1-4)
 - 3. The foolishness of Israel (32:5-6)
 - 4. The love of Jehovah (32:7-14)
 - 5. The apostasy of Israel (32:15-18)
 - 6. The wrath of the Lord on Israel (32:19-33)
 - 7. The final deliverance of Israel (32:34-43)
 - 8. The resulting exhortation (32:44-47)
- C. The sight of the land by Moses (32:48-52)
- D. The blessing of Israel by Moses (33:1-29)
 - 1. Introduction (33:1-5)
 - 2. The blessing of the tribes (33:6-25)
 - a. Reuben (33:6)
 - b. Judah (33:7)
 - c. Levi (33:8-11)
 - d. Benjamin (33:12)
 - e. Joseph (33:13-17)
 - f. Zebulun (33:18-19)
 - g. Gad (33:20-21)
 - h. Dan (33:22)
 - i. Naphtali (33:23)
 - j. Asher (33:24-25)
 - 3. Conclusion (33:26-29)

1. What did Moses say was God's portion of the inheritance?

[illegible]

God does not change. He is still the same today as He was in Old Testament times. If we will be faithful and true to Him, we will have His presence, His provision, and His protection with us.

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

**“And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face.”
(Deuteronomy 34:10)**

When I was applying for a job after graduating from college, I sifted through the letters of recommendations that my professors had written for me, and one letter especially caught my eye: this letter of recommendation was very flattering and praised my accomplishments at some length. As I eagerly scanned to the bottom of the letter to learn who had such a high opinion of me, I remembered, to my chagrin, that I had written the letter myself! One of my less-conscientious professors had told me to type up my own letter of recommendation, and he would just sign it. Needless to say, I was not half as impressed with this letter of recommendation when I remembered that I was the actual author.

A good exercise to make sure that we do not think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think is to imagine what others might say about us at our own funeral. Moses had a wonderful eulogy recorded in Deuteronomy 34:10-12. As he passed from this earth, the Word of God records that there was no other prophet like Moses, and that the Lord knew him face to face. What are the “good words” that people would say about you if your life were to end right now?

In *Stories for a Man's Heart*, Al and Alice Gray record the words that the children of Dick Wimer placed in his memorial service bulletin:

“What a teacher! What a giver! What a heart! He was all those old clichés. Big hearted. Tender hearted. He had a generous heart. He was all heart. It was the best used part he had and he just wore it out giving it to others. Now he will go on living in our hearts.”

What will your family, friends, and acquaintances say about you when your time on earth is through? Will they have many words of praise? What a challenge to all of us to live in a way that encourages and enlightens the lives of all those around us!

BACKGROUND

Moses obviously did not write the last chapter of Deuteronomy, since this chapter recounts his death and burial. Traditionally, this chapter has been ascribed to Joshua; this ascription has gained widespread acceptance because the last chapter of the Book of Deuteronomy fits almost seamlessly with the Book of Joshua, which immediately follows.

The death of Moses, like the death of many saints, was bittersweet: it was sweet because the Lord took Moses up Mount Nebo to the peak of Pisgah and showed him the land which He had promised unto the Children of Israel, yet it was bitter because Moses himself was not allowed to enter the Promised Land due to his former disobedience. However, it says in verse 5, “Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD.” The literal meaning of the verse is, “he died at the mouth of the Lord,” which has been interpreted to mean that “he died by the kiss of the Lord,” suggesting that although Moses did not enter into the Promised Land, his heart was filled with peace when he finally saw all that God had promised.

Disobedience can be costly. Because the Children of Israel disobeyed God and refused to enter into the Promised Land at first, they had to conduct many funerals in the wilderness; if the numbers were evenly distributed, that would come to approximately one funeral every twenty minutes, twenty-four hours a day, for forty years!

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

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IV. Historical appendices

E. The death of Moses (34:1-12)

1. His death (34:1-7)
2. His mourning (34:8)
3. His replacement (34:9)
4. His eulogy (34:10-12)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. Who buried Moses?

2. Why do you suppose God kept the burial spot of Moses secret?

3. The Children of Israel mourned for Moses for thirty days. How long do you think it takes to recover from the loss of a loved one? What can help a person through such a difficult time?

CONCLUSION

You do not get to write your own eulogy, but your life is yours to live for the glory of God.

NOTES



Overview for Joshua

Author: Primarily Joshua. Phinehas, the high priest, was an eyewitness to the events and may have finished the book. Some commentators suggest that Ezra may have edited it.

Time Period Covered: 1451 B.C. – 1427 B.C.

Date Written: 1407 B.C. – 1383 B.C.

Setting: The conquest and division of the Land of Canaan, the geographical territory comprised by today's Israel and Jordan

Prominent Characters: Joshua, Rahab, two spies, Achan, Caleb, Phinehas, Eleazar

Key Word: “Inheritance” is used fifty-eight times in the Book of Joshua

Objective: To detail the history of Israel's taking possession of the Promised Land

Key Verse: “Within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land, which the Lord your God giveth you to possess it.” – Joshua 1:11

Comments: The Book of Joshua is a multi-purpose book. It continues to record the history of the Children of Israel begun in the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Old Testament which the Jews call the “Torah,” meaning “Law”). Also, it is a book of new beginnings, as it demonstrates the faithfulness of God in fulfilling His covenant in settling the tribes into their promised homeland.

The book can be separated into three main parts: Section one records the people entering the land (chapters 1—5); section two describes them conquering the land (chapters 6—12), and section three details them dividing and settling the land, including the setting aside of special cities of refuge and cities for the Levites (chapters 13—24). The remainder of the

historical books of the Old Testament (Judges through Esther) cover Israel's history inside the land.

The Book of Joshua begins just after the death of Moses. Joshua, who had distinguished himself as a man of faith and courage, was the successor appointed by God. Joshua had been one of the twelve spies who initially explored the land of Canaan, and, with Caleb, he brought back a good report. He demonstrated brilliant military leadership and was a strong influence for God to the Children of Israel. This book records Joshua's leadership of the people of God as they concluded their wanderings in the wilderness, conquered the Promised Land, and divided the land among the various tribes.

Many notable events are recorded in this book: the miraculous crossing of the Jordan River, the walls of Jericho falling down, the battle at Ai and the stoning of Achan, Israel at Ebal and Gerizim, the conquest of the north and south, and the renewal of God's covenant with the Children of Israel.

As leader of God's chosen people, Joshua was obedient to God and to God's way, and obedience is therefore a theme of this book. Whatever the Israelites set out to do, they were required to trust God and follow His plan implicitly. In his final message to the people, Joshua once more stressed the importance of obedience, telling them, “Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the Lord your God” (Joshua 23:11) and stating once again his personal purpose, “But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (Joshua 24:15).

The Book of Joshua instructs Christians of every age in how to be victorious soldiers of the Lord, and how to claim their rich spiritual inheritance in Jesus Christ. It encourages believers to be strong and courageous as they face their enemies and march forward to claim new territory for the Lord.

Timeline

Exodus from Egypt 1446 B.C.	Judges begin to rule 1375	T H E D A Y S O F T H E J U D G E S		United Kingdom under Saul 1050
	Israelites enter Canaan 1406			David becomes king 1010
	CONQUEST OF CANAAN			

Outline

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A complete amplified outline of this book is available on our website at www.apostolicfaith.org.*

- I. The land contested (1:1 — 12:24)
 - A. The preparation for the conquest (1:1 — 5:15)
 - B. The history of the conquest (6:1 — 12:24)
- II. The land divided (13:1 — 21:45)
 - A. The instructions to apportion the land (13:1-7)
 - B. The apportionment of Transjordan (13:8-33)
 - C. The apportionment of Canaan (14:1 — 19:51)
 - D. The assignment of the cities of refuge (20:1-9)
 - E. The apportionment to the Levites (21:1-42)
 - F. The summary (21:43-45)
- III. The epilogue (22:1 — 24:33)
 - A. The return of the Transjordan tribes (22:1-34)
 - B. The final addresses of Joshua (23:1 — 24:33)



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And they answered Joshua, saying, All that thou commandest us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us, we will go. According as we hearkened unto Moses in all things, so will we hearken unto thee: only the LORD thy God be with thee, as he was with Moses.” (Joshua 1:16-17)

At the start of the 1980 Olympics in New York, the United States hockey team had no prospects of a gold medal, even in the mind of its coach. In the semifinals, the U.S. met the Soviets, who were heavily favored to win. However, as the game progressed, the U.S. team began to believe they actually could gain the victory, even though that thought had seemed ridiculous a few days before. The team members started to pull together in an unprecedented way, and the game ended with the U.S. team winning by one goal in the final seconds. Then, they went on to capture the gold medal! “Do you believe in miracles?” was an announcer’s cry at the close of the game. The underdogs had won! Teamwork had paid off in a dramatic way.

In today’s text, the Israelites faced an exciting prospect—the Land of Promise was finally before them. They were gathered just outside the Promised Land and were united in their desire to follow their leader and possess the land. In our focus verse, they pledged their unanimous support to Joshua. In order to conquer the land, everyone had to agree to the leader’s plan and be willing to support and obey him.

Even in our day, the prospects of “what could happen if . . .” can be exciting to consider. When, as the people of God, we are truly unified in our purpose to see the Gospel go forward, the prospects are worth getting excited about! Does it seem too fantastic that God could answer our deepest desires? Does it seem out of reach that God could bring our hopes to reality? When we as Christians unite to pray and work together for a specific purpose, Christ himself is there with us. Anything can happen!

Nothing is more exciting than saying deep in our hearts that “God can do this for us!” What had seemed impossible in the natural begins to take on a different perspective in our minds and hearts as we pull together in unity of prayer and faith.

BACKGROUND

The people had wandered in the wilderness for forty dry, dusty years, and now the day that they had

anticipated was upon them. Joshua was appointed by God to lead Israel—600,000 soldiers and their families—and conquer the seven nations in Canaan.

God appointed Joshua to lead the people of Israel after the death of Moses. Joshua had been schooled—he had assisted Moses for forty years and had been the military leader for the armies of Israel. He and Caleb had been the only spies to give a good report, and therefore they were the only surviving members of the older generation who had witnessed all the miracles that started when the people left Egypt. Even so, the task of leading the Children of Israel into the Promised Land must have seemed overwhelming. God was faithful to assure Joshua of His continued help if Joshua would listen to His Word and obey it. The message, “Be thou strong and very courageous” was repeated several times in the chapter.

In asking for an inheritance on the east side of Jordan, two and a half tribes had agreed with Moses that their armies would fight with the rest of Israel until the land was conquered. Joshua reminded them of this promise, and let them know it was time to implement its fulfillment.

The leaders of Israel stated their willingness to support and follow Joshua just as they had followed Moses. They were united in their purpose to serve God and to possess the Promised Land.

What thrilling and exciting days these must have been as the people prepared for the crossing of Jordan. No doubt, they were busy getting their families and belongings ready, talking among themselves about what was ahead. There would be battles, but God would be with them.

God desired to make Israel successful in possessing the land He had promised them. It was not His plan that they would fail or live in discouragement and defeat. Joshua and Caleb had reminded the people once before, “We are well able.” Forty years later, the people as a whole had finally come to the same conclusion. Now, it was critical that they do everything God’s way if they wanted to succeed.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- I. The land contested
 - A. The preparation for the conquest
 - 1. The commission of Joshua (1:1-18)
 - a. The appointment of Joshua (1:1-9)
 - b. The command of Joshua (1:10-11)
 - c. The submission to Joshua (1:12-18)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. God made several promises to Joshua. What were they?

2. Why do you think Moses and Joshua, under God's direction, insisted that the tribes on the east of Jordan go to war with the rest of Israel?

3. The nation of Israel had a completely different outlook toward the challenges of the Promised Land than they had had forty years previously. The difference was in their perspective, for nothing else had changed. How can you adopt a positive outlook toward the challenges that face you?

4. The Lord reminded Joshua and the Israelites several times to "be of good courage" because He was with them. What are some things we might be afraid of? How can we truly realize that God has victory for us in these situations?

CONCLUSION

It is God's plan that we be victorious spiritually. He has deliverance from every trial and affliction, and will give us certain victory if we order our lives according to His will. We can get excited about a lot of things, but is there anything that stirs our enthusiasm and increases our faith more than the possibilities of God's power working for and through us?

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“Then she let them down by a cord through the window: for her house was upon the town wall, and she dwelt upon the wall.” (Joshua 2:15)

When I was nine years old, my grandparents took me on a week-long trip to visit my aunt and uncle. After an enjoyable stay, we packed the car and began our two-day journey home. It was a comfortable ride in their roomy Cadillac.

Several hours into our trip, as the noon hour approached, we began to talk of stopping for lunch. Then I remarked, “I smell a forest fire.” Grandma replied, “Oh, God forbid!” We pulled into a rest area, and when Grandpa lifted a sack of food off the floor of the back seat, it burst into flames! Immediately, Grandpa started beating the flames with his hands, attempting to put out the fire. I looked on, knowing I should do something—but what could I do, just a child? Suddenly an idea came to me and I ran to a water fountain, filled a can with water and ran back. With that water, Grandpa extinguished the fire.

A hole in the muffler, we learned, had caused intense heat to burn a hole through the floor of the car. When Grandpa lifted the sack off the floor, the added oxygen fueled the smoldering fire, causing an outburst of flame.

I did not know that God could use me, but He did that day. Although I saw myself as a child, dependent on others to care for me, God saw something different. Through my actions, the “helpless” became the “helper,” and a difficult problem was remedied.

