



# Deuteronomy

Deuteronomy 1 – 26

Introduction of the book of Deuteronomy & Investigation of Moses' stirring speeches.

## Storing Up Treasures:

Discovering The Rich Teaching Of Scripture



### The Name

Both the Hebrew and Greek titles of the book reveal its importance to the Israelites. The Hebrew title, Haddebarim, means “the words,” which comes from the opening verse of the book, *“These are the words Moses spoke to all Israel in the desert east of the Jordan”*

**Deuteronomy**

(Deuteronomy 1:1). Deuteronomy is a series of farewell sermons from Moses to the new generation of Israelites preparing to enter the land of Promise, in which he urged the people to love God, obey His laws and follow the leadership of Joshua. The history and legislation of the earlier books are reviewed in Deuteronomy, but only as the basis for the words of

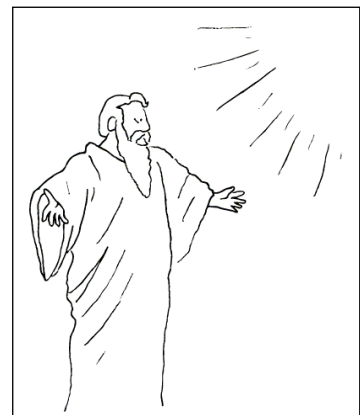
admonition. The clear intent of the book is persuasion. This is why some ancient Rabbis called Deuteronomy, “The Book of Exhortations.” In much the same way a preacher today may take the information of a Biblical text and seek to inspire his listeners to put it in their hearts and lives, Moses takes the events and laws of Israel’s past and preaches passionately to the hearts of his listeners “words” that are meant to stir up love and obedience. Oh, the power of “the words.”

Our own title, “Deuteronomy,” is taken from Greek version of the Old Testament called the Septuagint. In the third century B.C. translators gave the book the title *Deuteronomion*, *deuteros*, meaning “second,” and *nomos*, meaning “law.” In Deuteronomy we have a second giving of the Law. It is not a giving of a new law, but a reemphasis and exposition of that law which was earlier given in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers. Deuteronomy speaks to the need of repetition and remembrance to a life of spiritual maturity and obedience. Deuteronomy fills in missing elements and gives the spiritual significance of the history found in the other books of the Pentateuch.

Collected from "Explore the Book," Baxter; "Masterwork" Swindoll; "Story of the Bible" Jackson

### The Purpose

There are certain times in life when we need counsel or advice. Often those times of counsel are related to transitional periods. When we are about to go into a new phase of experience it is wise to get some straightforward advice. Perhaps the time of transition is from childhood to adolescence, or from singleness to married, or starting a new job, moving to a new place, or entering retirement. We all see the need for some counsel at such important times of transition, where we are going into a new experience, and we need to hear from someone who knows how to get us to the other side safely and successfully.



The book of Deuteronomy is a book of counsel given to people who are about to make a great transition in their lives. Israel has just finished 40 years in the wilderness where they walked with God, following a cloud by day, and a fire by night; where they had Moses as their leader; where they experienced the blessing of God as He provided for their needs in the form of manna and water. Canaan wouldn't have the cloud, wouldn't have Moses, wouldn't have the miraculous food. They are about to go into land of Canaan where the land was full of idolaters, immoral, unbelieving, corrupt, degenerate people. This new generation would be tempted by the wickedness of the world like they have never known. Israel is going through a transition! These nomads were about to become a nation with a land.

The one to give that needed counsel was Moses. He is more than twice as old as anyone in Israel, except Joshua and Caleb. The oldest Israelite would have been around 58 years old, and Moses was 120! The wisdom of years gave his counsel significance. He was a proven leader who helped Israel through her first transition from slaves to a nation. The wisdom of experience gave his counsel insight. But most of all, Moses was the one to help Israel through this transition because He was God's man. He spoke God's words, and loved God's ways. There are several reasons why Moses restated the Law on the border of Canaan.



