

Hello everyone,

PERCENT OF BIBLE COMPLETED: 16.6%

Weekly Readings will cover: Deuteronomy 1 through Deuteronomy 7

Sunday: Deuteronomy 1

Monday: Deuteronomy 2

Tuesday: Deuteronomy 3

Wednesday: Deuteronomy 4

Thursday: Deuteronomy 5

Friday: Deuteronomy 6

Saturday: Deuteronomy 7

Current # of email addresses in the group: 584

I hope your study of the book of Numbers is finishing well. You have one day left (tomorrow) for those who are current. We now will start the book of Deuteronomy, which will be our final book of the Pentateuch. I hope you enjoy this first week in this new book.

Website archive location for audio files & PDFs:

<https://www.ucg.org/congregations/san-francisco-bay-area-ca/posts/audio-links-re-three-year-chronological-deep-dive-reading-program-circa-2022-2025-903711>

### **3-YEAR CHRONOLOGICAL STUDY: Week 30**

Read the following passages & the Daily Deep Dive on the daily reading.

Day 183 - SUNDAY: June 18<sup>th</sup>

Deuteronomy 1

Daily Deep Dive:

Book Overview:

The book of Deuteronomy is the last book of the Pentateuch. The book itself clearly identifies that the main author was Moses (see Deuteronomy 1:1, 5 & 31:24-25). Additionally, there are numerous New Testament passages that confirm the authorship of Moses (compare Matthew 19:7-8, Mark 10:3-5, Acts 3:22-23; 7:37-38, Romans 10:19). An unidentified author must have completed the book containing the details around Moses death and Joshua becoming the

next leader. The original audience would be the generation of Israelites who would soon enter the land of Canaan. After 40 years of wandering in the desert, they were on the brink of entering the promise land. God, through Moses, would give His people a sort of refresher course. There are a number of major themes in this book such as the law, the covenant, mankind's choices and God looking out for the poor.

I don't want to duplicate the material already explained in the UCG reading plan's introduction to this book, so we will move over to that: "By the time Moses addresses the messages contained in the book of Deuteronomy to the new generation of Israelites, he is 120 years old. The Hebrew name for the book, *Haddebbharim*, means "The Words," derived from the first verse, which reads, "These are the words which Moses spoke to all Israel...." The Jews have also referred to this book as *Mishneh Hattorah*, "The Repetition of the Law," taken from Deuteronomy 17:18, which uses a phrase that the New King James Version translates as "a copy of this law." The Greek Septuagint translation rendered this as *To Deuteronomion Touto*, that is, "This Second Law," from which we have the English title, Deuteronomy.

The book does not, however, set forth a "second" law, but merely repeats and expands on the law that had been given in a codified form more than 40 years earlier in the book of Exodus. In fact, much of God's law predated even the book of Exodus, as the Ten Commandments, for instance, were already in force since the creation of Adam and Eve (compare Romans 5:12-13). And Abraham, we are told, observed God's commandments, statutes and laws (Genesis 26:5) long before Moses was born. Therefore, some Bibles, such as most Protestant German Bibles, identify this last book written by Moses simply as "The Fifth Book of Moses." It should be noted, however, that its last chapter, Moses' obituary, was probably written by someone else, Joshua being the most likely candidate—especially when we see other obvious additions by others in Moses' books (e.g., Numbers 12:3). While

God *could* have inspired Moses to write this last chapter before his death, that seems unlikely.

The *Tyndale Old Testament Commentary* on Deuteronomy states: "Deuteronomy is one of the greatest books of the Old Testament. Its influence on the domestic and personal religion of all ages has not been surpassed by any other book in the Bible. It is quoted over eighty times in the New Testament and thus it belongs to a small group of four Old Testament books to which the early Christians made reference." The other three books are Genesis, Psalms and Isaiah. *Tyndale* adds, "The book comes even to the modern reader in much the same way as a challenging sermon, for it is directed towards moving the minds and wills of the hearers to decision: choose life, that you and your descendants may live (Deuteronomy 30:19)." [END]

Here is the UCG reading plan for chapter 1: "In verse 2 we see the mention of Horeb, which is another name for Mount Sinai. With the exception of Deuteronomy 33:2, this book uses Horeb rather than Sinai. The word Horeb literally means "desolation," "desert" or "drought."