Rahab knew immediately that the Israelite spies were the foreshadowing of God’s judgment upon the wicked. She knew a difficult situation loomed ahead. However, instead of standing there wondering what she could do, she chose to act. She used what means she had at her disposal to act in the cause of God, and the Lord rewarded her for her obedience and trust.

Today, the Lord is looking for those who will take action for the cause of God. Merely knowing we should do something is not sufficient. Our faith in God is evidenced by an active use of our means. Do not consider yourself too young, too old, or too unworthy; put your faith into action today.

BACKGROUND

The Israelite spies could have gone anywhere in Jericho, but God was guiding them. They may have been drawn to Rahab’s house because of its location

on the city wall. Archeological finds indicate that the city of Jericho was fortified by two thick and high walls, about 12 feet (4 meters) apart. Houses were built between these two walls, likely on logs or beams. As this was not the most protected part of the city in case of war, this area was likely home to the poor—maybe even a slum district—the logical address of a harlot such as Rahab.

More than one Jericho excavation has found heaps of mud bricks and layers of ash and debris, indicating that the walls fell and the city was burned. Possibly of even greater interest, however, was the finding of a German excavation in 1907-1909: a short section of the lower city wall is still intact! That section was located on the north of the city, only a short distance from the wilderness hiding place the spies likely fled to after their escape from the city (Joshua 2:16, 22).

After flax was harvested from the field, it was laid out to dry, then spun into thread to make cloth. Rooftops of houses in Biblical times were flat and used as places for social gatherings, as well as work and occasional escape from the heat inside. Rahab hid the spies on the roof among the stacks of flax she had drying there. The stacks of flax drying on the rooftop would indicate a time period of late March to early April.

Located on the outermost wall, a window of Rahab’s residence overlooked the country outside the city. While not the safest place during a conquest, this did afford a pleasant view for the occupants of the house, and in this case, a clever escape for the Israelite spies.

Although Rahab participated in idolatry and sin early in her life, God nevertheless detected a spark of faith in her heart and drew her to Him. He selected a most unlikely means to accomplish His end. But once she came face to face with God’s people, Rahab immediately declared her intentions and began a new life of faith in the living God. She took action. Rahab is a testimony of the power of God to change lives and the power of faith in God to change circumstances.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- I. The land contested
 - A. The preparation for the conquest
 2. The sending of the spies (2:1-24)
 - a. The mission of the spies (2:1)
 - b. The search for the spies (2:2-7)
 - c. The promise of the spies (2:8-14)
 - d. The escape of the spies (2:15-21)
 - e. The report of the spies (2:22-24)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. What reasons did Rahab give for hiding the spies?

2. What do you think gave Rahab the courage to side with Israel rather than with her king and her country?

3. Where do you think Rahab first exhibited faith in God?

4. How can you put your faith in God into action in these areas of your life this week?

On the job

At home

At school

In your neighborhood

CONCLUSION

Rahab is remembered as a woman whose faith was boldly displayed in works of bravery for the cause of God. Is there something you could be doing for the cause of God?

NOTES

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And they commanded the people, saying, When ye see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests the Levites bearing it, then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it. Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure: come not near unto it, that ye may know the way by which ye must go: for ye have not passed this way heretofore.” (Joshua 3:3-4)

As a child, did you ever imagine what you would be when you grew up; where you would live; whom you would marry; or how you would travel to see the world? Have all those dreams been realized in your life?

Though most of us have goals in life, none of us know where the events of each new day will take us. Often, it may seem that we are on course to reaching our goals until a sharp turn of events confuses us. Other times, everyday events alter the direction we are heading, and we put our dreams on hold. Regardless of where we find ourselves in relation to our dreams and goals, each day of our lives brings new challenges, surprises, and endeavors.

Our pastor tells of applying for a job, which he wanted so much that he felt his perspective was clouded. As he drove to what he expected would be the decisive final interview, he asked God to please step in if taking that job would be a mistake. God did intervene, and he did not get the job; a few years later, that company was out of business. God saw the future and turned the events in a better direction.

Understanding the predicament we find ourselves in when we face something new in our lives, God designed a way by which we can be assured that we are staying on course. When we become Christians and relinquish control of our lives to God, He becomes our Guide. Though we will still travel through places we have never been, we have an assurance in our hearts that He knows the direction that our lives should take. He often assures us of His leading by pointing out His blessings along the way. We learn that the more we rely upon Him as our Guide and the more closely we follow Him, the more assured and satisfied we become with our lives.

God has many wonderful surprises along the way, and often He will take us on a seemingly unusual route to prepare us for the good that is ahead. Learning to lean on His guidance gives us the best chance

at making each day count for something positive. Through scary and difficult times, or through ordinary, everyday situations, we can trust our Guide, because He knows the way.

BACKGROUND

Joshua instructed the people to leave Shittim for the banks of the Jordan River and wait there for further instruction. Then, the officers went through the camp and told the people to start walking when they saw the Ark of the Covenant moving. The ark was representative of God's presence with them, and He would be the One to lead them and give the victory. The people were to keep a distance of approximately one mile between themselves and the ark. This space showed respect for God, and it also kept the ark in view of the people. As they embarked on this journey, they were told, “Ye have not passed this way heretofore,” and God provided a way to guide them.

Instead of the people being told to prepare their weapons or draw their swords, they were told to prepare their hearts by sanctifying themselves. In this instance, this was not a ritual ceremony but rather a spiritual preparation for what was ahead. God was going to work for them in a mighty way and their hearts were to be ready to receive His mighty works.

It is of great interest that God chose the time of their crossing when the Jordan River was overflowing. At this time, the time of barley harvest, the waters of the river were usually sixteen to twenty feet above flood stage, and the river was about a mile wide. Twelve Levitical priests were instructed to carry the ark into the rushing waters of the Jordan River. What great courage and faith the priests demonstrated by putting their feet into that rushing torrent! As soon as the soles of their feet touched the water, God stopped the river's flow, and the priests stood on dry ground. Through their faith, the people were able to enter into the Promised Land.

The Lord commanded Joshua to have twelve men, one man from each tribe, carry a stone from the bed of the river. These men took the stones to Gilgal, Israel's lodging place that night, which was located approximately five miles from the banks of the Jordan River. The purpose of the stones was to commemorate the miraculous event of the crossing of the Jordan. When subsequent generations asked what the stones meant, the fathers relayed to the children how God performed the miracle for them. In addition, Joshua set up twelve stones in the middle of the Jordan River, where the priests had stood, and God's Word says, “they are

there unto this day.” Though this memorial could not be seen, God and the Children of Israel knew that it was there.

At God’s command, the people moved and the waters stopped. Again, at God’s command, the priests walked out of the river and the water flowed once more. That day, God was glorified before His own people and also before the inhabitants of Canaan.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah's Bible Outlines
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- I. The land contested
 - A. The preparation for the conquest
 - 3. The crossing of the Jordan
 - a. The preparations for crossing (3:1-13)
 - (1) The instructions for crossing (3:1-4)
 - (2) The prospect of crossing (3:5-6)
 - (3) The promise to Joshua (3:7-8)
 - (4) The promise to Israel (3:9-13)
 - b. The passage (3:14-17)
 - c. The memorials (4:1-9)
 - (1) The significance of the stones (4:1-7)
 - (2) The placement of the stones (4:8-9)
 - d. The result of the crossing
 - (1) The passing of the ark (4:10-18)
 - (2) The encampment at Gilgal (4:19-24)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. How many days did the Children of Israel have to wait by the Jordan River before they could cross?

2. Why did God have the priests step out first before parting the waters of Jordan?

3. In what ways does God guide you today?

CONCLUSION

God is sovereign and all-powerful. He led the Children of Israel step by step through this miraculous crossing. He desires to lead us as He did the Children of Israel, even though at times we feel that the situations we face are impossible. By stepping out in faith, we, too, can have the victory.

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And the LORD said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour.” (Joshua 6:2)

We sat on a bench in front of the huge tabernacle, watching the people walk by while we visited. One couple smiled as they walked briskly along. They were walking for their health! About twenty minutes later they walked by again. As they came around the third time, we joked that on their sixth time around, we would move well away from that building—especially if they appeared with trumpets in their hands!

We were referring to the Biblical account of the battle of Jericho. God had told Joshua that when he followed His instructions, the walls of that city would fall down, and Joshua and the Children of Israel would be able to go in and take the city as promised. Joshua and the people did as God told them. His army marched around Jericho six days, and on the seventh day, they marched around seven times, then shouted and blew the trumpets they carried, and the walls fell down flat! God’s promise was fulfilled.

When we find a promise in God’s Word that fits what we need, God requires the same obedience and persistence that Joshua and the Children of Israel manifested on that occasion. We don’t have to make a lot of noise. We don’t have to talk it over among ourselves. We don’t even have to share the need, except perhaps to ask someone to join us in prayer. Then we must keep “marching around” that need with our prayers, until we receive the fulfillment of that promise.

God’s promises are guaranteed when we obey His instructions. God cannot lie, because He is God. His promises are not meant to tease us. They are meant to provide for us when we have a need. He is able to tear down walls.

Find a promise in His Word that fills your need today and start “marching.” It is guaranteed to make the enemy nervous, and victory is sure.

BACKGROUND

The Israelites wandered in the wilderness for forty years due to their lack of belief in God’s power. The Canaanites, however, were terrified when they heard of the power of this God. When they realized that the Israelites had crossed the Jordan River, their last

natural protection, on *dry land*, the Bible says “their heart melted” from fear (Joshua 5:1). God was preparing the enemy for defeat even before the Israelites stepped into the Promised Land.

There were several preparations God required of His people. First, God reestablished his covenant with the Israelites by commanding all the males over eight days old to be circumcised. God had suspended this ritual during the wilderness wanderings and, therefore, all of those under forty years of age now underwent this procedure. This included the soldiers: a test of faith considering they were camped about two miles northeast of Jericho, and this procedure left them physically unable to participate in combat for a time.

Circumcision also qualified the men of Israel to observe the Passover, the second part of God’s preparation. This occasion was only the third such celebration, the first observed the night of the exodus from Egypt and the second at Mount Sinai before moving toward the Promised Land thirty-nine years earlier. Remembering the victories of the past gave the Children of Israel confidence for the victories of the future.

The appearance of the “Captain of the host of the LORD” to Joshua (beginning at 5:13) was the final ingredient for victory. Jewish scholars consider this being an angel; however, some Christian commentators believe this was one of the pre-incarnate appearances of Jesus. Joshua worshiped this Captain and removed his sandals, as Moses had done in the presence of God at the burning bush. This meeting would have given Joshua the confidence he needed, as a leader of the people of God, to follow a strategy considered militarily ridiculous.

Jericho, in a strategic location, was a logical starting point for conquering Canaan. Protected by high, thick surrounding walls, the city was a symbol of military strength and power; defeating it was not likely. God’s instructions to Joshua, on the other hand, would never be considered logical from a human standpoint.

In His battle plan, God called for an unusual lineup of recruits: soldiers, followed by seven priests with rams horns, then the priests carrying the ark of the covenant, and finally the rear guard, a group of soldiers whose particular duty was to pull together any stragglers. This group was to march around the city once a day for six days without a sound other than the priests blowing the horns. On the seventh day, they were to circle the city seven times. On the seventh time, the marchers were to shout when the priests

blew a longer note on the horns, and God promised the walls would fall down flat, at which time the army could take over the city. With Israel's population more than two million, over 600,000 of which were able to bear arms (according to the military census in Numbers 26), most of the people remained in the camp at Gilgal.

There were several benefits to God's unprecedented battle strategy. Certainly He made it unquestionably clear that Jericho was *His* victory, not that of the Israelite military. This event was a clear indication of God's support for Joshua as the leader of His people. It was also a test of the faith, patience, and self-control of the Children of Israel. Additionally, it may have been a tactic to increase the fear of those living and taking refuge in the city of Jericho, making them easier to defeat once the walls fell.

It is interesting to note that the priests were to use trumpets made of rams' horns. These instruments were typically reserved for celebrations, while trumpets made of silver usually signaled an important event. In the year of Jubilee, the priests used the rams' horns to "proclaim liberty throughout all the land" (Leviticus 25:10). It seems that God wanted the Children of Israel to approach Jericho not as the beginning of a war, but as a celebration of the victories He had promised.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah's Bible Outlines
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- I. The land contested
 - A. The preparation for the conquest
 3. The crossing of the Jordan
 - d. The result of the crossing
 - (3) The fear of the inhabitants (5:1)
 4. The spiritual renewal at Gilgal (5:2-15)
 - a. The rite of circumcision renewed (5:2-9)
 - b. The Passover feast observed (5:10)
 - c. The cessation of manna (5:11-12)
 - d. The appearance of the captain of the Lord's host (5:13-15)
 - B. The history of the conquest
 1. The central campaign
 - a. The fall of Jericho (6:1-27)
 - (1) The instructions from the Lord (6:1-5)
 - (2) The destruction of the city (6:6-22)
 - (3) The preservation of Rahab (6:23-25)
 - (4) The curse upon the city (6:26-27)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. When and why did God stop providing manna for the Children of Israel, and what did they eat from that year on?

2. Why were Rahab and her family saved and honored to be part of the lineage of Christ? If they had wanted to, could other Canaanites have been saved?

3. What are some victories God has promised you? How can you prepare yourself to be able to receive those victories?

CONCLUSION

Knowing they had followed God's plan explicitly, the Children of Israel could celebrate the victory at Jericho, even before the walls fell. It is important to remember that obeying God will always bring victory, no matter how strange the instructions may seem.