## New Generation

The old generation (except for Caleb and Joshua) had perished in the wilderness, and the new generation needed to hear the Law again. We all have short memories, and these people were twenty years of age and under when the nation failed decades before at Kadesh-Barnea. It was important that they know God's Word afresh and realize how important it is to obey God. It is sad to note that this generation would not do the same thing for their children that Moses did for them. They did not pass on their knowledge of God to their children. And the book of Judges begins with this tragic epitaph of this generation that stood before Moses with such hope and understanding, *"After that whole generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation grew up, who knew neither the Lord nor what he had done for Israel."* (Judges 2:10). Where was the Moses for the next generation?

## New Challenge

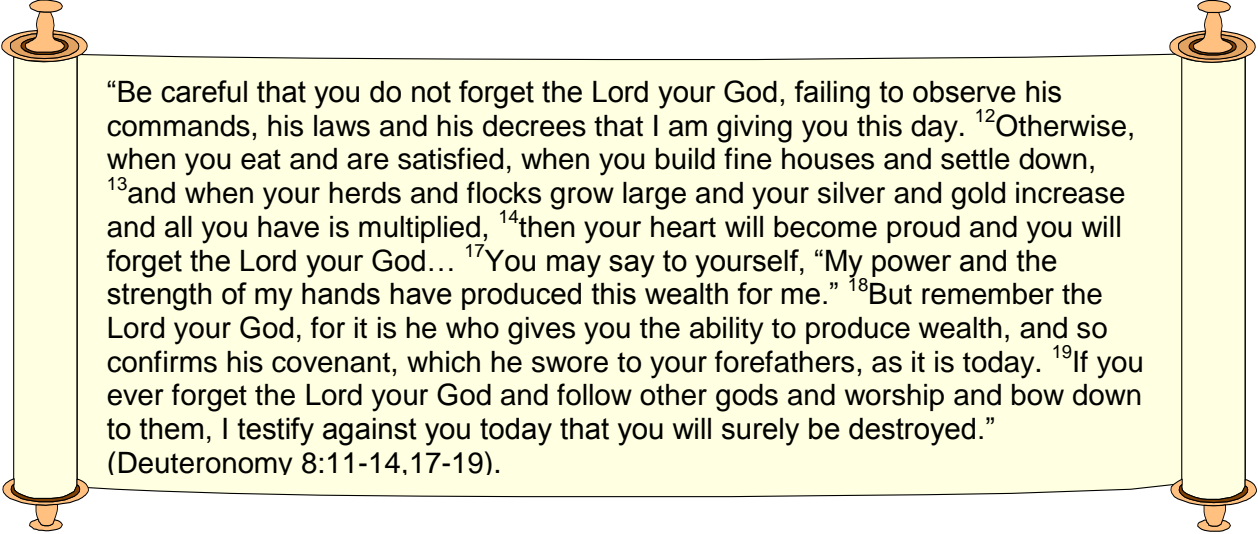
Up to now, the nation's life had been unsettled; they had been pilgrims. But now they were to enter their Promised Land and become a settled nation. There would be battles to fight, and they needed to be prepared. The best way to prepare for the future is to understand the past. *"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it,"* a famous philosopher has said. Moses wanted the nation to remember what God had done.

*The urgency of obedience is a key theme in Deuteronomy. In various forms it appears over 170 times in the book (do, keep, observe). Griffith Thomas offers this summary of the role of obedience in the book of Deuteronomy.*

- ✦ **The Necessity Of Obedience: The Law Of God.**
- ✦ **The Motive For Obedience: The Goodness Of God.**
- ✦ **The Standard Of Obedience: The Word Of God.**
- ✦ **The Incentive To Obedience: The Faithfulness Of God.**
- ✦ **The Alternative To Obedience: The Justice Of God.**

**New Leader** Moses was about to die, and Joshua would take over the leadership of the nation. Moses knew that the success of the nation depended on the people obeying God, no matter who their human leader might be. If they were grounded in the Word and loved the Lord, they would follow Joshua and win the victory.