At the outset, it is emphasized that Moses is, throughout the book, "explaining" the law (verse 5). This explanation is not based on his own will and ideas, but on "all that the Lord had given him as commandments to them" (verse 3)—reminding us of Jesus Christ, who only spoke what the Father told Him to speak (John 8:26; John 15:15). Yet before actually reiterating the law, Moses reviews Israel's prior opportunity to enter the Promised Land, their refusal and the resulting penalty, and, to bolster their faith, the recent victories that God had given them.

First, Moses reminds his audience how he established an organized administrative legal structure within the nation (Deuteronomy 1:9-18) before Israel was asked to possess the Promised Land (verses 8, 19-21).

This shows that an organization, in order to be successful in its dealings with the world, must first be properly set up and smoothly functioning internally. The selection of "heads" (verse 13) or tribal leaders involved a process similar to the selection of the first deacons of the Church in Acts 6. The people were told to give Moses the names of worthy candidates and Moses made the formal appointments (Deuteronomy 1:9-15). In Acts, the apostles appointed men as deacons after asking for congregational input.

Before entering the land of the Amorites, the people requested that spies first be sent into the land (Deuteronomy 1:22). Moses was pleased with this idea (verse 23), and God told him to go ahead with it (compare Numbers 13:1-2). Except for Joshua and Caleb, however, the returning spies discouraged the nation from trying to conquer the land (Deuteronomy 1:28). Although they confirmed God's word that the land was good (verse 25), they exaggerated physical obstacles as insurmountable and proclaimed that God must have hated them and didn't really want to give the land to them (verse 27). As a consequence, because of their unbelief (verse 32), in spite of all the visible proofs that God was with them (verses 25, 33), they *rebelled* against Him (verse 26) and refused to enter the land. The New Testament book of Hebrews explains that the Israelites were not allowed to enter the rest of the Promised Land—symbolic of our future rest in the Kingdom of God—because, although they had heard God's Word and had seen His mighty wonders, they hardened their heart in rebellion and refused to believe and obey Him (Deuteronomy 3:7-19). Thus, God pronounced His sentence. Later, even Moses was included in the sentence (verses 25-26; 4:21), as he did not follow God's explicit instructions when he struck the rock at Kadesh (Numbers 20:7-13). As Israel's human leader and teacher, Moses was under a stricter judgment from God (compare James 3:1) in order to serve as an example to the people (Deuteronomy 1:37).

After they realized their sin and the penalty it had earned them, a contingent of the people decided to go ahead and enter the land in an attempt to conquer it according to God's original instructions—but it was now too late. For us, too, there will come a time when it will be too late to enter the "Promised Land" of God's Kingdom (compare Matthew 25:1-13). Moses told the Israelites not to invade Canaan, as God would not be with them this time. But again, they did not believe and rebelled against God's Word (Deuteronomy 1:42-43)—and suffered the consequence of bitter defeat (verses 44-45). Then they returned and wept before God (verse 45; compare Matthew 25:30), but He would not hear them.

The throng of people who eventually did enter the Promised Land (who were all age 59 or younger) first had to endure the "great and terrible wilderness" (verse 19). We might consider this a physical type of the trying experiences that Christians sometimes endure in this life prior to entering the Kingdom of God (see Acts 14:22)." [END]

Verse 4 – King Sihon of the Amorites was defeated in Numbers 21:24. King Og of Bashan was defeated in Numbers 21:33 - 35. King Og was a giant (compare Deuteronomy 3:11 from the Rephaim).

Verse 10 – This statement ("stars of heaven") is the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham in Genesis 15:5. God is always faithful to fulfill His promises.

Verse 17 – Regarding the instruction to "hear the small as well as the great", the John Gill commentary states: "persons in low, life, and in mean circumstances, as well as great and noble personages; or little causes and of no great moment, as well as those of the utmost importance; all must be attended to..." [END]

It also states in this verse that they were not to be afraid of any man's presence. People can intimidate, use power, wealth, authority, etc...to

pervert justice. God gives clear instructions that they are to pass impartial judgments.

Verse 28 – Reminder that the sons of Anakim were giants (compare Numbers 13:22).

Day 184 - MONDAY: June 19<sup>th</sup>

Deuteronomy 2

Daily Deep Dive:

We'll begin with the UCG reading plan on this chapter: "In spite of the fact that the Israelites, because of their sin and subsequent punishment, had to wander in the wilderness for 40 years, unable to enter the Promised Land, they were still being cared for and provided for by God (verse 7). Once "all the men of war had finally perished from among the people" (verse 16), God gave command to the new generation to begin to conquer the land (verse 24). He made clear, however, that it was He who was in ultimate control of events (verse 25), so that no flesh would glory before Him. In fact, God hardened the heart of King Sihon to provoke him into fighting against Israel (verses 30, 32). And God delivered him and his cities, as well as other specifically designated cities, into the hands of Israel (verses 33, 36).