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“Up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves against to morrow: for thus saith the LORD God of Israel, There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel: thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the accursed thing from among you.” (Joshua 7:13)

On a rotating basis, the ladies cleaned the church building, making sure everything was presentable for the Sunday services. Part of the cleaning involved vacuuming the carpet on the floors. Even though the vacuum cleaner had good suction, some things needed to be picked up by hand and thrown in the trash, rather than attempting to vacuum them up. Then it happened! The vacuum nozzle was pushed over the wrong item, taking it in, but reducing its suction considerably. The vacuum no longer functioned effectively.

Upon checking the vacuum hose, the blockage that prevented dirt from going to the retaining pot was discovered. After removing the items causing the blockage, the vacuum was test driven and found to be as good as new. The next shift of cleaning ladies enjoyed hearing the swishing of dust quickly passing through the hose and viewed the “looking like new” carpet with pride.

It is pretty basic—if your vacuum is not picking up properly, you need to see if something is stuck in the hose. In our lives, it is also possible to “pick up” something that should not be present. If that happens, our Christianity will not work effectively. We are expected to obey God’s Word and keep our lives clean. By doing so, we can prevent a “blockage” of our connection with Heaven, which may hinder our getting a prayer through when we face the enemy.

When the Children of Israel captured Jericho, Achan picked up some items that he had been clearly instructed not to take. As a result, Israel was defeated at Ai and thirty-six Israelite soldiers were killed. Our decisions to obey or to disobey God will affect the success of others as well as ourselves—our families, our friends, our churches, and the body of Christ.

We can be sure that the enemy will put temptations in our way. There will be items that need to be picked up and thrown away. Let us not take in the devil’s trash, which can bring defeat to our Christian walk. Instead, let us be obedient to God and expect victories!

BACKGROUND

In the previous chapter, Joshua and the Children of Israel were on the mountaintop of victory because Jericho had been captured. However, the ominous word “but” that introduces today’s text indicates that something was about to change.

Joshua sent men to view Ai, and since the city was small, they thought it would be an easy victory. They operated on their own understanding instead of seeking the Lord’s directions. Rather than defeating Ai, they found themselves fleeing for their lives and leaving behind dead comrades. Achan’s sin had separated them from God, and their hearts were melted as water because God had not helped them.

At Gilgal, Joshua and his elders prostrated themselves before the ark, which was the symbol of God’s presence, and tore their clothes, putting dust on their heads. This was the usual Israelite method of showing remorse and humiliation. Joshua laid his heart open before God, telling the Lord his true thoughts. Yet, his great concern was the defense of the Lord’s name before their enemies.

Following Joshua’s prayer, God spoke, saying that the nation had stolen the accursed thing and had hidden it among their personal possessions. God told Joshua to get up and sort out the problem.

The people were instructed to sanctify themselves, a process that would prepare them to come before the Lord. God instructed that the guilty party would be located by tribe, then by family, next by household, and finally man by man. Achan was found to be the guilty party.

Before judgment was executed, the evidence was dug up and presented. Achan and his family were taken to the valley of Achor, where they and their possessions were stoned and then burned with fire. The pile of stones would be a reminder to the people of the consequences of disobedience.

Although only one man sinned, the whole nation was judged. There was still much land for Israel to conquer. The people would see many items that they could perhaps covet. Strict adherence to God’s directions was imperative. God wanted His people to be pure and to understand that their victory came only through obedience.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- I. The land contested
 - B. The history of the conquest
 1. The central campaign

- 4. If you encounter defeat in your Christian life, what should you do?**

[illegible]

CONCLUSION

Just as the Children of Israel were one nation, God's people today are one body in Christ. The responsibility of each individual is to do the Lord's bidding, because what we do will affect others. Let us each choose to be holy and obedient.

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And the LORD said unto Joshua, Fear not, neither be thou dismayed: take all the people of war with thee, and arise, go up to Ai: see, I have given into thy hand the king of Ai, and his people, and his city, and his land.” (Joshua 8:1)

Fearful, apprehensive, and distressed, I opened the computer case in front of me. The hard drive in my computer had failed with years of important data on it, and now it needed to be replaced. Yes, there were backups, and I had all of my software to reload, but the knot in my stomach would not leave. I opened the box for the new hard drive and began to read the installation instructions.

Slowly I began to follow the list: Step 1: Turn off system power. Step 2: Remove system cover. Step 3: Verify jumper settings on the hard drive. The list went on and on until it was time to install the formatting software. I remember not breathing a sigh of relief until the final reboot of the operating system software. As the familiar soft whir of the hard drive started, I realized the computer was working normally again. A daunting task had been successfully completed because instructions were followed to the letter!

Joshua was feeling fearful, apprehensive, and distressed the day the Lord spoke to him and told him to go back to Ai and take the city. The earlier defeat at Ai had been swift and humiliating, and lives had been lost. Sin had been found in the camp, and punishment rendered. Now the Lord encouraged Joshua on to the assignment, and Joshua set out to do just what the Lord commanded. We can and should do the same! When the Lord tells us not to be afraid or dismayed, we can step out on his Word in confidence.

Joshua followed God’s instructions to the letter and found victory! Ai was defeated, the city burned, and the spoils of war went to the people. When we are exact in following God’s instructions, we too can have spiritual victory. God honors obedience, and Joshua did not forget who gave the victory. He built an altar unto the Lord, where the people offered sacrifices unto God. Thanksgiving unto the Lord should be the natural outflow when we receive spiritual victories.

Maybe God has given you specific instructions regarding something in your life. Don’t let fear or discouragement stop you from following those instructions to the letter, even if you have tried and failed before. Keep pressing on; God will give the victory!

BACKGROUND

In our text today, the campaign against the city of Ai was completed. We see God’s hand continue to work for Israel, as they learned to trust Him. They were recovering from their initial defeat at that city, which was an important city to take because it controlled the high ground between Jericho and the rest of Canaan. In the first battle, Joshua had relied on the word of his spies and his own assessment, sending only part of his army to fight.

This time God gave the instructions, and the tactical maneuvers employed to capture the city were brilliant. God told Joshua to send 30,000 men away by night to make the thirteen-mile trek to the city and to position themselves on the west side. They were to wait there in a position of ambush, and on the next day, Joshua and the main army of Israel would approach on the north side of Ai. When the inhabitants of Ai saw the armies on the north, they would engage them, and Joshua’s army was to pretend to flee. As the armies of Ai pursued them, the 30,000 soldiers on the west would be free to move unhindered into Ai.

The plan of God, obediently followed, brought complete victory. Not a man was left of the armies of Ai—they had been delivered into the hand of Israel by the hand of God.

When the victory had been won, Joshua moved to the base of Mount Ebal in the central section of Canaan, where he built an altar unto the Lord as an indication of thankfulness for the defeat of Ai. There he inscribed a copy of the Law of Moses on a stone, and read it aloud to the people, so they would recognize that their victory was because of their covenant with Jehovah.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah's Bible Outlines
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- I. The land contested
- B. The history of the conquest
 - 1. The central campaign
 - b. The fall of Ai
 - (2) The conquest of Ai (8:1-29)
 - (a) The encouragement of Jehovah (8:1-2)
 - (b) The strategy of Joshua (8:3-13)
 - (c) The destruction of the city (8:14-29)
 - c. The altar erected at Mt. Ebal (8:30-35)



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And the men took of their victuals, and asked not counsel at the mouth of the LORD.” (Joshua 9:14)

Beep, beep, beeeeeep! Another morning begins with the sound of the alarm, and immediately the decision-making process starts. Shall I get up now, or will I still be able to get to work on time if I set the snooze for ten more minutes? What shall I wear today? Should breakfast be fruit with yogurt, or eggs and sausage? Should I make it at home or drive through at McDonald’s? And so it goes. Every day I make dozens of choices.

Many of those daily choices are automatic and relatively unimportant. I make choices based on my personal likes and dislikes, my personality, or my internal values, and that’s fine. Even as a Christian, many of the choices I make are easily decided because I know Christ, and in knowing Him, I feel sure of what He would have me do in a given situation.

However, there are times when I need to go to God and ask for His specific guidance before making a decision. I don’t always know how each decision will change my life, until after it has already been made, so I must stay alert to God’s voice, and be careful that I do not make a decision on my own when I should have consulted Him first.

In today’s text, Joshua and the leaders of Israel were deceived because they failed to seek God’s direction in a critical matter. God had specifically instructed Israel to make no treaties with the people who inhabited Canaan. However, the treaty proposed by the people of Gibeon seemed harmless, so Joshua and the leaders made this decision on their own. By neglecting to seek God’s guidance, they had to deal with angry people and an awkward alliance.

At times, I may be tempted to go forward on my own, thinking I have all of the facts and a good grasp of a situation. However, only God knows the future. If I want God’s best for my life, I must stay in constant communication with Him. I must know His voice, and listen for it. I must ask Him to guide my thinking when it comes to situations that need decisions. It is dangerous business, as the leaders of Israel discovered, to neglect the counsel God is so willing to give!

BACKGROUND

Joshua’s leadership of the Israelites began with a series of great victories. At God’s direction, he had

led the Israelites across the Jordan River to conquer Jericho and Ai. In the incident recorded in chapter 9, Joshua decided to make a decision on his own.

God had told the Israelites that all of Canaan would be theirs. They were not to share it with anyone. God would destroy the inhabitants and give all of the land to Israel. The city of Gibeon was located about twenty-five miles from the Israelite camp and was a strategic place directly in Joshua’s next line of attack. In order to avoid being conquered, the Gibeonites decided to trick the Israelites into a treaty.

The Israelites had been directed not to make covenants with anyone but God. However, when a group of ambassadors from “a far country” came to the camp, Joshua and his men did not check into their story any further. Instead, without asking for God’s direction, they made a covenant of peace with them. Later, when the Gibeonite’s trickery was discovered, the agreement still stood, and Joshua appointed them to be “hewers of wood, and drawers of water” for the service of the Tabernacle. The covenant would soon cost the lives of some Israelites when they found themselves in battle against four allied Canaanite kings in order to defend the Gibeonites and protect Israel.

The Gibeonites remained in Israel, and eventually came to be known as the Nethinims, meaning the “given ones”—those given to assist the priests. This was an important role in society at that time. In later years, King Saul violated the treaty with Gibeon. For that, his children were punished by God (2 Samuel 21). King David restored the covenant, and placed the Gibeonites in service to the Levites. The fact that, after the Babylonian captivity, over five hundred Nethinims returned with Ezra to Jerusalem (see Ezra 2:43-58 and 8:20), suggests that the Gibeonites retained their role throughout Hebrew history and became devoted to God and the Temple.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- I. The land contested
- B. The history of the conquest
 1. The central campaign
 - d. The treaty with the Gibeonites (9:1-27)
 - (1) The confederation against Israel (9:1-2)
 - (2) The deception of the Gibeonites (9:3-13)
 - (3) The failure of the Israelites (9:14-15)

- (4) The discovery of the plot (9:16-21)
- (5) The subjection of the Gibeonites (9:22-27)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. What did the Gibeonites do to trick the Israelites into believing they had come from a far-away land?

2. Why do you think Joshua and his men accepted the Gibeonites and made peace with them without asking God for His direction first?

3. Sometimes, certain choices that look good to you may have pitfalls of which you are unaware. How can you be sure that the decisions you are making lead you to life in God, and not to spiritual death?

[illegible]

CONCLUSION

In today's study, the Israelites' failure to consult God had far-reaching consequences. Let us learn to identify the types of choices that require deeper thought and prayer, and ask God to help us place those decisions in His hands, allowing Him to work out His plan in our lives.

NOTES

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“Then spake Joshua to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.” (Joshua 10:12)

Before she passed on to her reward, for many years my mother kept a notebook recording her various prayer requests. With many of these requests there was an added note, detailing how the Lord had answered. (A few of those prayers are still bottled up in Heaven, hopefully to be answered within the lifetimes of those prayed for.)

None of Mother’s requests were as big as that of Joshua—that the sun would stand still. God answered Joshua’s prayer by causing the sun to remain where it was, so it did not set for almost 24 hours. Some of Mother’s prayers were as simple as asking that she might be healed of a common cold. There, perhaps, is a key to her success in prayer. Most of us would pray if faced with a life-threatening illness, yet few of us ever get healed of a common cold or sore throat. Is it simply because we do not take these “minor” problems seriously to the Lord? In living a close daily walk with the Lord, Mother found it normal to take everything to Him in prayer—big or small.

Can one go too far with “small” requests? I think so. Our pastor once told about a man who supposedly asked the Lord which dish he should wash first when cleaning up after supper. As our pastor told us, “Just wash them!” But if something is big enough to fret or worry about, it is big enough to pray about. I certainly think I should have prayed more sincerely before purchasing a certain used van that we owned for a time. It looked like a good deal, but it turned out to give us nothing but grief until we finally were able to sell it. Hopefully, I learned from that experience.

It is interesting to note that Joshua in effect commanded God in this matter, and God commended him for it. We know that the primary hallmark of a Christian is submission to God and death to self. Yet in the matter of prayer—concerning those requests that are within His will—we can step out in faith. God wants us to put our heart into our prayers. He is happy to answer those kinds of requests.

BACKGROUND

As noted in the previous chapter, Israel had made a covenant in error with the Gibeonites. So when they

needed help, God told Joshua to go to battle. In spite of Israel’s mistake, God worked this battle to their advantage by giving them victory over a coalition of enemies, rather than having to fight with each enemy individually.