**New Temptations** A settled people in the land would face different problems than a pilgrim people in the wilderness. Moses wanted them not only to possess the land, but also to maintain that possession, so he warned them of the dangers and gave them the way of success. Moses warned them of the dangers of having plenty. They had known the trial of having little, living in tents, being thirsty, how would they and their children handle the rich plenty of a land flowing with milk and honey? Would trust in self replace trust in God. Moses warned them the dangers of adopting the idols of the land. This generation did not have the peer influence of idolatry as their fathers had in Egypt, but Canaan would provide new temptations. The following quote from Deuteronomy 8 addresses these temptations, and Moses gives his advice.



“Be careful that you do not forget the Lord your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day. <sup>12</sup>Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, <sup>13</sup>and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, <sup>14</sup>then your heart will become proud and you will forget the Lord your God... <sup>17</sup>You may say to yourself, “My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.” <sup>18</sup>But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today. <sup>19</sup>If you ever forget the Lord your God and follow other gods and worship and bow down to them, I testify against you today that you will surely be destroyed.”  
(Deuteronomy 8:11-14,17-19).

**New Revelation** As we read Deuteronomy, we cannot help but be impressed with the deeper message Moses gives concerning the spiritual life of his people. We find the word “love” repeated at least twenty times in the book, an emphasis not found in Genesis through Numbers (only Exodus 15:13; 20:6; 36:6,7). “Love for God and God’s love for the people” is a new theme in Deuteronomy (4:37; 6:4–6; 7:6–13; 10:12; 11:1; 30:6, 16, 20). While the previous books certainly speak of love and prove God’s love for Israel, Deuteronomy emphasizes this theme as never before. Moses shows Israel that the reason behind the commands of God and the work of God was His love for them. Then love begets love, and as God has loved man, so man is urged to reciprocate. Love is the underlying motive of obedience.

The word “heart” is also important. The Word must be in their hearts (5:29; 6:6); sin begins in the heart (7:17ff and 8:11–20); and they must love God from the heart (10:12). In other words, Moses makes it clear that blessings come when the heart is right. In order for the people to possess and enjoy the land, their hearts had to be filled with love for God and His Word. Perhaps this is why there are so many parallels between the Lord’s Sermon on the Mount and Deuteronomy, for both show us the purpose of the command was the condition of the heart!

## **The Book Of Deuteronomy Is A Book For Everyone.**

Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers were “technical books” belonging in a special way to the priests and Levites, but Deuteronomy was written for everyone. While it repeats many of the laws found in previous books, it gives a new and deeper meaning to these laws and shows what they meant in the everyday lives of the people. All of us today can learn much from Deuteronomy about loving God and obeying His will.

From "Outlines on the O.T." Wiersbe; "Story of the Bible" Jackson; "Explore the Book" Baxter

### **The Outline**

There are different ideas as to how many speeches of Moses are recorded in the book of Deuteronomy, from one to ten have been suggested. While the exact number might not be easy to discern, three major divisions of content are easy to find. They occur at chapter 5, where the Decalogue is repeated, and in chapter 27 where the blessings and cursing are proclaimed. This divides the book into three sections, with distinct messages, and distinct perspectives.

<b>The Book Of Deuteronomy</b>						
<i>“Hear, O Israel”</i>						
<i>A Call To Remembrance</i>						
<b>Chapters 1 – 4</b>		<b>Chapters 5 – 26</b>			<b>Chapters 27 – 34</b>	
<b>Looking Back</b> <i>Historical Concerns</i> What God Has Done		<b>Looking Up</b> <i>Practical Concerns</i> What God Expected			<b>Looking Ahead</b> <i>Prophetic Concerns</i> What God Will Do	
<b>Recall</b> Retrospective		<b>Reflect</b> Introspective			<b>Resolve</b> Prospective	
<b>Review God’s Acts For Israel</b>	<b>Exposition of the Decalogue</b>	<b>Ceremonial Laws</b>	<b>Civil Laws</b>	<b>Social Laws</b>	<b>Ratification of the Covenant</b>	<b>Transition Of Covenant Mediator</b>
At the beginning of the book Moses is the leader (1:1)...				by the end of the book Joshua is the leader (1:38; 34:9)		

Conquering Canaan

Wilderness Wandering

Contributions from "The Open Bible"; "Masterwork" Swindoll; "Explore the Book" Baxter

### **Similar Stories: Deuteronomy & 2 Peter**

It is interesting to note the similarities in the message of Deuteronomy and the New Testament book of 2 Peter. Much like Moses, Peter writes his second letter as an aged man of God, and his task is the same, to bring the people to remembrance. He reminds them what God has done in the past, and what God expects of them, and Peter closes by calling his readers to look ahead to the coming of the Lord where eternal “curses and blessings” will be handed out. This proves the message of Deuteronomy is needed in every age!