At God's command, the Israelites "utterly destroyed the men, women, and little ones of every city" (verse 34). Passages like these have led many readers to conclude that the God of the Old Testament was harsh and cruel, in contrast to Jesus Christ, who is thought of as gentle and meek. The fact is, however, that it was the preincarnate Jesus Christ *Himself* who appeared to and gave this command to Moses (see 1 Corinthians 10:4 and our free booklet [Who Is God?](#)). It was He, the Giver of life who created mankind at the Father's behest (compare Hebrews 1:1-2; John 1:3; Colossians 1:16; Ephesians 3:9), who rightly ordered *taking* the life of certain people. It appears that in God's infinite wisdom, He decided that, rather than the children of that evil,

demon-worshiping society continuing to live in misery and pain, it was better for them to die and later be resurrected to physical life in a better world in which His right way of life would be taught to everyone and enforced throughout the earth (see Revelation 20:5, 11-12; "The Eighth Day: Eternal Life Offered to All," *God's Holy Day Plan: The Promise of Hope for All Mankind*, 1999, pp. 51-57).

Of course, the prerogative to take human life belongs solely to God. Only He has the right to kill a person or command someone else to do so." [END]

Verse 5 – God commands the people not to “meddle” (NKJV) with Esau’s descendants. This Hebrew word means “to cause strife, stir up, contend, meddle” (BDB).

Verse 9 – The Moabites came from the family of Lot’s son Moab through his first daughter (see Genesis 19:17). Ar was the city center of Moab (also called Ar of Moab in Isaiah 15:1).

Verse 19 – The Ammonites were the descendants of Lot’s son Ben-Ammi through his second daughter (see Genesis 19:38).

Verses 20 & 21 – It’s worth noting that God works on tracks that we might not always understand. Here God says it was He who destroyed these giants for the descendants of these families He had chosen to bless.

### Day 185 - TUESDAY: June 20<sup>th</sup>

Deuteronomy 3

Daily Deep Dive:

Here is the UCG reading plan for this chapter: “Moses reminds the new generation how God gave the Israelites victory over their enemies— “there was not a city which we did not take from them” (verse 4),

although all of them "were fortified with high walls, gates and bars" (verse 5). This, says Moses, happened because "the Lord your God has given you this land to possess" (verse 18). This reminder was to inspire confidence in the Israelites at this momentous time—encouraging them to have faith as they crossed into the Promised Land, where they would meet Canaanite resistance. Moses, rather than wallowing in self-pity over the fact that he himself would not enter the land, obeys God's command to provide this encouragement, particularly to Joshua, the new leader (verses 23-28). They need not fear the enemy since God will fight for Israel (verse 22).

Several commentaries including *Tyndale* and *The Nelson Study Bible* state that the "bedstead" of Og mentioned in verse 11 could also be translated sarcophagus. So the reference may be to the size of his coffin. These dimensions equal about 13 feet by 6 feet." [END]

I don't have anything additional to add for this day.

Day 186 - WEDNESDAY: June 21<sup>st</sup>

Deuteronomy 4

Daily Deep Dive:

We'll begin with the UCG reading plan: "Moses cautions Israel not to "add to" nor "take from" God's commandments (verse 2), but, rather, to "carefully observe" them and to "act" in accordance with them (verses 2, 14, 5-6). To *know* God's Word is not enough—indeed, it is quite useless unless one *acts* on it and *does* His will (see Matthew 5:19; Matthew 7:24-27; James 1:22-25). If Israel does this, then they will be recognized by others as a great, wise, understanding, righteous and God-fearing nation (verses 6-8). But since such recognition could be a source of pride, Moses warns them to *not forget* God and His wonders (verses 9-10). He reminds them that *God* was the originator of this wise law—that *He* appeared to them on the mountain to proclaim *His* Ten Commandments (verse 10).