This chapter recounts one instance after another in which the Lord fought for the Children of Israel and gave them victory over their enemies. In many cases, they won by fighting hard, using the conventional warfare of the time. For example, Joshua took his army from Gilgal to Gibeon at night. This was a distance of about twenty miles uphill that resulted in a 3300-foot change in elevation. Yet in verse 11 we read how God sent great hailstones and actually defeated more of the enemy by this means than by the hands of the Israelite soldiers. That God was fighting for Israel was clear to both the Israelites and their enemies, especially since only the enemy soldiers were killed in the storm.

At times, various scholars have tried to explain away the miracle of the extended day. Others have tried to determine exactly how God performed the phenomenon. The important factor, of course, is to recognize and believe that God indeed performed a notable miracle. God the Creator certainly possesses the power to control what He created, and stretching a day is not difficult for Him.

When Joshua called for his captains of war to place their foot on the necks of the captive kings (Joshua 10:24), it was more than the usual practice symbolizing a military victory and superiority. This action was intended to encourage the Israelite warriors that if they would follow God, He would win the victory for them.

While the duration of this particular campaign is unsure, the text implies that these cities in southern Canaan fell quickly after the initial long day of battle: “And all these kings and their land did Joshua take at one time” (verse 42). The key, of course, was the latter part of that verse—the Lord fought for them.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- I. The land contested
 - B. The history of the conquest
 2. The southern campaign (10:1-43)
 - a. The defeat of Adoni-zedec’s confederacy (10:1-27)
 - (1) The attack upon Gibeon (10:1-5)
 - (2) The destruction of the confederacy (10:6-15)

- b. The conquest of the southern area
(10:28-43)

[illegible]

What needs are you taking to God in prayer today? Perhaps they seem small, but God wants to work for you. Obey Him and then trust Him to help you.

[illegible]

1. How did Joshua defeat the five kings themselves?

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“As the LORD commanded Moses his servant, so did Moses command Joshua, and so did Joshua; he left nothing undone of all that the LORD commanded Moses.” (Joshua 11:15)

There is a story of a man who, while performing his job on the railroad, noticed his young son playing on the tracks in the path of an oncoming train. His first instinct was to stop the train, but doing so would risk injury or even death to the passengers. He was afraid that if he began yelling frantically and waving his arms, his son would be so frightened that he would be unable to move. Seconds were passing and there was no time to deliberate—something must be done immediately!

Calmly, yet firmly, he called to his son, “Lie down! Now!” and with great fear and trepidation he watched the speeding train pass over the body of his young son. After the train had passed, the man approached the spot on the tracks where his son had been playing, fearing he would find a mangled body. Instead, the boy arose unharmed: he had obeyed his father’s command.

Few of us ever experience a lesson in obedience so profound as that family did. Had the boy questioned his father’s order, it would have been too late; had he deliberated or sought a second opinion, he would have been killed. Without the son’s total obedience, the story would have had a tragic ending rather than a good one.

Joshua was God’s humble servant, chosen to lead the Israelites into battle and into the Promised Land. Many times during Joshua’s career, God gave him explicit instructions for the battles: where to go, how to approach the city, what to do with the spoils of war. In each situation, Joshua had to choose to obey the Lord. Joshua made the right choices and obeyed the commands of the Lord, resulting in victory for the Israelites and the possession of the Promised Land.

The words of our Heavenly Father are plain and direct. They instruct us to do something, to do nothing, or to wait. God speaks to us through His written Word, through the spoken word of His ministers, and through the prompting and leading of the Holy Spirit. Like Joshua, in each instance we are faced with a decision: to obey or to question, hesitate, and seek the advice of someone else.

Joshua’s victories were the direct result of his total and immediate obedience to God. Whether we

understand or not, we can possess that same victory by choosing to obey the commands of our Heavenly Father.

BACKGROUND

A new confederacy of nations had formed to combat the invading Israelites. This northern conquest was Joshua’s third and last advance into the Promised Land.

The Israelite army consisted of infantry only, whereas their enemies rode in chariots and had foot soldiers beyond number. Canaanite chariots of that day were of wooden construction tipped with iron barbs: a fearsome and destructive military machine.

God instructed Israel to “hough” their enemies’ horses. To “hough their horses” was to cut the hamstring tendon at the joint of the horses’ hind legs, rendering them useless in future battles. The hock is the joint in the hind leg of a horse which corresponds to the ankle in a human. The houghing of their horses and burning of their enemies’ chariots proved God’s total victory over the traditional Canaanite means of warfare.

Joshua burned Hazor, but did not burn the remaining cities (verses 11-14). The inhabitants were slain, however the cattle and other livestock were preserved.

The Anakims mentioned in verses 21-22 of chapter 11 were the peculiar race of giants, which had discouraged the ten Israelite spies, and subsequently the majority of the people, from entering the Promised Land some forty years earlier.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah’s Bible Outlines
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- I. The land contested
 - B. The history of the conquest
 3. The northern campaign (11:1-15)
 - a. The confederacy of Jabin (11:1-5)
 - b. The destruction of the confederacy (11:6-9)
 - c. The destruction of Hazor (11:10-12)
 - d. The securing of the north (11:13-15)
 4. The campaigns summarized (11:16—12:24)
 - a. The land conquered (11:16-20)
 - b. The Anakim destroyed (11:21-23)
 - c. The kings defeated (12:1-24)
 - (1) In the Transjordan (12:1-6)
 - (2) In the land (12:7-24)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. What were God's explicit commands to Joshua about their enemies' horses and chariots? Were those commandments obeyed?

2. How do you think Joshua felt when he saw the huge army facing him?

3. To obey is one of the most powerful choices we possess. Look carefully at every aspect of your life: body, mind, finances, and will. Can you say you have “left nothing undone of all that the LORD commanded?” If there is a question or hesitation, ask yourself: “What do I need to change in order to bring about total obedience in all my life?”

CONCLUSION

Obedience to God is one area of life over which we have control. What choices are you making in this regard?

NOTES

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“All the inhabitants of the hill country from Lebanon unto Misrephoth-maim, and all the Sidonians, them will I drive out from before the children of Israel: only divide thou it by lot unto the Israelites for an inheritance, as I have commanded thee.” (Joshua 13:7)

My father moved to the United States from the Middle East, where he came from a long line of landowners. The land primarily held vineyards. I am sure that generation after generation had passed the land down to their children, and those who inherited the land took care of it. Although my father initially came to the United States to study, he stayed and later married my mother.

Not long after I was born, my father died. While I do not remember much about him because I was so young, I do remember hearing about “the land.” My uncle would discuss “our land” with my older brother. The point of discussion was usually whether we should keep it or sell it.

How did it become “our land”? When my grandfather divided up his land, he gave each of his children a portion. My father’s portion became ours when he died. The land was something we had inherited. It was something that we, through my father, had been promised.

All of chapter 13 of Joshua is about “promised” land. Some of the land had already been conquered, but some still needed to be claimed. Joshua was to divide that land among those to whom it had been promised. The division of the land was then recorded to avoid confusion.

Not all of us have land that is waiting for us to claim, but we do have spiritual victories that God has promised to us. Unlike the land that Joshua was dividing, we can all share fully in the blessings God bestows. Healing is not limited to the Jones’ family, or salvation only to the Jacob’s. Each promise God has in His Word is meant for everyone. All we have to do is believe! The knowledge of these promises is an inheritance we can pass down to our children, just as it was passed down to us.

BACKGROUND

This chapter starts out with the Lord stating: “Now Joshua was old and stricken in years; and the LORD said unto him, Thou art old and stricken in

years, and there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed ” (Joshua 13:1). Many estimate that Joshua was approaching one hundred years of age at this point. He was 110 years old when he died.

Although not all the land had been conquered, God directed Joshua to divide up all the land—as if to say, “It will be yours.”

It is mentioned twice in this chapter that land would not be given to the tribe of Levi. This tribe was dedicated to serving God—God was their inheritance. The Levites needed the time and ability to move, which would be hindered as landowners. God instructed the other tribes to meet the Levites’ needs through donations.

Joshua 13:13 clearly identifies the reason the Israelites had so many problems settling the land. They failed to conquer fully the land and drive out all its inhabitants. The presence of the remaining pagan peoples of Canaan was like a disease, causing unending difficulties for the Israelites.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

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- II. The land divided
 - A. The instructions to apportion the land (13:1-7)
 - B. The apportionment of Transjordan (13:8-33)
 - 1. The dimensions of the land (13:8-14)
 - 2. The assignment to Reuben (13:15-23)
 - 3. The assignment to Gad (13:24-28)
 - 4. The assignment to Manasseh (13:29-30)
 - 5. Conclusion (13:31-33)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. Why was Joshua so specific in dividing the land?

2. Why did those in the tribe of Levi not receive a land inheritance?

[illegible]

This chapter gives us a clear explanation of what land each tribe was to inherit. The Bible gives us many promises of blessings that we can inherit as a child of God.

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“Now therefore give me this mountain whereof the LORD spake in that day; . . . if so be the LORD will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the LORD said.” (Joshua 14:12)

Abraham Lincoln spoke the following words as he was leaving Springfield, Illinois, to begin his first Presidential term:

“Today I leave you. I go to assume a task more difficult than that which devolved [transferred or delegated] upon General Washington. Unless the great God who assisted him shall be with and aid me, I must fail; but if the same Omniscient Mind and Almighty Arm that directed and protected him shall guide and support me, I shall not fail, I shall succeed. Let us all pray that the God of our fathers may not forsake us now. To Him I commend you all. Permit me to ask that with equal sincerity and faith you will invoke His wisdom and guidance for me.”

President Lincoln fully understood the awesome task before him: steering a nation divided on the practice of slavery. He felt a divine instruction to bring about justice in place of bondage. His love of liberty was not just for a few, but for every soul under his jurisdiction. Also, his decision to move forward with the charted course was a clear directive, not a matter of committee discussion.

The Israelites were directed to be strong and very courageous, and to go in and possess the land. As they did, God promised He would be with them (chapter 1). In the devotional focus verse above, we see Caleb’s complete confidence in God. At the age of forty, he was promised Mount Hebron as part of his inheritance, because he wholly followed the Lord. Now at eighty-five years of age, he had not forgotten this. Caleb did not care if the Anakims were there or if the cities were great and fenced. What would possess an old man to try to take a mountain? Caleb trusted God! He knew that the Israelites were directed, with God’s promised presence, to be strong and very courageous, and to go in and possess the land. He knew that “one plus God” is a majority, and if the Lord was with Him, he was assured of victory. Since God had directed them to drive out the heathen and inhabit the Promised Land, Caleb’s confidence lay in the power of the Lord and not in his own strength. He trusted God to give him his promised inheritance, no matter what the obstacles were.

Christians have an inheritance promised by God—a home in Heaven for eternity with our Savior. We are encouraged to claim our inheritance, though the wait seems long and obstacles loom large. Let us place our confidence in God and prevail against surrounding darkness, then lay claim to riches and rest in Christ. We, like Caleb, can say, “Give me this mountain!” Through faith and patience, we will inherit what God has promised.

BACKGROUND

After wandering in the wilderness for forty years and witnessing the hand of God at work in the defeat of Jericho, the time had come to “enter in” and divide up the land of Canaan. Joshua, together with Eleazar, the priest, and a representative from each tribe, determined the inheritance of each tribe by casting lots.

The term *inheritance* was used more than fifty times in chapters 13 through 21 to refer to the land of Canaan, the “Promised Land.” The people did not gain the land as spoils of war, nor did they purchase it. God retained ownership, and allowed them to live in the land, but they were not permitted to sell it permanently. Since God was the final authority, there essentially was a landlord/tenant relationship between God and the Israelites in Canaan.

On the west side of the Jordan, Caleb was the first to receive his allotment. Caleb was at least twenty years older than anyone else in the nation of Israel with the exception of Joshua. He had been forty when the judgment was passed limiting entrance into the Promised Land to those twenty years of age and younger, plus the two “good” spies. His age certainly gave him a higher rank among the Children of Israel. However, the primary reason Caleb was dealt his inheritance first was because of his unshakable belief in God’s promises. Forty-five years prior to this, only he and Joshua, out of the twelve spies, had believed they were able to go in and take the land, and as a result they had been promised an inheritance in Canaan. When it was time to distribute the land, he was ready to claim that promise.

Caleb’s health had not waned during his years in the wilderness. He still had the same strength for war, and physical stamina to labor as he had in the day he was sent as one of the twelve spies. In this passage, Caleb asked for mountains to climb and the greatly feared giant sons of Anak to conquer. His eagerness to claim his portion was not selfishness, but rather enthusiasm for the work God had given them to do.

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- ## A CLOSER LOOK

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“Give me a blessing; for thou hast given me a south land; give me also springs of water. And he gave her the upper springs, and the nether springs.” (Joshua 15:19)

A couple of years ago, my nephew’s wife discovered a website where you could research a database to find out if there was unclaimed money that should be yours. She entered her maiden name just for fun—and was amazed to find that there was, indeed, some money awaiting her! An uncle she hardly knew had passed away, leaving her a small inheritance, and the executors of his estate had been unable to locate her. The money was hers—all she had to do was contact the executors and prove her identity.

Joshua 15 shows us God’s faithfulness in bestowing His promised blessings, but it also shows the active part that we must take to receive those blessings. God had promised to give Caleb and his descendants an inheritance in the land of Canaan (Numbers 14:24), and in today’s text, this promise was fulfilled. However, Caleb had to step out in faith to receive his land inheritance. He had to conquer the city of Hebron by driving out the three sons of Anak, and he needed to enlist the help of Othniel to conquer the city of Debir.

As Christians, God has promised us a goodly heritage, but we must be willing, like Caleb, to actively pursue the blessings of the Lord. When God promises us material or spiritual blessings, we must do our part to receive those blessings. We must also be willing, like Caleb’s daughter, to ask boldly for the blessings we need.