<b>Similar Stories!</b>		
Parallel of 2 Peter & Deuteronomy		
<b>Remember What God Has Done!</b>	<b>Remember What God Expects!</b>	<b>Remember What God Will Do!</b>
<p>“<sup>1</sup>Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking. <sup>2</sup>I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles.” (2 Peter 3:1-2). (Also, God’s punishment of the unfaithful (2:4-17); The flood in the days of Noah (3:5-7)</p>	<p>“<sup>4</sup>Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.” (2 Peter 1:4).</p>	<p>“<sup>10</sup>But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. <sup>11</sup>Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives <sup>12</sup>as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming.” (2 Peter 3:10-12).</p>
<p><b>What God Has Done</b> <i>Deuteronomy 1 – 4</i></p>	<p><b>What God Expects</b> <i>Deuteronomy 5 – 26</i></p>	<p><b>What God Will Do</b> <i>Deuteronomy 27 – 36</i></p>

From "Outlines on the O.T." Wiersbe; "Story of the Bible" Jackson; "Explore the Book" Baxter

### **A Recognizable Covenant**

Scholars have noted a similarity in the structure of Deuteronomy and the pattern which is observable in vassal treaties from the ancient Near East. Whenever a king would conquer a new people and bring them into his kingdom, he would make a treaty with them that had a common format. God evidently used this format to outline His covenant with His people, so that it would be in a form of communication the people of that time would be familiar with. These treaties consisted of six component parts:

- (1) Preamble (1:1–5)
- (2) Historical Prologue (1:6–4:43)
- (3) General Stipulations (5:1–11:32)
- (4) Specific Stipulations (12:1–26:14)
- (5) Divine Witnesses Invoked (26:15–19)
- (6) Blessings And Curses (27–28)

### **The Chronology Of Deuteronomy**

The first address in Deuteronomy is dated to the fortieth year of the Exodus, the eleventh month and the first day of the month. According to Joshua 4:19 Israel crossed the Jordan river into Canaan in the forty-first year after leaving Egypt, the first month and the tenth day. This would be about seventy days after Moses’ first address. Subtracting the thirty days of mourning following Moses’ death (34:8), leaves roughly forty days for the addresses of Deuteronomy. Moses spoke to the people for about forty days, assuming he died shortly after he delivered his last sermon which is reasonable from the flow of the narrative in Deuteronomy 34.

<b>Chronology Of Deuteronomy</b>		
<b>Deuteronomy 1:3</b>	<b>Deuteronomy 34:8</b>	<b>Joshua 4:19</b>
Moses' First Address	Mourning For Moses (30 days)	Israel Crossed Jordan
40 / 11 / 1 year / month / day		41 / 1 / 10 year / month / day

Adapted from "The Pentateuch" Smith

Forty days to reflect on the past! The miraculous deliverance from Egypt. The bodies of their disobedient parents who lay under the desert sand. Forty days to hear afresh God's own laws for His people. The distinctive codes of behavior that would make Israel shine like a city on a hill. Forty days for the Israelites to anticipate the realization of God's promises, a land of their own. Truly a time of revival—a time of sorrow, self examination, and hope.

### **Jesus' Favorite!**

**For Temptation!** The book of Deuteronomy was quoted by Christ more than any other Old Testament book. It is quoted or referred to in the New Testament more than 80 times—more than any other book. Jesus quoted Deuteronomy three times during His temptations. Understanding the historical context from which these statements were taken gives real insight into the way Jesus used them. Israel was in the wilderness when they learned these lessons, and Jesus was in his own wilderness so He could use them. Where Israel failed in the wilderness, Jesus would utterly succeed! Jesus found in the words of this book the principles that helped Him defeat Satan's every temptation. That alone should commend it's study to us. Deuteronomy was written for the common man, it was intended to help in daily life, maybe that's why it was one of Jesus' favorite.