At that time, the people did not see a "form" of God (verse 12). He points this out to dissuade the people from crafting any images of Him. However, as a consequence of this statement, some believe that God is formless and shapeless. Yet this is emphatically false, as the fact that God does have form is clearly stated in Numbers 12:6-8. In fact, God created man in His image, in accordance with His likeness (Genesis 1:26), as Adam's son Seth was in the image and likeness of Adam (Genesis 5:3). Moreover, God revealed His glorified form to Moses (compare Exodus 33:18-23). Both the Father's and the Son's glorified appearance are described in the Bible (compare Daniel 7:9, Daniel 7:13; Ezekiel 1:26-28; Revelation 1:12-16; Revelation 4:2-3; Revelation 5:1), clearly proving that God has form. Further, although the people as a whole did not see any form when God spoke to them from the mountain, Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu and the 70 elders of Israel clearly did see a form shortly thereafter (Exodus 24:9-11). Nevertheless, in no encounter did *anyone* see the *full* glorified appearance of the Almighty. And not only can no image truly capture God's glory, but any image would limit Him in people's minds.

In Deuteronomy 4:13, we read that God "declared...His covenant which He commanded you to perform, the Ten Commandments; and He wrote them on two tablets of stone." Some have taken this passage to mean that the Old Covenant was the same as the Ten Commandments, and that when the Old Covenant was abolished, so were the Ten Commandments. This understanding, however, is not correct—since a covenant is a contract or an agreement, which is *based on* law but not *identical to* the law. For instance, we read in Exodus 24:8 that God made a covenant with Israel "according to all these words." The Revised English Bible renders this, "on the terms of this book." In Exodus 34:27, it is again explained that a covenant is made based on law, as we read, "Write these words, for according to the tenor of these words I have made [or, better, I will make] a covenant with you and with Israel." Again, the Revised English Bible states that "the covenant I make with

you and with Israel is on those terms." We have already seen that the Ten Commandments were in force long before Moses lived, so the Old Covenant did not bring them into existence—nor was it identical to them. What the Old Covenant did not bring into force could not be abolished when that covenant ended at the time of Christ's death. The reason that the Ten Commandments are especially emphasized in Deuteronomy 4:13 is that they are the *heart and core* of the law on which the Old Covenant was based (compare Deuteronomy 5:22)—but they are not *all the law* on which the covenant was based (compare Deuteronomy 4:14).

Moses begins to admonish the Israelites again not to make any carved images, in whatever form, to portray or picture God as an aid to worship (verses 15-18, 23-25). Further, he warns them not to worship anything else in place of the true God (verse 19). Earlier, in Exodus 32, God had condemned Israel for making a golden calf *representing* Him (Exodus 32:8). Rather than using physical pictures, portrayals or representations of God in our worship of Him, we are to worship God "in spirit and truth" (John 4:24)—not with idolatrous images and practices adopted from false religions. Moses warns the Israelites that if they would not obey God's commandments, God would scatter them among the nations so that only few would survive (verses 26-27). The fulfillment of this prophecy lies ahead of us, as it was meant for the end time or the "latter days" (verse 30).

A hint of man's amazing destiny is given in verse 19, where it says that "the sun, the moon, and the stars, all the host of heaven" are for "all the peoples under the whole heaven as a heritage." Thus, though mankind was only given dominion over the earth in Genesis 2, we are to ultimately inherit the entire universe. This is the same incredible message conveyed in Romans 8:16-25 and Hebrews 2:5-11.

Deuteronomy 4:29 is a wonderful comfort. It assures us that we *will* find God if we search for Him with all our heart and soul (compare Jeremiah 29:13). Indeed, God wants not just *part* of our affections but our *entire being* devoted to Him (compare Romans 12:1-2; Matthew 22:37)." [END]

Verse 3 – This is when the people of Israel committed harlotry with the women of Moab and they worshiped their gods (see Number 25:1-9).

Verse 6 – The NKJV is translated as: "Be careful to observe them". In the Strong's Dictionary it states: "properly to hedge about (as with thorns), that is, guard, generally to protect, attend to, etc..."

Where do we get wisdom and understanding? It doesn't spring out of us as if we are the source of true wisdom and understanding. Our wisdom and understanding come from God's laws, statutes, and judgments, and to whatever degree we appropriately apply them, some may attribute to us wisdom & understanding but again, we know where it really comes from.

Verse 9 – Both the words "take heed" & "keep" (KJV/NKJV) are both again the same word "to hedge about with thorns" as discussed in verse 6.

Israel, and by extension all of us, are told that to avoid God's way from departing from our hearts, it takes focus and diligence, otherwise, we can lose it. God's way and the understanding of it, is not something we should take for granted.