The attitude of Caleb’s daughter, Achsah, teaches us to ask for the “best gifts” from our Heavenly Father. Achsah knew that a field alone was no good in that semi-arid region, so she asked her father Caleb for the blessing of “springs of water.” In response, Caleb gave her both the upper and lower springs.

Will your Heavenly Father be any less generous if you ask Him for living water to restore and refresh your soul? Jesus says that He will give His followers spiritual water that shall be “a well of water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:14). Ask boldly for the spiritual blessings you need!

BACKGROUND

Although Judah was the fourth-born son of Jacob, the tribe of Judah was first to receive an inheritance in the land of Canaan. The first twelve verses of this

chapter define the boundaries of Judah’s inheritance, described in reference to geographical location.

Caleb, once a partner spy to Joshua (Numbers 13:26-33), and one of the descendants of Judah, began the process of driving the children of Anak from his inheritance, the mountain promised to him because of his faithfulness to God. He progressed as far as Debir, formerly called Kirjath-sepher. There, he issued a challenge—anyone who could conquer this town was to be given the hand of his daughter, Achsah, in marriage. Othniel, a brave and capable warrior, and also Caleb’s nephew, stepped forward to accept the challenge, and revealed his military skills by capturing the city. Later, after Joshua’s death, Othniel became the first judge over Israel (Judges 3:7-11) and played an important role in reforming Israel by vanquishing an enemy army and restoring peace to the land. Thus Caleb’s legacy of faithfulness passed on to the next generation.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

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- II. The land divided
 - C. The apportionment of Canaan
 - 3. The assignment to Judah (15:1-63)
 - a. The dimensions of the apportionment (15:1-12)
 - b. Caleb’s conquest of his portion (15:13-19)
 - c. The cities of the apportionment (15:20-63)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. What was Othniel’s relationship to Caleb?

2. Why do you think Caleb was able to drive out the sons of Anak from Hebron, yet the children of Judah could not drive out the Jebusites from Jerusalem?

[illegible]

Caleb's faith in God never seemed to waver, and without making any compromises, he confidently claimed what God had promised. He was not swayed by what others thought or did, but he wholly followed the Lord. We, too, can live victoriously like Caleb if we keep our eyes on God.

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“But the mountain shall be thine; for it is a wood, and thou shalt cut it down: and the outgoings of it shall be thine: for thou shalt drive out the Canaanites, though they have iron chariots, and though they be strong.” (Joshua 17:18)

Perhaps you have heard your children wail, “It’s too hard!” Maybe it was your preschooler trying to tie his shoes, or a third-grader working on a math problem. It could be that you yourself have moaned, “It’s too hard,” regarding a project or a problem. Most of us have looked at the activities or feats of others and said they were too hard for us to do. I would never try to scale a sheer rock cliff or give a piano concert. It would be *much* too hard!

In today’s text, Manasseh and Ephraim, the children of Joseph, complained to Joshua that it was too hard to take the wooded country where the giants lived. In addition to their size, the Canaanites had chariots of iron! However, Joshua encouraged the children of Joseph that they could overcome them. Did he respond in that way because he thought Manasseh and Ephraim were strong enough to outfight or smart enough to outwit the Canaanites? No, Joshua’s response was driven by his focus. Rather than looking at the situation from a human perspective, Joshua was looking at God’s promises to Israel, at the past victories that God had helped them win, and the fact that it was God’s expressed will for the people to take the land.

Are you facing a situation, a consecration, or a trial that looks too hard? If so, ask God to show you His will in the matter. Once you know God’s attitude on the issue, inventory where your focus is. Are you looking at the situation and allowing it to overwhelm you? Remember, God will never give you something too hard to do. He will give grace and strength for whatever faces you. He wants you to review His promises, rehearse the past victories He has given you, and ask for His grace.

With God in the lead, you can have the victory even though the circumstances you face may seem impossible!

BACKGROUND

No tribe was named after Joseph—Jacob’s first son by Rachel—because Joseph actually received a double portion. A tribe was named after each of

his sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. Though Manasseh was the older son, Jacob named Ephraim first when he counted them among his sons. These two tribes brought Israel’s inheriting tribes to twelve, because the tribe of Levi did not receive a territory. Together these tribes were a large number of people and were given a large territory as their inheritance. This area eventually became the northern portion of Israel’s heartland.

God had commanded Israel to possess the land of Canaan, and He intended that they destroy the people of the land. However, this text shows that both Ephraim and Manasseh made the choice not to drive out the inhabitants, but rather to have them “serve under tribute.” At that time, this course might have seemed easier, but later the Children of Israel reaped the results of these choices. The people and the pagan practices of Canaan caused the Israelites much grief by enticing them away from God.

What a contrast there was between Caleb, who, at eighty-five years of age, asked for his promised possession even though it had giants in it, and these children of Joseph, who complained because they did not have enough land and yet had not possessed what they had been given! They wanted an inheritance that they did not have to work or fight for.

Years earlier, God had given Moses instructions regarding an inheritance for Zelophehad’s daughters. Because they had no brothers, these women determined to preserve their father’s name and inheritance for future generations. When they came to remind Joshua of the command given at least ten years before, he—in the faithfulness that was his pattern—did exactly what God had directed through Moses.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

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- II. The land divided
 - C. The apportionment of Canaan
 - 4. The assignment to the sons of Joseph (16:1 — 17:18)
 - a. The dimensions of the apportionment (16:1-3)
 - b. The assignment to Ephraim (16:4-10)
 - c. The assignment to Manasseh (17:1-13)
 - (1) The portion (17:1-6)
 - (2) The borders (17:7-13)
 - d. The complaint of the sons of Joseph (17:14-18)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. When did the Children of Israel put the Canaanites “to tribute”?

2. How might the children of Joseph have expected Joshua to respond when they talked to him about their inheritance?

3. Give some examples of problems or situations that might seem overwhelming to you today. How can you encourage yourself to handle those problems or situations as God wants you to?

[illegible]

CONCLUSION

If you are looking at something today that seems “too hard,” why not challenge yourself to look to God instead. He can give you the “wooded land” in spite of the “giants” and the “iron chariots.”

NOTES

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, How long are ye slack to go to possess the land, which the LORD God of your fathers hath given you?” (Joshua 18:3)

An acquaintance of mine and his wife were flying with an airline company which was having a promotional campaign. On every flight, a seat number was picked. Whoever was in that seat was the lucky person to win a flight for two to any destination where this airline operated. On this particular flight, when the number was called, the man who was sitting in the lucky seat was reading a book. We might expect that he would at once run from his seat to the front to accept the reward. Instead, he just smiled and continued reading. His wife went forward and claimed his reward. She was excited!

In this chapter, we read of a person who was excited about claiming his own reward. The Children of Israel had made the long journey from Egypt and had finally reached the Promised Land. At the first opportunity, Caleb lost no time in making it clear that he wanted what was promised to him, and he took possession. There remained seven tribes, with the land subdued before them, that had not yet received their inheritance. Joshua wanted to know what they were waiting for.

Having the land available to them as promised, we wonder why they were not more eager and quick to take possession. When we stop to think about it, however, we see that there are people today who have the Gospel at their fingertips and still are not taking possession of all that God has promised them. There are numerous added promises and blessings in the Gospel that many people do not reach out in faith and claim. It is better to be like Caleb: claim what is ours and start to reap the benefits at once. He was vigorous, eager, and excited to receive what had been promised to him.

Since you have the promise of the Gospel and its benefits, claim it now. Don't let someone else claim your reward. Take what is yours!

BACKGROUND

As the congregation of Israel assembled at Shiloh, in the territory of Ephraim, Joshua moved the camp of Israel and set up the Tabernacle of the congregation there. It had been at Gilgal for the previous seven years. By this time, the Israelites had possession of

the land on all sides. The Canaanites were completely subdued. There was no longer any general resistance to the Israelite army.

The Israelites had experienced many miracles, but we find an unaccountable backwardness of seven tribes to claim the inheritances that God had given them. They did not have the faith and spiritual zeal of Caleb and the daughters of Zelophehad (Joshua 14:12; 17:3-4). They were faithful in helping fight battles and defeating the enemy, but they hesitated to claim their inheritances.

To help those seven tribes, Joshua and the leaders inaugurated a new system for allocating the land. Each tribe appointed three men who went through the remaining territories, and listed the cities and the landmarks to describe each part of the land. This information was brought back to Joshua, who then assigned the various portions to the remaining seven tribes by casting lots before the Lord. The tribe of Levi, being inheritors of the priesthood, was not included. The Lord was their portion and they had the sacrifices, oblations, tithes, firstfruits, redemption money of the firstborn, etc. for their provision. The tribes of Gad, Reuben, and half the tribe of Manasseh received their inheritances on the east side of Jordan.

The first lot fell to Benjamin, giving that tribe a narrow band of land. Since Benjamin was a full brother to Joseph, his territory was assigned adjacent to Ephraim and the other half-tribe of Manasseh.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

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- II. The land divided
 - C. The apportionment of Canaan
 - 5. The assignments to the remaining tribes
 - a. The division of the land (18:1-10)
 - b. The assignment to Benjamin (18:11-28)
 - (1) The borders (18:11-20)
 - (2) The cities (18:21-28)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. In what way did Joshua help the seven tribes to obtain their inheritances?

2. Why do you think the seven tribes hesitated to claim their inheritances?

3. If you recognize that you have been slow to claim some of God's promises to you, what actions should you take?

CONCLUSION

Many have been saved for years but have not yet received their sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Ghost, or some other promise from the Lord. Are you one of those who have been faithful in supporting others, while you have not claimed what is yours? Don't allow yourself to procrastinate when it comes to taking new spiritual ground! Step out by faith and claim God's promises to you!

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“And the coast of the children of Dan went out too little for them: therefore the children of Dan went up to fight against Leshem, and took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and possessed it, and dwelt therein, and called Leshem, Dan, after the name of Dan their father.” (Joshua 19:47)

I recently read a book about a young woman whose top priority in life is to make a difference in other people's lives. In her book, *I'm Out to Change My World*, Ann Kiemel tells how one day, while she was traveling in Florida, she got into a hot taxi to go to a hotel. It was so hot the driver had every window rolled down. Ann leaned forward and shouted, “What is the one word that describes your life?” The old, gnarled man said that he had two words to describe it, “Bored and unhappy.” He had a lousy job and no one in the world wanted him.

Ann sat in silence for a moment, pondering his words. Then, she asked him if she could sing him a song. He rolled up his window and listened while she sang about how God had made something beautiful out of her life. When she finished singing, she told him how Jesus had become Lord of her life, and how He was her closest friend.

“He laughs with me and cries with me . . .”

“I'm a Jew,” the man said.

But she continued, “Sir, He'll walk with you (and He'll laugh with you. He'll be your friend.”

When they arrived at her hotel, Ann fumbled in her purse for money, but suddenly noticed his coarse hand reaching over the seat. She grabbed it, almost afraid to look at him. When she lifted her eyes, she saw he was crying.

“Lady,” he said, “When I got in this old cab tonight, I was the loneliest person in the whole world. I never heard anyone talk like you talked tonight and I want your God. He and I could ride together.”

In this chapter, we read about the children of Dan. They did not have enough territory, so they simply picked up their swords and conquered more. Ann spent every moment she could conquering more territory for Christ. There is territory that we can conquer for Christ too.

BACKGROUND

In this text, the final tribes received their inheritance. The tribe of Simeon received land that had initially been given to Judah, but which Judah had

not settled. To Zebulun was given a portion of Galilee midway between the Mediterranean Sea and the Sea of Galilee. Their land included large, fertile valleys and high hills. Nazareth, Jesus' boyhood home, was on one of these hills.

Issachar received a hilly region southwest of the Sea of Galilee. Asher was given territory along the Mediterranean coast, north of Mount Carmel, which stretched to the Phoenician cities of Tyre and Sidon. Naphtali's inheritance in Galilee included the Sea of Galilee and the regions west and north of it.

The last lot fell on the tribe of Dan. Dan received a narrow piece of land bordering on Judah, Ephraim, Benjamin, and the Mediterranean Sea. The land given to Dan and Benjamin formed a “belt,” connecting the Mediterranean Sea and the Dead Sea. The region of Dan includes the modern city and suburbs of Tel Aviv.

After completing the allotment of Israel's inherited land, Joshua took possession of his own inheritance. He spent the rest of his life in Timnath-serah, a small farming village in the mountainous region of Ephraim.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

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- II. The land divided
 - C. The apportionment of Canaan
 - 5. The assignments to the remaining tribes
 - c. The assignment to Simeon (19:1-9)
 - d. The assignment to Zebulun (19:10-16)
 - (1) The borders (19:10-14)
 - (2) The cities (19:15-16)
 - e. The assignment to Issachar (19:17-23)
 - f. The assignment to Asher (19:24-31)
 - (1) The borders (19:24-29)
 - (2) The cities (19:30-31)
 - g. The assignment to Naphtali (19:32-39)
 - (1) The borders (19:32-34)
 - (2) The cities (19:35-39)
 - h. The assignment to Dan (19:40-48)
 - i. The assignment to Joshua (19:49-50)
 - j. The conclusion (19:51)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. How did the tribe of Simeon claim their inheritance differently than Dan?