<b>Satan's Temptation</b>	<b>Jesus' Quotation</b>
"Command these stones to become bread!"	"Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"" (Matthew 4:4). <b>See Deuteronomy 8:3</b>
"Jump from the pinnacle of the temple!"	"Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"" (Matthew 4:7). <b>See Deuteronomy 6:16</b>
"Bow down and worship me!"	"Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"" (Matthew 4:10). <b>See Deuteronomy 6:13</b>

***For Living.*** Jesus also found His favorite passage in the Bible from Deuteronomy. He was asked on time, ***“What is the most important commandment?”*** and His mind went to Deuteronomy. ***“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. <sup>5</sup>Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.”*** (Deuteronomy 6:4-5). Jesus identified love as the greatest commandment. Love is the foundation upon which the Law is based—that understanding comes exclusively from Deuteronomy. When Jesus added, ***“Love your neighbor as your self,”*** (Leviticus 19:18) to Deuteronomy 6:4-5, He said the whole Law can be simply seen as an expression of those two commands. Putting these two passages together you find that all of God’s law can be explained on three levels.

**1** *First, God’s Love For Us.* The Bible never starts with our response. It always begins with God’s initiative. Notice how Jesus began, ***“Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.”*** Why should God be loved totally and completely by Israel? Because God had made a covenant of love with Israel. God chose to be their God. Not because they were deserving. Not because they were large or powerful or impressive. But God, in His grace, chose to be Israel’s God and that’s where it starts. God always approaches us first. Later John is going to say in 1 John 4:19, ***“We love because...”*** what? ***“He first loved us.”*** So understand it starts with God’s love for us.

**2** *Second, Our Response Of Devotion.* We respond to God’s love with devotion. That’s what Jesus meant when He said, ***“Love God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength.”*** Devotion is not a feeling. Devotion is an attitude. Devotion talks about service, and about emptying and abandoning self. It talks about submission. God’s love for us stems from grace. Our love for God stems from gratitude.

**3** *Third, Our Devotion Is Expressed In Love Toward Others.* When one picks God, he picks the one God has picked. ***“This is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us. He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.”*** (1 John 4:10-11). *From God to us to others!* “You’ve got to start with God chose you, when you were unlovely, undeserving. And when that sinks in you are so grateful to God you express it in loving others who are unlovely. To grasp this is he grasp the intent of every law of God.

**One God ! or ?**

Textual Highlights: **Deuteronomy 6:4**

Arguably the key verse in the book of Deuteronomy is in chapter 6:4. Right after Moses recited the 10 Commandments, which formed the heart of the Law—the Law in distilled form, He makes this application,



This great passage is sometimes called the “Shema,” from the word “hear.” Due to the fact that God is said to be “one,” the United Pentecostal church, Unitarians and other groups have called upon this passage to “prove” that God is a unity, not a plurality—He is one, not three. They teach that God is but one Personality, Jesus only. In other words, these believe that Father, Son and Holy Spirit are simply three manifestations of the same Person.

This text rather implies both the unity and the plurality characteristic of the divine godhead. The word “God” is *Elohim* (plural). It is the same word used in Genesis 1:1, and reveals in seed form the doctrine of the trinity which later bursts into full bloom, especially in the New Testament. In addition, the word “one” translates the Hebrew word *ehad*, which can denote a compound unity—stresses unity while recognizing diversity within the oneness. An example of this use of the word “one” is found in Genesis 2:24 where the same term is used to describe the unity that exists in marriage, a man and woman, two different people become “one flesh.” When Moses says, “the Lord is one,” he first uses a plural word for God, and second, he uses a word for one that recognizes that different persons can share unity. “One” does not exclude the multiple personalities of the Godhead. So, yes God is One! And God is three!