Further, we have the responsibility, the command by God, to teach His way to subsequent generations. It is their choice whether to respond, but we have the command to ensure it is diligently taught and modeled.

Verse 28 – This is the reality of mankind's gods. They are simply wood, rock, etc...and they don't do anything (hear, see, smell).

Verse 30 – In life, all of us get off course and fail. The answer is always the same, turn back to God, repent, and obey, because we serve a very merciful God.

Verse 34 – What God had done for the nation of Israel was utterly unique.

### Day 187 - THURSDAY: June 22<sup>nd</sup>

Deuteronomy 5

Daily Deep Dive:

Here is the UCG reading plan to start off this chapter: “Moses repeats the Ten Commandments to the younger generation. Comparing this chapter with Exodus 20, we see that God inspires Moses here to give an additional reason for keeping the Sabbath—“remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; *therefore* the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day” (Deuteronomy 5:15). So the Sabbath not only reminds us that God is our *Creator*, but it also points to Him as our *Redeemer*—the One who delivers *us* from *spiritual* Egypt, i.e., the dominion of Satan, society and our own sinful nature. The Sabbath day, then, signifies *freedom* and reminds us that we should share this freedom with everyone who is within our care and under our control (verse 14). Of course, heads of households must exercise great wisdom in this area when it comes to wives and houseguests who do not share the same beliefs.

The Fifth and Tenth Commandments also have wordings slightly different from those in Exodus 20. Notice the words "as the Lord your God has commanded you" in the Fourth and Fifth Commandments. These are not ten suggestions, and it's interesting that God emphasized this concerning these two commandments when He inspired Moses to restate the Ten.

The fifth commandment is stated very positively, adding not only the same blessing for obedience promised in Exodus 20—"that your days may be long...in the land"—but also the words "that it may be well with you." Obedience to this commandment is essential to maintain healthy families, which are one of the foundation of a stable society. The lack of proper esteem and respect for parents is one of the reasons that families in Western nations are in sad shape. *World* magazine recently reported, "A respected seminary professor [suggested] that the very concept of fatherhood may 'now be passe' for a high proportion of young people" (May 25, 2002).

In the Tenth Commandment, "wife" and "house" are in opposite order in the two versions, and Deuteronomy adds "his field." The reason for that addition may be that no Israelite had a field of his own for 40 years after the Exodus, but now they were about to gain fields in the Promised Land. Realizing the Tenth Commandment prohibits coveting, it is interesting to consider Colossians 3:5, which tells us that covetousness is idolatry. Thus, the Tenth Commandment links right back up with the First Commandment. In this way, the Ten Commandments make a complete circuit.

"Face to face" in verse 4 does not mean the Israelites actually saw the face of God (see Deuteronomy 5:5, Deuteronomy 5:22-23; Deuteronomy 4:12, Deuteronomy 4:15). Even Moses did not see His glorious face. The expression implies close proximity—being confronted with God's obvious presence—and God's speaking to them on a level they could understand.

People accuse God of hiding from them, but in verses 23-27 we see man's proclivity to hide—or at least keep his distance—from God. Of course, God mercifully understands (verse 28), and He expresses His longing for the time when they would have "a heart in them" to properly fear and obey Him (verse 29). A heart can be spiritually

converted only when God gives the gift of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:5-10; Deuteronomy 29:4).” [END]

V15 – In Egypt, there was no weekly day off work. Under the oppression of Egypt, every day was the hard grind of slavery. God’s Sabbath rest is a blessing. We should never forget that.

V29 – Do we pray daily to have a heart that yearns to obey and follow God? Our hearts are not naturally inclined toward God. With God’s help through His Holy Spirit, we can have soft malleable hearts.

V32 – God’s way isn’t easy. It’s a lifelong journey that involves constant examination, course corrections, humility, and a willingness to learn, grow, change, and overcome, to name a few things (of course we know it’s even more involved than that). We often find ourselves in one ditch or another. God doesn’t want us turning left or right from His ways. This is not easy but with God’s help and humility, He will guide us back on track.