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“Speak to the children of Israel, saying, Appoint out for you cities of refuge, whereof I spake unto you by the hand of Moses: that the slayer that killeth any person unawares and unwittingly may flee thither: and they shall be your refuge from the avenger of blood.” (Joshua 20:2-3)

It is important to view with compassion those who unintentionally harm or kill others. Accidents happen even to good people who would never purposely hurt another individual. One woman who experienced this type of devastating event was Maryann Gray. When Maryann was a twenty-two-year-old graduate student, a young boy darted out in front of her car as she was driving on a winding backroad in Southern Ohio. She was unable to stop in time, and Brian, the child she hit, died as a result.

The justice system absolved Maryann of any legal responsibility, but she still suffered. “For twenty-five years, I’ve thought of Brian every day,” Gray told National Public Radio in a letter she also read on the air.¹ For more than twenty years, Maryann spoke publicly and wrote frequently about the challenges that face those who accidentally hurt or kill others, and eventually she founded a website for individuals who have been involved in this type of tragedy. Today the site and its umbrella organization, known as The Hyacinth Fellowship, minister to individuals who live with suffering brought on by the unintentional harm they caused.

The compassion that led Maryann to establish such an organization reflects the divine compassion that ordained the establishment of cities of refuge in Israel. Since these cities were designed to provide a place of protection, they can also be seen as an illustration of Jesus Christ and the refuge He provides for those who turn to Him in a time of need.

Several similarities can be noted.

- Like the cities of refuge, Jesus is easily accessible; He is always near to hear the cry of one who needs him.
- Just as the cities of refuge were open to both Israelites and “strangers,” Jesus offers spiritual deliverance to “whosoever will.”
- The cities of refuge were a place where the individual in need could dwell; those who come to Jesus in a time of need are invited to dwell “in the secret place of the most high” (Psalm 91:1).

- The cities of refuge were the only refuge for a person fleeing vengeance; without this specific protection, death would result. Jesus offers the only deliverance and protection from spiritual death.
- Finally, the one who fled to a city of refuge had to stay within its boundaries to remain safe. The one who has found protection under the Blood of Jesus must stay there to remain spiritually safe.

There is one key distinction between these ancient cities of Israel and the refuge found in Jesus Christ: the cities of refuge only offered protection to the innocent. How grateful we are that the guilty can come to Jesus! Because of His great compassion toward mankind, we can escape death and find a place of deliverance, refuge, and safety in Him.

BACKGROUND

Years before today’s text, God had instructed Moses that the Children of Israel were to establish cities of refuge when they came into the land of Canaan (see Exodus 21:12-14; Numbers 35; Deuteronomy 4:41-43, 19:1-13). The purpose of these cities was to prevent injustice, specifically to protect individuals who killed another person accidentally, without any ill-will or malice. Six such cities were established—three on each side of the Jordan River.

The Mosaic Law emphasized the sacredness of life. The principle for capital punishment is based on Genesis 9:6 and the fact that when an act of murder goes unpunished, it defiles a land (see Numbers 35:31, 35:33-34). In a tribal society where no strong central governmental authority existed, the practice of requiring blood for blood safeguarded life.

In Israel, the responsibility of researching and punishing crime fell to the families of the victims. The words “avenger of blood” in verse 3 are a translation of the Hebrew word *goel*, which in this context means the designated representative from the victim’s family who was charged with making sure justice was carried out.

The cities of refuge were established to prevent an emotional and perhaps incorrect reprisal. A person who shed blood “unawares and unwittingly” could flee to one of these cities and come under God-ordained protection until the circumstances surrounding the death of the victim were fully investigated, and his innocence established.

Verse 4 explains how refuge was granted; it was customary for the elders and judicial appointees of a

city to sit near its gates; this was where business was conducted and legal issues resolved. When someone fleeing from an avenger of blood came to a city of refuge, he stated his case to the elders. Verse 6 indicates that the fleeing person could expect to be protected as long as he remained within the walls of the city until his case was fully heard, and until the death of the high priest. That event seemingly established something like a “statute of limitations” for the time in which retribution could be exacted. After the decease of the high priest, the slayer was free to go back to his home and be legally protected against the wrath of the avenger of blood.

The distribution of the cities of refuge across Israel described in verses 7-8 shows they were well spaced throughout the country. No matter where a person resided in Israel, he or she was likely within a day’s journey of one of designated cities.

The chapter concludes in verse 9 with a restatement of the purpose for these cities of refuge. They were not only for the benefit of the Israelites but also for “the stranger that sojourneth among them” (verse 9). God’s justice applied to all, without partiality.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

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- II. The land divided
 - D. The assignment of the cities of refuge (20:1-9)
 - 1. The purpose for the cities (20:1-6)
 - 2. The location of the cities (20:7-9)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. Who commanded the establishment of cities of refuge throughout Israel?

2. What two words in verse 3 do you think are especially significant, and why?

3. In what ways has Jesus been a “city of refuge” for you? What are some steps you can take to make sure you stay within the boundaries of His protection?

CONCLUSION

Christ Jesus is the place of refuge for sinners, and in His great compassion for mankind, He invites all to come to Him.

NOTES

1. Jonaki Mehta, “Maryann Gray Spent Her Life Advocating for People Who Accidntally Killed Others,” *National Public Radio*, April 12, 2023, <https://www.npr.org/2023/04/12/1169257508/maryann-gray-hyacinth-fellowship-accidental-death>.



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“There failed not ought of any good thing which the LORD had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass. (Joshua 21:45)

There was a time in my life when I needed the blessing of the Lord in a very tangible way. Although I was working long hours, the money was going to pay for rent, and there was not a lot left over for essentials such as food. My teenage daughter questioned when we were going to go grocery shopping, since we had little left in the cupboards. I told her that I did not have the money to buy food and did not know when I would, but that the Lord would help us somehow. I poured my heart out to the Lord, saying that I needed His help. I also reminded Him that my children needed to see that trusting the Lord for every detail of our lives really worked!

In just a few days, my daughter called me at work, wondering who had told the man from church that we needed food. When I told her no one had, she said that one of the brothers had just left ten sacks of food at our house. I told her that the Lord was behind it, and He had answered our prayers. We cried together when I got home from work that day, thanking the Lord over and over again for His provision. You can be sure, that is one day that gets brought up every time we start reminiscing about the blessings of the Lord and the prayers that He has answered!

The Children of Israel had that privilege as well. Surely, there were nights spent around campfires telling stories of how God had kept His promises to them. I can imagine one of the elders talking about hearing his father tell the account of how the people left Egypt. No doubt another chimed in, telling of the miracle of the manna and quail. I am sure they told of the crossing of the Red Sea, and how their families made it across by the hand of the Lord.

We can experience the continued blessing of the Lord too. All we have to do is follow His directions exactly and trust Him to do what He has promised.

BACKGROUND

Chapter 21 describes the apportionment of the Levitical cities. The males of the tribe of Levi were set apart to help the Children of Israel serve God by teaching them the Law and aiding in their worship. Because of this divine call, they were not allotted a single parcel of land as their inheritance, as the other tribes were. Instead, God declared that He would be

their inheritance (see Joshua 13:14; 13:33). Since the Levites needed places to dwell, they were given cities and their surrounding pasturelands that were scattered throughout Israel. This made religious instruction close at hand for all the inhabitants of the land.

The cities were appointed according to their three Levitical clans or family divisions: the families of Kohath (verses 13-26), the families of Gershon (verses 27-33), and the families of Merari (verses 34-42). The Levites descended from Aaron were from the family of Kohath and were included in the allotment of cities given to the Kothathites.

The final verses of today's text contain a short summary of God's faithfulness in fulfilling His promises to the Israelites "according to all that he swore unto their fathers" (verse 44). The concept of rest in the phrase "the LORD gave them rest round about" is alluded to in the New Testament in Hebrews chapter 4.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

Hannah's Bible Outlines
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- II. The land divided
 - E. The apportionment to the Levites (21:1-42)
 - 1. The summary (21:1-8)
 - 2. The specifics (21:9-40)
 - a. The assignment to Kohath (21:9-26)
 - b. The assignment to Gershon (21:27-33)
 - c. The assignment to Merari (21:34-40)
 - 3. The conclusion (21:41-42)
 - F. The summary (21:43-45)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. According to verse 2, who commanded that the Levites be given cities to dwell in?

2. Why do you think it was important to establish cities and pasture lands for the Levites?

3. In what way can verse 45 provide personal reassurance to you?

CONCLUSION

The Lord delights in blessing His children, and if we follow His instructions, His promises are sure. What a wonderful heritage we have! There is value in rehearsing how God has fulfilled His promises for you.

NOTES



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“But take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the LORD charged you, to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul.”
(Joshua 22:5)

When I first entered the job market, I had to make a decision between a job with the state government or a job in the small town where I lived. It was tempting to take the job with the state because it paid more to start with, and the opportunities for advancement were fantastic, but I would have had to commute over thirty miles each way. I finally decided to take the job close to home so I would have more time for church and family. It was a decision I never regretted.

We face decisions every day that may impact our spiritual walks with the Lord. Some of these decisions include where to work, who to marry, who our friends are, how many church activities to get involved in, and the list goes on. In every decision, we want to be sure we are serving God in obedience and with our whole hearts, just as Joshua admonished the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh in our focus verse. If we are not careful, we can be more concerned about what seems beneficial for us than what is God’s will for our lives.

Years before today’s text, the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh made a decision to request a possession on the east side of Jordan. This request made sense to them because they raised cattle, and the land on the east side of Jordan was excellent for their herds. Yet, they were using their own reasoning rather than following God’s perfect will. It was a decision that eventually led them into trouble.

God has a perfect plan for each of our lives. At times, we may look at the decisions we face and expect to trust our common sense to help us choose correctly. Yet, our own reasoning may lead us astray. How much better to cleave to God and His commandments! We are always safe when we lay our decisions out before the Lord and seek His direction. Then, if we follow His instructions, we will benefit and be blessed—even if those directions do not sometimes seem the most advantageous to our ways of thinking.

BACKGROUND

Moses had given one requirement to the children of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, when

he agreed that they could develop their land on the east side of Jordan. They had to help their fellow tribes conquer the land on the west side of Jordan. In our text today, these tribes had fulfilled their promise and now the land was at rest. They had been at battle for over seven years, and finally the time came when Joshua told them they could return to their families and the land of their possession.

Joshua commended these tribes who remained loyal to their duties until the enemy was defeated. They had pledged their loyalty to Moses, and then they extended that same loyalty to Joshua after Moses died. After commending them, Joshua admonished them concerning their spiritual walk. He knew they had won the victory over their enemies because they loved God and kept His commandments. They needed to show the same diligence in their worship of God as they had in battle.

In Israel, it was the custom that those who stayed home to take care of the land, women, and children, or those who could not participate in the battles for some other reason, shared in the wealth that had been taken from their enemies in battle. These returning men carried the riches to be distributed.

As the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh started home, they began to feel isolated from their brothers on the west side. They decided to solve their problem by building a large altar by the Jordan River as a reminder that they belonged to the nation of Israel. The altar on the Jordan River did not guarantee spiritual success for the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh. Their success would only come if they faithfully attended the feasts at the Tabernacle, obeyed God’s Word, and diligently taught their children to serve God.

The tribes on the west side of Jordan became concerned when they saw the altar that their brothers had built. God had commanded them to destroy all the altars of the heathen Canaanites, and they were not to build any altars of their own. So they decided to send a group of ten princes from each tribe, led by Phinehas, the son of the high priest, to investigate this seeming breach of the Law. Phineas warned the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh of the dangers of rebelling against the Lord, reminding them of two grave instances of rebellion and the consequences that followed.

In verse 22, the accused tribes used the sacred names for the Lord: “El” (the Mighty One), “Elohim” (God), and “Jehovah” (the Lord). This denoted an earnest vow that their intentions were pure and that the

Phinehas and his delegation, as well as all the Children of Israel on the west side of Jordan, were pleased with the eastern tribes' declaration that they were not rebelling against the Lord. They were relieved that the altar was erected as a witness and not for sacrifices, and they were thankful that a civil war had been averted.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

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A. The return of the Transjordan tribes

1. The tribes sent home (22:1-9)

a. The altar erected (22:10-12)

c. The answers of the tribes

d. The controversy resolved

1. What three tribes decided to stay on the east side of the Jordan River, and what was their reason?

[illegible]

When making decisions in our own lives, we need to make sure we are in line with God's Word, and not making choices that may seem to benefit us but, in fact, will draw us away from our service to God.

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“Cleave unto the LORD your God, as ye have done unto this day.” (Joshua 23:8)

Today, while walking along the edge of a bluff, we spotted an old, storm-battered tree just hanging on to the side of the bank—barely attached, but still hanging on! Half of its support had given way as the ground had crumbled beneath it, exposing sturdy thick roots still clinging tenaciously to the remaining soil.

How important it is, when the storms of life assail us, to have roots that go deep. God does not promise to shelter us from storms. If He allowed no dark clouds to gather around and no winds to buffet us, would our “roots” ever grow strong? So often it is through adversity that we learn the most priceless spiritual lessons.

We may face times when the people we have depended on turn away. The support system we had grown accustomed to suddenly is not there. We feel alone and vulnerable and wonder if we will make it spiritually. With the Psalmist, our heart cries out, “I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none” (Psalm 69:20).

Whatever choices those around us may make, God does not leave us alone. Instead, He is with us, strengthening and supporting us and helping us to cling to Him. His promise is, “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee” (Hebrews 13:5).

The adversity we face today is training us to be strong in Christ. Let us thank God that He is with us, and hold on!