See “Notes From The Margin” W. Jackson

## Fleshing Out The Ten!

## Textual Highlights: Deuteronomy 6-26

One way of looking at the middle section of the book, chapters 6—26 is that they are an expansion of the Decalogue with the intent of addressing the spirit of the law. Moses intended to clarify the attitudes implied by the Ten Commandments rather than only giving specific commands on a variety of subjects. The following chart then could be helpful in seeing how the 10 Commandments were “fleshed out” in the rest of the book. This view may help us understand why Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount did the same thing, He illuminated the attitude, the “heart” of the Law. (“Heart” being a key word in Deuteronomy.)

MAJOR ISSUES	GODWARD	MANWARD
AUTHORITY	<b>Commandment 1</b> <i>“no other gods before Me.”</i> (expounded in chs. 6-11)	<b>Commandment 5</b> <i>“honor your father and mother”</i> (expounded in chs. 16:18-18:22)
DIGNITY	<b>Commandment 2</b> <i>“not make an idol”</i> (expounded in ch. 12)	<b>Commandments 6,7,8</b> <i>“not murder, commit adultery, steal”</i> (expounded in chs. 19-21; 22:1-23:24; and 23:15-24:7 respectively)
COMMITMENT	<b>Commandment 3</b> <i>“not misuse the name of the Lord”</i> (expounded in 13:1-14:21)	<b>Commandment 9</b> <i>“not give false witness”</i> (expounded in 24:8-16)
RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES	<b>Commandment 4</b> <i>“Sabbath day holy”</i> (expounded in 14:22-16:17)	<b>Commandment 10</b> <i>“You shall not covet”</i> (expounded in 24:19-26:15)

See, Class Notes, Deuteronomy, Dr. Thomas L. Constable

## The Valley Of Decision: Blessing & Cursing

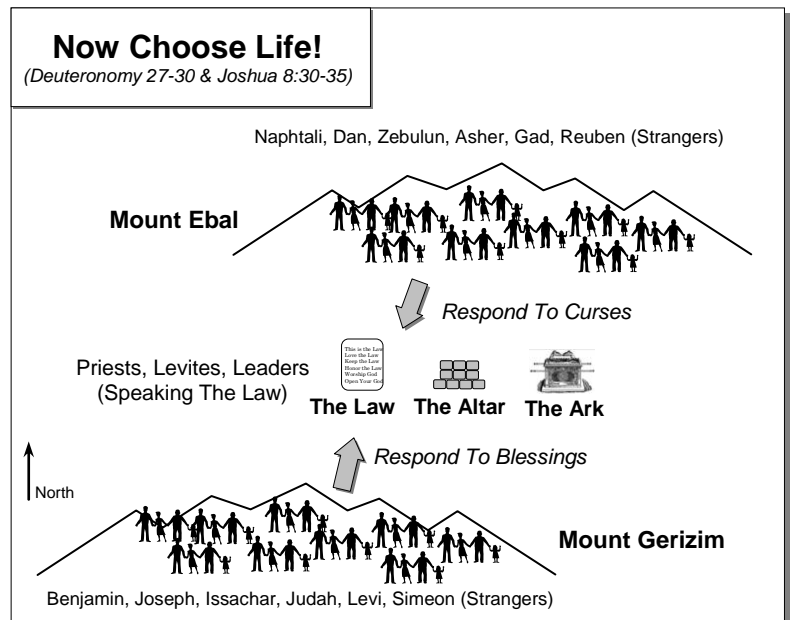
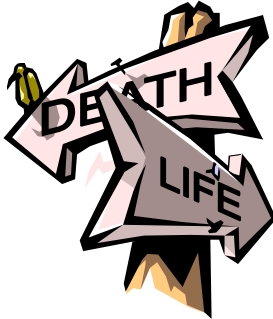
Textual Highlights: Deuteronomy 27-30

### The Plan Explained!

The book of Joshua ends with the stirring challenge, *“Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve!”* (Joshua 24:15). Joshua learned how to talk like that from Moses. Moses’ last words to the nation he loved, and lead, and suffered for, were words challenging Israel to make a decision. A decision between nothing less than life or death. This rousing challenge is found in Deuteronomy 27-30, which many think were the final words from Moses to ring in Israel’s ears. The heart of the speech is heard in it’s conclusion, *“This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live<sup>20</sup> and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the Lord is your life.”* (Deuteronomy 30:19-20). The nation’s conquest of the land, and their very survival as a nation depended on their obeying God’s commandments! The Lord is life, and to separate yourself from Him is to have only death. Moses tells the people that the path he calls them to is possible. *“<sup>11</sup>Now what I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you or beyond your reach. <sup>14</sup>No, the word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart so you may obey it.”* (Deuteronomy 30:11,14) It’s demands are not too difficult. It’s message is not unintelligible. If they failed to keep the covenant the problem was with the willingness of their heart to obey, not with God’s demands or communication.