### Day 188 - FRIDAY: June 23<sup>rd</sup>

Deuteronomy 6

Daily Deep Dive:

Here is the detailed UCG reading plan writeup for this chapter: “For many centuries Deuteronomy 6:4-9 has been known among the Jews as the *Shema*. This Hebrew word, which means "hear," is the first word of verse 4. Continuing in verse 4, we read in the earlier and New King James Versions that God is "one." And, indeed, many, including the Jews, have traditionally understood the verse this way. Furthermore, they have concluded from it that God consists of only one Being. We know, however, that God consists of two Beings at present, God and the Word (John 1:1), later called the Father and Jesus Christ (compare verse 14). God said in Genesis 1:26, "Let *Us* make man in *Our* Image," showing that God consists of more than one personage. The Hebrew

word for God, *Elohim*, is plural, and denotes the God *family*. Ephesians 3:14-15 not only confirms that God is a family, but also that He is in the process of *enlarging* His family through converted Christians—His begotten children awaiting glorification into divine spirit beings like Him (1 John 3:1-2). It is interesting how the New International Version translates Hebrews 2:11: "Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are *of the same family*."

So what is Deuteronomy 6:4 saying? First of all, it should be stated that the word "one" in the sense of singularity is probably not what the original Hebrew here is intending to convey. Indeed, it could be understood as one in priority—meaning God is to be *first*, the highest priority, in our lives. And some Bible versions render the phrase in question as, "The Lord is our God, the Lord alone." In this sense, the prohibition is against worshiping other gods. Though the Lord normally denoted the One who became Jesus Christ, since He is the one who dealt with Israel (compare 1 Corinthians 10:4), this passage does not deny the existence of the Father. For the name *Yahweh*, having the sense of "Eternal One," which is rendered "Lord" in the New King James Version, could also refer to God the Father (compare Psalm 110:1). Of course, Israel did not know about the Father. Rather, Christ came to *reveal* Him (Matthew 11:27; John 1:18; John 17:25-26).

But Deuteronomy 6:4 *could* be translated as "the Lord is one." And if *that's* what is meant, then we must ask *how* is God one? The answer can be found in John 17, where Christ prayed to the Father about His disciples, "And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one" (verse 22). So God truly is one—in the unity of mindset and purpose shared by the Father and Christ, which They want us to share with Them. But They obviously do not constitute one being—just as God's *people* are not to become one being.

Incidentally, Deuteronomy 6:8 should be understood metaphorically—sealing God's instructions on our hands (i.e., in our actions) and between our eyes (i.e., in our minds). But later Jews attempted to obey this scripture in a literal way by writing down four passages (verses Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Deuteronomy 11:13-21; Exodus 13:1-10; Exodus 13:11-16) on tiny scrolls—then placing the scrolls in leather pouches and attaching these to their foreheads and left arms while reciting the Shema. This is the origin of phylacteries (referred to in Matthew 23:5).

We are then introduced to one of the two great commandments in the law: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength." (Deuteronomy 6:5; compare Matthew 22:36-38). Christ made clear that this is "the first and great commandment," but that the second ("You shall love your neighbor as yourself") is "like" it (verse 39, quoting from Leviticus 19:18). He explained that God's entire law is summarized by these two commandments (see Matthew 22:40). This is understandable, as the first four of the Ten Commandments explain *how* to love God, while the last six tell us *how* to love our neighbor. The statutes and judgments, in turn (compare Deuteronomy 4:13-14), expand on and set forth in more detail the practical application of the Ten Commandments in our daily lives. And Christ's teachings in the New Testament—a magnification of the law (see Isaiah 42:21)—expand on the Ten Commandments, statutes and judgments even further, by showing us how to live according to their spiritual intent. (For instance, in Matthew 5:21-22 Jesus stated it is not only wrong to actually murder someone, but it is wrong to even hate someone, as uncontrolled hatred can ultimately lead to the physical act of murder.)

Verses 6-9 emphasize the urgent necessity of teaching children the truths of God, giving parents the primary responsibility here. Too often, parents are negligent in this responsibility and children grow up uncertain about what they know. Conveying confidence and certainty



in the Word of God is a vital role parents are commanded to fulfill. The laws and ways of God should be taught daily. Regarding "Thou shalt teach them diligently" in verse 7, *Adam Clarke's Commentary* notes that the Hebrew means "'to repeat, iterate, or do a thing *again and again*'; hence to whet or sharpen any instrument, which is done by *reiterated* friction or grinding" (emphasis added). This points to the great value of family Bible study and prayer. And biblical principles should be talked about informally as often as opportunities present themselves—whenever there is a way to connect daily living and attitudes with the teachings of the Bible. An opportunity is whenever you are together—sitting, walking, riding in a car, eating together, etc. An opportunity is when a question or problem arises and the parent can point to the Bible for understanding and solutions. And it's valuable for families to start and end each day talking about and praying to God.