BACKGROUND

Joshua’s farewell sermon to the Children of Israel was much like Moses’ when he was near the end of his life (Deuteronomy 31:1-21). Joshua was old and knew his time of death was near. He assembled the Children of Israel to deliver to them one last message in hope that they would live in accordance with God’s laws. He first reminded the people of all the things God had done for them, and of all the fulfilled promises they had witnessed. He urged them to continue to obey the Law of God, reminding them that if they did, God would continue to bless them. If they did not obey His Law, God would administer judgment.

The Israelites had fallen away from God and His Law before, and worshiped idols (Exodus 32); Joshua wanted to prevent it from happening again. He cautioned the elders of Israel to remain separate from the

heathen nations that surrounded them. Joshua knew that if the Children of Israel chose to befriend the people of Canaan, they would be tempted to worship Canaan’s gods. He instructed the people to “cleave unto the LORD your God,” knowing that only God had the power to keep them.

The Hebrew verb *dabaq*, which means “to cleave or cling,” is used to designate a very close, physical proximity between two people. It also indicates the affection and loyalty that results in this type of close relationship. Joshua desired the Children of Israel to have this close relationship with God.

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

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III. The epilogue

B. The final addresses of Joshua

1. The first address (23:1-16)

- a. An exhortation to faithfulness (23:1-13)
- b. A warning about disobedience (23:14-16)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. Joshua felt it was important to remind the Israelites of the promises they had witnessed God fulfill in their lives. What were those promises?

2. What were the Children of Israel ordered to do, and not do, in response to the fulfilled promises? Why do you think Joshua felt it was necessary to give Israel such a harsh warning?

[illegible]

When we cleave to the Lord throughout good times and bad, He will cause our roots to delve deeper into His Word. We are not easily moved when our roots are firmly planted in the Gospel.

[illegible]



DEVOTIONAL FOCUS

“For the LORD our God, he it is that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the people through whom we passed.” (Joshua 24:17)

Much of this chapter concerns the time Joshua gathered together the leaders of Israel and reminded them of the great things the Lord had done for them. This makes me think of a time when our children were young, and we found ourselves regularly making the 15-mile drive home from church late at night. To pass the time, I got in the habit of telling the kids stories from my younger years. They loved those stories so much that they would beg to hear more. It was not that I had done anything so heroic, but to the kids, the accounts were interesting. These were real experiences that had happened to a real person who was important to them, and I must confess, I enjoyed reminiscing. I recalled events that had been almost forgotten. Some of the most interesting happenings had not been fun at all at the time—but seen from the vantage point of years later, they had been character builders.

My stories included things that, in the more recent past, the Lord had done in my life and of those who were dear to me. For instance, one time, my wife began choking on a chicken bone at the dinner table. Of course we prayed! The Lord intervened and cleared her throat. Once this was done, we all prayed a prayer of thanksgiving, and then continued with dinner. Another time, our baby boy was very sick and I wondered if the Lord was going to take him to Heaven. I prayed and put him in the Lord’s hands, and just a few minutes later, my son perked up and soon was feeling fine. Another time, we had prayed for my son’s hearing problem; then one day, we discovered that he could hear just fine. The Lord had healed him. I could go on and on, for there were many such accounts.

If you have been a Christian for any length of time, the Lord has done many things for you. It is good for you to meditate on these things. This will help you to recognize the reality of God. No, the days of miracles are not past, and yes, we want to serve the Lord with all our hearts for all that He has done for us. Not because we have to, but because we love and appreciate Him! If we need faith to face an obstacle,

what better way to engender faith than by remembering what the Lord has done for us in the past.

BACKGROUND

God had given Israel a land that they did not conquer, crops that they did not plant, and cities that they did not build. Such unmerited benefits called for a commitment of service on the part of Israel.

The most famous words of this chapter are found in verse 15, Joshua’s crisis-call for this commitment: “Choose you this day whom ye will serve.” When Joshua was able to get the people to reflect on all that God had done for them, choosing God was easy.

Then, in verse 23 we read: “Now therefore put away, said he, the strange gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto the LORD God of Israel.” After a choice to serve God has been made, it may be necessary to take definite action, as the Lord directs.

In response to Joshua’s challenge, the people emphatically chose to serve God. What a testimony to the value of Joshua’s godly influence is seen in the statement, “And Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua” (Joshua 24:31).

In recording Joshua’s death, a double reference is given to identify him. First, he is given the normal designation (“the son of Nun”) to distinguish his identity in relation to his father. Then, a second reference established his relationship with his Lord (“the servant of God”). What an epitaph!

AMPLIFIED OUTLINE

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III. The epilogue

B. The final addresses of Joshua

2. The second address (24:1-28)

a. A rehearsal of God’s faithfulness (24:1-15)

(1) The review (24:1-13)

(2) The challenge (24:14-15)

b. The covenant at Shechem (24:16-28)

(1) The promise of the people (24:16-18)

(2) The instructions of Joshua (24:19-24)

(3) The covenant ratified (24:25-28)

3. The final notices (24:29-33)

a. Joshua’s death and burial (24:29-31)

b. Joseph’s reburial (24:32)

c. Eleazar’s death and burial (24:33)

A CLOSER LOOK

1. What pest did God send to drive out the enemies of the Children of Israel?

2. What would you list as the top five miracles the Lord had done for the Israelites in the years prior to the account in Joshua 24?

3. What are the top five miracles that the Lord has done in your life or in those of your loved ones? Note here how you felt when you were awaiting the answer, and then how you felt after God had sent His answer.

[illegible]

CONCLUSION

What kind of a spiritual legacy are you leaving your children, your grandchildren, or others who look up to you? When you are gone, will your godly influence cause them to say, as the people said in response to Joshua in verse 21, “We will serve the LORD”?

NOTES

[illegible]

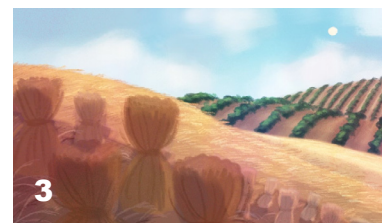
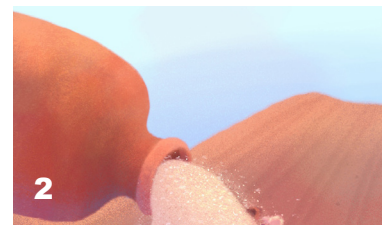
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The Seven Feasts in Leviticus

<div>English/ Hebrew Name</div> <div>Jewish/Gregorian Calendar Dates</div> <div>Theme</div> <div>Key Texts</div> <div>Summary</div>	Spring Feasts The first three springtime feasts celebrate different aspects of one major event in Jewish history: deliverance from bondage in Egypt. They occur together in an eight-day period, beginning with Passover. Technically, Passover is only the first night of the celebration, but together the three feasts are commonly referred to as “Passover week.” The fourth springtime holiday, the Feast of Weeks, occurs seven weeks later.			
	1	2	3	4
	FEAST OF PASSOVER <i>PESACH</i>	FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD <i>MATZOT</i>	FEAST OF FIRSTFRUITS <i>BIKKURIM</i>	FEAST OF WEEKS OR PENTECOST <i>SHAVUOT</i>
	Fourteenth day of the first month March or April	Fifteenth to twenty-first day of the first month March or April	The day after the Passover Sabbath March or April	Fifty days after the Feast of Firstfruits May or June
	Deliverance	Holiness	Resurrection	Revelation of God’s Law
	Leviticus 23:5 Exodus 12:1-46	Leviticus 23:6-8 Exodus 23:14-15	Leviticus 23:9-14 Exodus 23:16, 19	Leviticus 23:15-21 Exodus 34:22 Deuteronomy 26:1-11
	<p>This feast marks God’s deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage and His preservation of their firstborn through the sacrificial blood of a lamb. That was the defining moment of Israel’s birth as a nation and therefore is the first holiday on their calendar. It is to be commemorated with a meal that is comprised of the same types of foods as the first Passover.</p> <p>Over 1,500 years later, Jesus died on Passover as the Sacrificial Lamb for all mankind. The Jews’ deliverance from Egyptian bondage foreshadowed our greater deliverance from the bondage of sin, which is accomplished through the Blood of Jesus. Thus, the birth of the nation illustrated spiritual birth of believers in Jesus Christ.</p>	<p>This feast commemorates the first days of the Israelites’ freedom from bondage. When God brought them out of Egypt, He instructed them to eat only unleavened bread. Before this feast begins each year, the Jews are to purge all leaven from their homes and then abstain from eating it during the entire Passover week.</p> <p>In the New Testament, leaven is commonly symbolic of sin, so unleavened bread is symbolic of a life without sin—in both outward acts and the inner nature. Sin must be eradicated from our hearts through sanctification, which was also made possible through Christ’s sacrificial death (Hebrews 13:12).</p>	<p>This feast commemorates the Jews’ entrance into the Promised Land and the fulfillment of God’s promise to give the land as an inheritance. It is also the first of three feasts that relate to the harvest season. On this day, Jews are to offer the first of the harvest to God, thanking Him in advance for what is yet to come.</p> <p>Jesus rose from the dead on the Feast of Firstfruits and Scripture explains that as the first to be resurrected, He was the firstfruits offering (1 Corinthians 15:20). On Easter (Resurrection Day), we rejoice both in the power that raised us from spiritual death and our promised inheritance awaiting us in Heaven.</p>	<p>Firstfruits marks the beginning harvest of the first spring crop (barley), and this feast marks the beginning harvest of the last spring crop (wheat). This is a day of rest when offerings are to be made, including grain, wine, animal sacrifices, and some quantity of all the later spring crops. Jewish tradition also holds that the Ten Commandments were given to Moses on this day.</p> <p>Following Jesus’ ascension, it was on this feast day that the Holy Spirit was first poured out, which resulted in 3,000 souls being reconciled to God. This fulfilled Jeremiah 31:33, “I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.” These first converts under the new covenant dispensation marked the birth of the Church.</p>

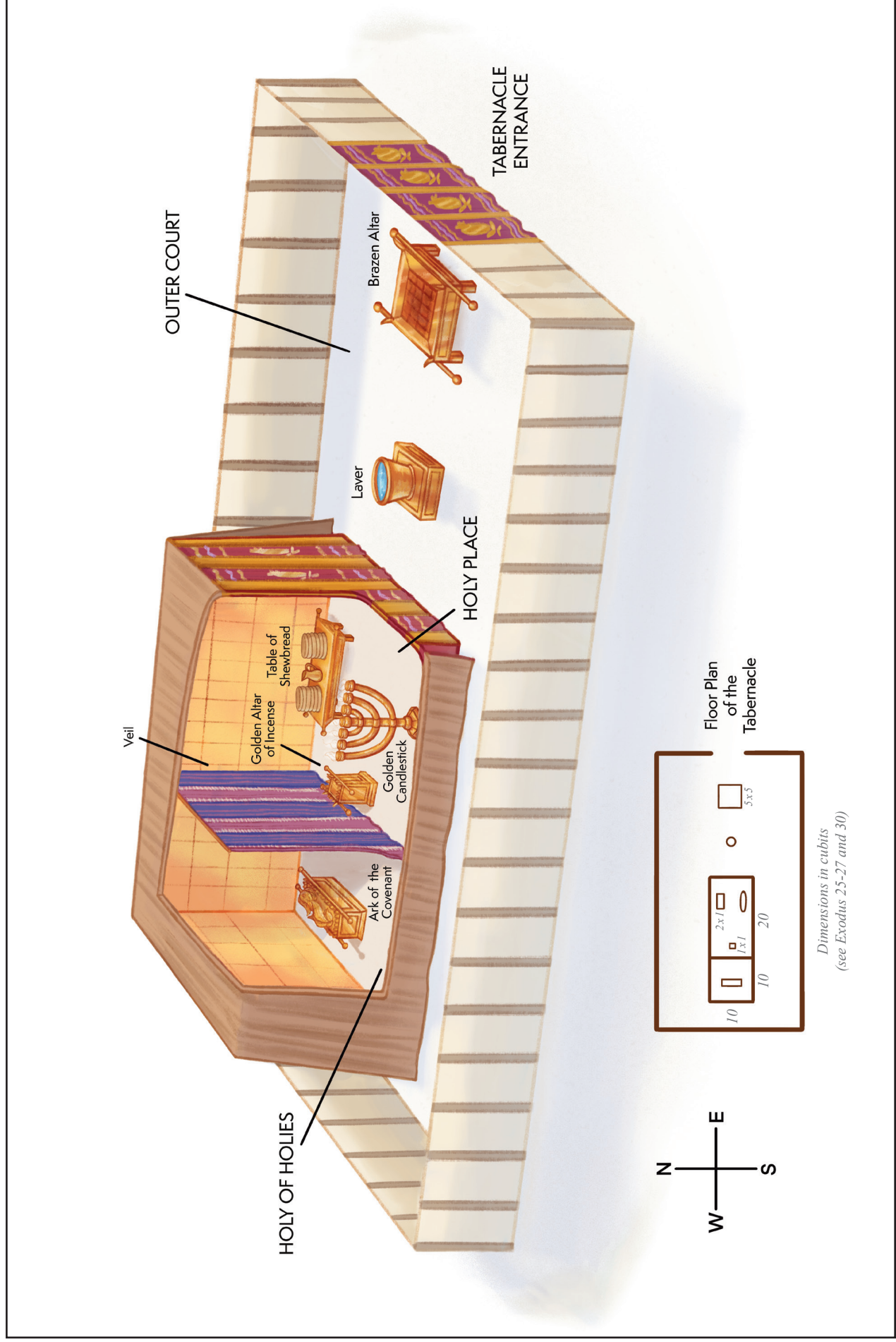
Fall Feasts | The fall feasts all take place in the seventh month of the Jewish calendar. Since the number seven is representative of completion, it seems fitting that these feasts would mark major events of the end times. Christ fulfilled the spring feasts during His first coming and it is anticipated that He will fulfill the fall feasts during His second coming.