He would call Israel to make this decision in a most unique way. He commanded that once they entered the land they were to go to the valley between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim. The entire area forms a natural amphitheater about two miles wide, and it would not be difficult for the people to hear the Law read (Jotham later spoke to all Shechem by standing “on the top of mount Gerizim” Judges 9:7).

The elders of the tribes were to set up the “great stones” on Mount Ebal and write on them the Ten Commandments. At the foot of the mount they were to erect an altar, where burnt offerings and peace offerings would be sacrificed. The Law brings condemnation (2 Corinthians 3:7–9), but the altar met the need of the condemned sinner. The burnt offerings speak of Christ’s complete sacrifice on our behalf, and the peace offerings remind us that, in spite of a broken law, He has brought us peace with God (Romans 5:1).



Six tribes were to stand on Mount Gerizim, and respond to the blessings. Six tribes were to stand on Mount Ebal and respond to the curses by saying, “Amen!” The Levites, with the ark, were to stand in the valley between the two mountains and call out the Law. This entire ceremony would be a striking reminder to Israel that they were a covenant nation, and they existed as long as they lived as the people of the Lord. *“Be silent, O Israel, and listen! You have now become the people of the Lord your God. <sup>10</sup>Obey the Lord your God and follow his commands and decrees that I give you today.”* (Deuteronomy 27:9-10).

### **The Plan Executed!**

Moses’ plan to have the children of Israel make their allegiance known in this unique time of covenant confirmation was carried out in Joshua 8, and it’s timing teaches important lessons. Israel had invaded Canaan and conquered Jericho, however because of sin in the camp they failed miserably at a small village named Ai. Once they dealt with the sin victory came easy. And then, as if to explain the reason why things happened at Ai the way they did, Joshua and all the people fulfilled Moses’ command to stand on the mountains and proclaim God’s blessings and cursing. What they learned through experience they now learned again through instruction—pursing God was the only means to victory, and disobedience would lead to disaster. Ai was Israel’s first brilliant illustration of the blessing and cursing of God being dependant upon her faithfulness.

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*Pursing God was the only means to victory, and disobedience would lead to disaster!*

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### ***Corrupting The Place Of Worship***

Mount Gerizim’s identification as the Mount of Blessing would later be used Sanballat the Horonite, an enemy of Israel in Nehemiah’s day, in an effort to divide Israel. The son of the high priest named Manasseh, married Sanballat’s daughter, and built on Mount Gerizim a rival temple to that in Jerusalem (Nehemiah 13:28). This became the place of worship for the Samaritans, and Manasseh became it’s first high priest. By the time of Jesus the Samaritan woman would say, *“Our fathers worshipped in this mountain”* John 4:12). Yet another example of how Satan can even use religion to ensnare the hearts of men.

Contribution from Josephus, via “Deuteronomy” Bruce Oberst

The final movement of Moses' sermon to the people is highly predictive ("will" is used 50 times). In these chapter Moses forecasts what will happen to Israel if they do not obey the Lord's commands. It is bleak and painful reading, but God can not bless those who rebel against Him. What is even more painful than the reading is to know that the sad prediction becomes the sad truth. Found in Deuteronomy 27-30 is an astonishingly accurate account of Israel's history.