Since Israel was a carnal nation, God commanded that they write the commandments on the doorposts of their houses (Deuteronomy 6:9). Although it would not be wrong for a Christian to do so today, it is not obligatory, as the law of God should be inscribed in a far more important place—on our hearts. God desired this for ancient Israel, too (verse 6), but He knew that this would not be the case without His Spirit within them (compare Deuteronomy 31:21, Deuteronomy 29:4). Of course, while adults may feel no need for physical reminders and visual aids, as illustrated by verses 8-9, they are often helpful for children.

In verse 15, God describes Himself as a "jealous God," as in Exodus 34:14. He demands our absolute loyalty and fidelity to Him. But this is not for Himself—because He just soaks up our adoration. Putting other things before the true God in our lives is harmful and destructive to ourselves and others. God knows that all too well. If everyone instead set their affections on Him—the God of love—above all others, there would be perfect peace and happiness throughout the world. So God is jealous not for His own sake—but for ours.

Some today say that all we need is the "righteousness of faith"—that is, as long as we believe in Christ, we are justified or "made right," regardless of *how* we live. But Moses told Israel something different. In Deuteronomy 6:25, we read, "Then it will be *righteousness* for us, if we are careful to *observe all these commandments* before the Lord our God, as He has commanded us." Psalm 119, an ode to keeping God's law, which is traditionally attributed to King David, defines all of God's commandments as righteousness (Psalm 119:172). After all, faith without works is dead (James 2:14; James 2:20). We will be rewarded in accordance with our works, and we are to practice "*obedience to the faith*" (Romans 1:5; Romans 16:26). When we sin, Christ forgives us upon repentance and justifies us or makes us righteous (1 John 1:7-9). But we are told *not* to sin—this must be our foremost goal (Matthew 6:33; Romans 6:15; 1 John 2:1). Since "sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4, KJV), we remain righteous unless and until we sin. But no one can keep God's law on his own—we need the help of the living Christ in us to conquer sin. That is why we read, "He condemned sin in the flesh that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit... Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His... For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God" (Romans 8:3-4; Romans 8:9; Romans 8:14)." [END]

Verse 2 – The “fear” of the Lord is a large subject, but it’s more than just being afraid of God. Certainly, God is All Powerful and it would be foolish not to have a proper fear of being in opposition to God. The word “fear” in Hebrew contains also the idea of reverence, honor, respect, and being in awe of Him.

Verse 4 – The UCG reading plan above discussed the Hebrew word “Shema”. I would like to discuss this important word a bit more. This is a very common word that is used 1,158 times in the OT. For example, it’s used also at the beginning of verse 3 and it was used in

the previous chapter in Deuteronomy 5:1). The Hebrew word Shema contains much more depth than simply “to hear”.

The Hebrew language only has about 45,000 words, and less than 9,000 of those words were used to write the OT. (For comparison, the English language has approximately 470,000 words (10x more)). Therefore, Hebrew words are often very dense with deep meaning, such as the Hebrew word Shema which has been translated more than 45 different ways.

The word Shema can mean simply “to hear” (compare Genesis 3:8). It can also mean “to hear and to respond” (compare Psalm 27:7). In Leviticus 26:21 & 27, it’s translated “to obey”. Often in the Bible, God intends all three to be understood by the simple word of Shema. That God expects us to audibly hear, to appropriately respond to what we’ve heard, and to be obedient to what He has commanded.

Eighteen times in the Bible, God inspired the word to be used twice in a row (shema shema) which adds additional emphasis (compare Deuteronomy 11:13 – translated as “earnestly obey”).

Verse 12 – It’s so easy in our human nature to forget God (think less about Him or be less in tune with Him) when all things are going pretty well in our lives. God recognized that this was an easy thing for humans to do, so He warned them in advance to be very careful about this. We should be careful to remember to thank God, remember where our blessings and good gifts come from, and to remain diligent in obeying Him.

Verse 16 – This word translated “tempt” in the NKJV means “to test, to try, to prove” (BDB).