5	6	7
FEAST OF TRUMPETS YOM TERUAH	DAY OF ATONEMENT YOM KIPPUR	FEAST OF TABERNACLES SUKKOT
First day of the seventh month September or October	Tenth day of the seventh month September or October	Fifteenth to twenty-first day of the seventh month September or October
Regathering	Repentance	Millennial Kingdom
Leviticus 23:23-25 Numbers 29:1-6	Leviticus 23:26-32 Leviticus 16:1-34	Leviticus 23:33-43 Deuteronomy 16:13
<p>This feast does not mark an event in Jewish history and Scripture does not state its purpose. It is to be a solemn day of rest that includes sacrifices, offerings, and the blowing of trumpets. It is commonly understood to be a call to prepare for the Day of Atonement.</p> <p>This feast has not yet been fulfilled, but the blowing of trumpets suggests a connection to the Rapture. It is the only feast to occur on the first day of the month, which begins when the new moon first appears. The Jewish people had to wait and watch the sky to know when that would happen, just as we must wait and watch for the return of Jesus.</p>	<p>God gave detailed instructions to carry out this feast, with the focus being a sacrificial ceremony to atone for the sins of the nation. It is a solemn day of fasting, mourning sin, repentance, and abstaining from work and pleasure.</p> <p>This feast has not yet been fulfilled because no major event has taken place on this date. However, Christ's death fulfilled all the steps of atonement. At Passover He was the Sacrificial Lamb, but in the Day of Atonement He is both our High Priest and Atoning Sacrifice (Hebrews 9:11-12). Some suggest this feast will be fulfilled on the future day of mourning at the Battle of Armageddon.</p>	<p>This feast is a time of great jubilation when the people are commanded to rejoice. Falling at the end of harvest season, it is a time to thank God for His provision, protection, and presence over the past year, as well as remember His help during the years of wandering in the wilderness. To do that, the Jewish people were instructed to dwell in booths (simple shelters) outside their homes for seven days.</p> <p>This feast has not yet been fulfilled. Zechariah prophesied that it will be celebrated during Christ's Millennial Reign, so it could mark a key date related to His kingdom.</p>



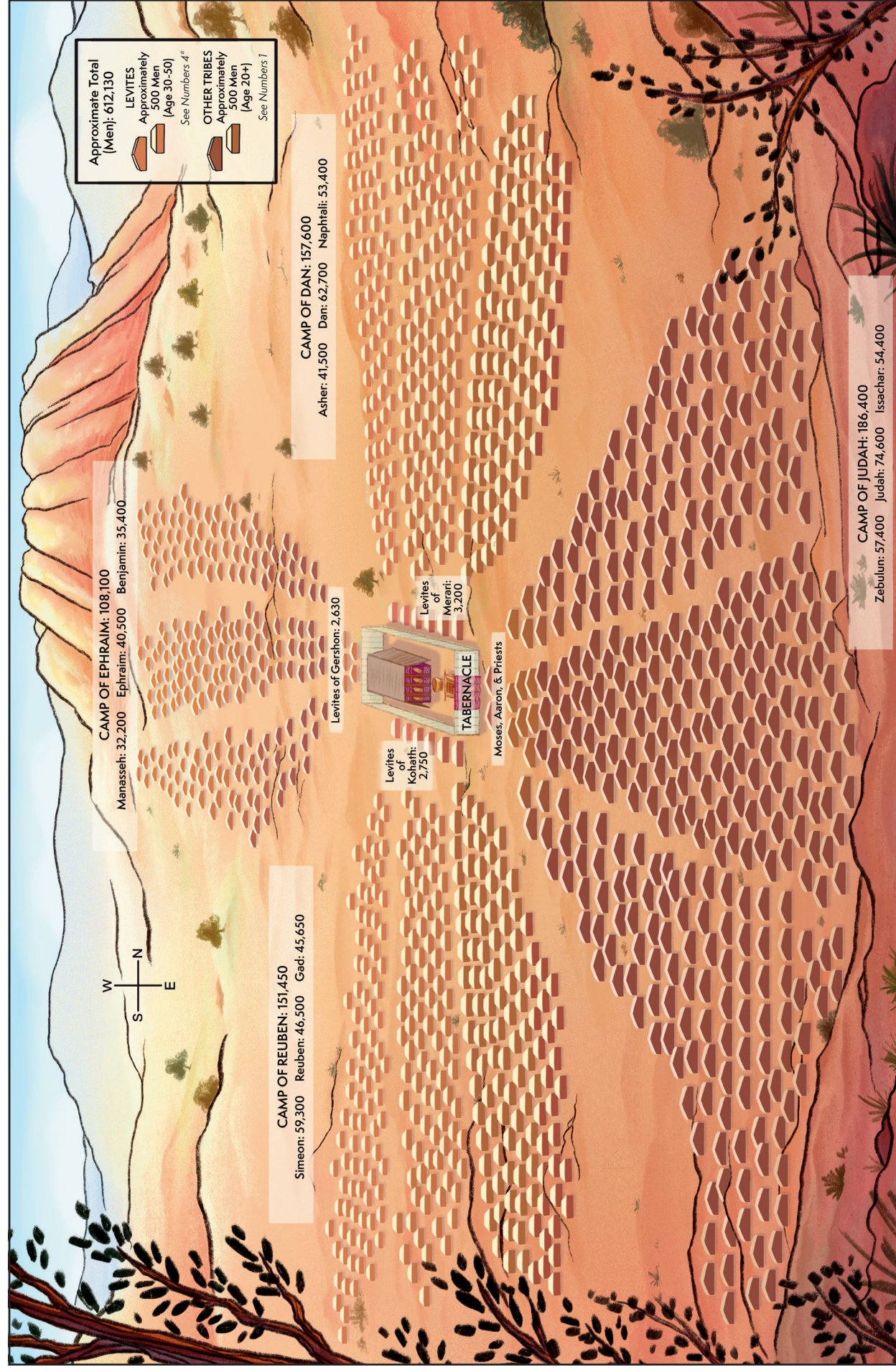
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An Illustration of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness



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An Illustration of the Camp of the Tribes of Israel



*The Levite totals in Numbers 3 include males age one month and older. The Numbers 4 census totaled only those able to perform the Levitical duties, including carrying the Tabernacle, which was tremendously heavy. The Numbers 4 totals are used here as the age 30-50 parameter more closely aligns with the age 20+ criteria for the other tribes, and this essentially represents all those able to serve either in a religious or military capacity.

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Key Locations in Numbers



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The Promised Land – Allotments & Cities of Refuge



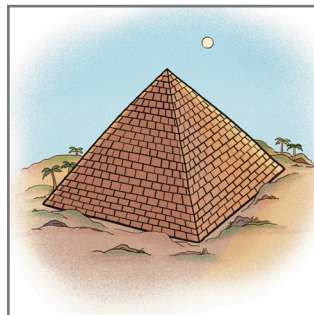
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Why So Many Laws?

Jacob's family numbered 75 when he moved to Egypt.¹



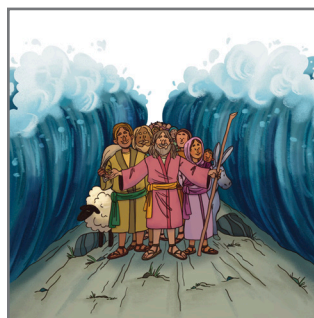
The Israelites spent approximately 400 years living in Egypt.



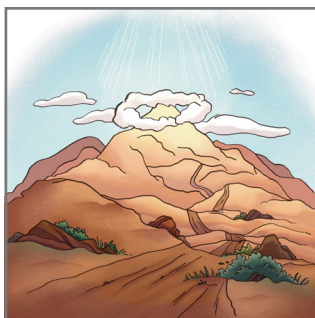
At the end of that time, their population was perhaps over 3,000,000.² They were slaves, and had years of exposure to Egyptian idolatry, culture, and government.



God gave them a miraculous deliverance from Egypt.



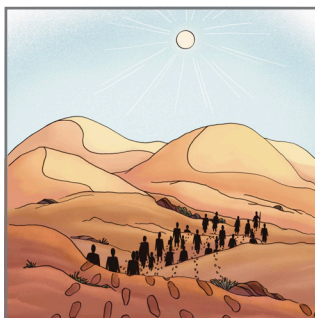
At Mt. Sinai, God gave them a mode of worship and a system of government.



When Israel was nearly ready to enter the Promised Land, the ten spies gave a negative report. The people rebelled because they did not believe God would give them the land.



Due to their unbelief, God caused the people to wander in the wilderness for nearly thirty-nine years. All those who were twenty and older died (except Caleb and Joshua).



The new generation of adults was ready to enter the Promised Land. They had not been of age when the Law was given, so Moses rehearsed it. Thus we have Deuteronomy, meaning "second giving of the law."



1. Acts 7:14.

2. *Adam Clarke Commentary*, pg. 358, chart for Exodus 12:37.

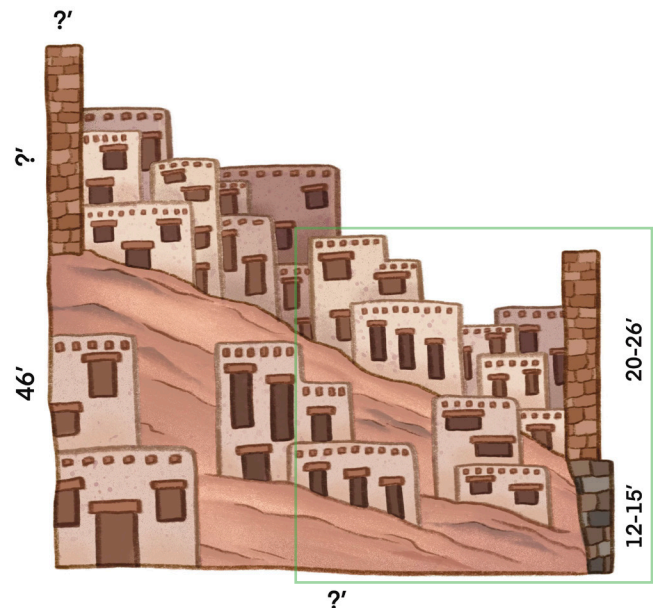
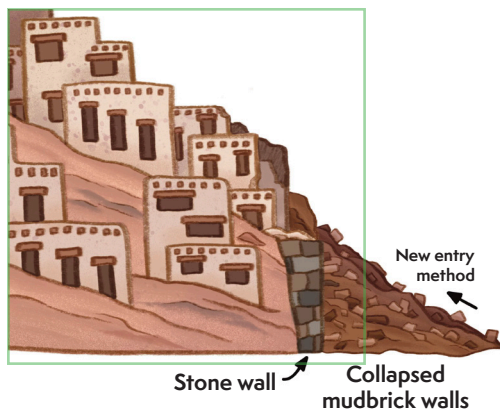
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Jericho Archeology

Dr. Bryant Wood is an archaeologist and director of *Associates for Biblical Research*. He has made a career of the study of Jericho and is an internationally recognized authority on the subject. In his article titled, “The Walls of Jericho,” first published in *Creation Ex Nihilo* (March–May 1999), Dr. Wood relays the following intriguing discoveries regarding Jericho:

- Jericho was built on a hill and surrounded by two high walls. The outside (or lower) wall included a mudbrick wall (20 to 26 feet high and about 6 feet thick) built on top of a stone retaining wall (12 to 15 feet high) at the base of the hill. Inside the mudbrick wall was an embankment ascending to about 46 feet above the ground level of the surrounding countryside. On the top of this embankment was the inside (or upper) wall, also made of mudbrick. (In meters respectively: 6 to 8 and 2; 4 to 5; 14.)
- The upper city (inside the upper wall) included about nine acres and was home to about 1,200 people by archeological estimates. Houses were also built on the embankment between the upper and lower mudbrick walls—likely a poor district, as this area was significantly less secure in war. Residents of the surrounding countryside probably fled to Jericho in wartime as well.
- Jericho had adequate food and water to survive a lengthy siege. A spring inside the city provided an abundant water supply and excavations have uncovered large jars *full* of grain (indicating the siege had been short and the conquerors had not looted the commodity, as was normally the case).
- Various excavations (at different sides of the city) have found that the mudbrick walls collapsed and fell with gravity, forming a ramp against the (still-standing) stone retaining wall.

“So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.” (Joshua 6:20)



- A German excavation in 1907–1909 found a short section of the outside city wall and the houses built against it still intact. The section was located on the north of the city and the houses (built between the two city walls) were in the poor area.

“Then she [Rahab the harlot] let them [two spies] down by a cord through the window: for her house was upon the town wall, and she dwelt upon the wall. And she said unto them, Get you to the mountain [probably the wilderness just north of the city], lest the pursuers meet you.” (Joshua 2:15-16)

- Archeologists have found a layer of ash and debris (about three feet thick) and their studies indicate the city was burned *after* the collapse of the walls.

“And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein.” (Joshua 6:24)

Dr. Wood concludes that the findings of archeologists at Jericho prove the Biblical account in Joshua. It is important to realize, however, that many archeologists—even those who carried out the excavations Dr. Wood references—conclude that the Biblical account is merely a folk tale explaining the city ruins. Most of these Bible-skeptic views are based on unproven and incorrect assumptions of the archeologists—such as a world that is billions of years old—and the dating of archeological findings—methods of which are debatable in themselves. (Visit www.answersingenesis.org for more information.)

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