Day 189 - SATURDAY: June 24<sup>th</sup>

Deuteronomy 7

Daily Deep Dive:

Here is the UCG reading plan for this last day of our reading week:

"Israel is not to intermarry with the peoples of Canaan, because, as God tells them, "they will turn your sons away from following Me, to serve other gods" (verse 4). Regrettably, the Israelites will not obey this command, and the history of Israel and Judah will reveal the bad results. Indeed, we may think of individual examples in the Old Testament like Solomon, whose many foreign wives induced him to forsake the living God, or the influence of the pagan Queen Jezebel on King Ahab. Yet, even for us today, God says basically the same thing (compare 2 Corinthians 6:14-18). In 1 Corinthians 7:39, Paul makes it clear that a Christian is not to marry a person of a different faith. The Living Bible renders this passage as follows: "The [Christian] wife is part of her husband as long as he lives; if her husband dies, then she may marry again, but only if she marries a Christian." God wants us to be happy, and He knows that an interfaith marriage is not going to be as peaceful, joyful and productive as it otherwise would be. Moreover, God is concerned that His child might be influenced by the unbelieving spouse to forsake Him—which happened time and time again in ancient Israel and Judah. And a believer usually is a more effective instrument in doing God's work when he or she has a believing partner, so they can serve as a team.

In this same chapter of Deuteronomy, God promises the nation that if they will obey Him, they will be blessed in their possessions, and He will "take away from [them] all sickness" (7:15; compare Exodus 23:25). But neither the ancient nor the modern Israelites have lived a lifestyle pleasing to God. And, as a consequence, they were, are, and will be plagued with sicknesses and terrible diseases (compare Leviticus 26:16, 21, 25). Although an individual's sickness can be caused by his own sin, such as by smoking, this does not have to be the case. Polluted air, for example, can cause sickness. In this case, the person breathing the air did not sin, but those responsible for polluting the air because of greed—abandoning the responsibility God gave man of caring for the

environment—did sin. Indeed, the fact that there is sickness in the world at all is ultimately a result of the general state of mankind being cut off from God due to the sin of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.

Deuteronomy 7:20 explains that when the Israelites enter the Promised Land, God will fight *for* them to hand it over to them. We read, "Moreover the Lord your God will send the *hornet* among them until those who are left, who hide themselves from you, are destroyed." He had similarly told Israel in Exodus 23:27-28: "I will send My fear before you, I will cause confusion among all the people to whom you come, and will make all your enemies turn their backs to you. And I will send *hornets* before you, which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite from before you." We will later see that God *does* send hornets. Indeed, even though Israel fights, their sword does *not* bring them victory—rather, God does. Moses states: "Therefore understand today that the Lord your God is He who goes over before you as a consuming fire. He will destroy them and bring them down before you; so you shall drive them out and destroy them quickly as the Lord has said to you" (9:3). So God gives them their part to play—but they are not truly responsible for their victory. Following the conquest, He explains, "I sent the *hornet* before you which drove them out from before you, also the two kings of the Amorites, but *not* with your sword or with your bow" (Joshua 24:12). Sadly, Israel's future disobedience will show just how true this is. For as part of the penalty for forsaking God, Israel will suffer ignominious defeat at the hands of their enemies. "The Lord will cause you to be defeated before your enemies; you shall go out one way against them and flee seven ways before them.... You shall be only oppressed and plundered continually, and no one shall save you" (Deuteronomy 28:25, 29). Thus, trusting in their weapons of war will be utterly useless. True security lies only in God's protection and deliverance.

Today, converted Christians are instructed by God not to fight in war at all (compare Matthew 5:44; Matthew 26:52; Romans 12:20; 2 Corinthians 10:3-4; James 4:1-2; 1 John 3:15). And in the wonderful world to come, when God's Kingdom rules the earth, mankind as a whole will not learn the way of war anymore (Isaiah 2:4)." [END]

Verse 7 – Later we will see this command of God come into play. Israel was to make no covenants with these pagan nations that God was removing from the land.

Verse 5 – Very clear instructions to remove all the false god worship from the land. Nothing was to stay.

Verse 9 – This is true to this very day where God in His faithfulness continues to fulfill blessings and promises through the family lines He promised to bless.

Verse 21 – When we are in difficult situations and fear comes upon us, we should remind ourselves of this principle. We should not be afraid, because “the great and awesome God, is among you.”

Verse 26 – Are we careful to keep this mindset about the things that God hates? God loves all people, but the actions that are clearly against His laws and the byproduct of their evil choices we must “utterly detest” and “utterly abhor”.

The word for “utterly detest” means “to be filthy”. It’s used twice in a row for added emphasis.

The word for “utterly abhor” means “to loathe”. It’s used twice in a row for added emphasis.