**Israel's Chastening.**

First, much is made in these chapters of the way the Lord would chasten His rebellious people to show them the destruction of sin and draw them back to Himself. He would strike their bodies with disease; the land with drought, their livestock with death, their wombs with fruitlessness (examples:

28:15-24; 38-40,42). It is notable that the majority of the text is given to a description of discipline. God's patience is long, and He will lovingly discipline for a long time, before He must take more drastic measures. The Lord's chastening of Israel can be seen most dramatically in the book of **Judges**. Israel will turn her back on God, and God will allow some calamity to befall them until they are driven back to their only true source of help and love, God.

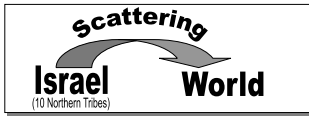
God still graciously chastens those whom He loves to burn off the chaff of sin, and provided deeper insight into His character (Hebrews 12:4-11). It is a merciful God who chastens. It shows a love that seeks reform and restoration, and not simply justice. (It must be kept in mind this was a national chastisement. Every time an individual suffers loss does not mean God is disciplining them for sin (John 9). God was giving the nation Israel clear indicators of the rebellion so that they might repent.)

**Israel's Captivity.**

When centuries of chastisement did not work, God had to resort to captivity to shake His people into faithfulness. *"The Lord will drive you and the king you set over you to a nation unknown to you or your fathers. ...<sup>37</sup> You will become a thing of horror and an object of scorn and ridicule to all the nations where the Lord*

*will drive you."* (Deuteronomy 28:36-37; other examples 28:25-37; 41, 49-57; 29:24-27). This promise was fulfilled in the days of the divided kingdom. First Israel was taken away into Assyrian Captivity, and later Judah experienced a similar humiliation by being taken into Babylonian captivity. When they abandoned their covenant with God they no longer had a right to the land He had promised. Because of Judah, the two Southern Tribes, learned to repent in her exile, and because of God's faithfulness to the Messianic Promise, God restored Judah to the land after her time in captivity. It is truly a fearful thing to be so caught up with the world's ways that being captive to it is the only logical result of your behavior (Romans 6:7-14; 2 Peter 18-22).

### **Israel's Scattering.**



If not for the grace of God, scattering would be the only outcome of captivity, and this is exactly what Israel, the ten Northern Tribes, experienced. They had become so rebellious, so distant from the ways of God, they were irremediable.

Therefore they were scattered among the people's of the world never to be heard of again. This too can happen to a child of God today. The Hebrew writer speaks of those who had known the ways of God, experienced the works of God in their life, and yet left God. He says *"It is impossible for them to be brought back to repentance"* (Hebrews 6:4-8). Those, like Judas, who were once apart of God's people became children doomed for destruction, so incorporated from the world they are indistinguishable! (Jesus predicted the final scattering of Israel in Matthew 24 for their ultimate rejection of the Christ.)

### **Israel's Restoration.**



The true hope of the predictive section of Moses' sermon is found in Deuteronomy 30. Here Moses promises restoration, return, for those who would repent. *"when you and your children return to the Lord your God and obey him with all your heart and with all your soul according to everything I command you today,*

*<sup>3</sup>then the Lord your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you."* (Deuteronomy 30:2-3). Through the prophetic work of men like Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, God turned the hearts of His people back in the Babylonian Captivity, and He brought them back to the land.

This is how Joshua used the blessing and cursing experience in Joshua 8. The people sinned at Ai, sin was in the camp, and he called the people back to the path of obedience. Joshua deliberately led the children of Israel to the Valley of Decision. Joshua said, "I want everyone to stand up and hear God's word." And all the people stood up on the side of a mountains, and they read the good news and the bad news about life according to God. They were told that day, "If you'll faithful God will give you blessing. But if you rebel life will get hard." Israel repented and learned that defeat does not have to be the last chapter. This gracious principle is illustrated in the life of every believer, and personified by Simon in Acts 8, who's actions associated him with the world, but Peter's advice offered hope for restoration, *"Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive you for having such a thought in your heart."* (Acts 8:22).

## **The Secret & The Revealed**

Moses' sermon of prediction closes with an important note. *"The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law."* (Deuteronomy 29:29). God alone knows the future, and it is not for his people to probe those mysteries. *"The things revealed,"* (the Law) belong to his people. Their future is determined by their present walk. Obedient faith leads to blessing, but disobedience to disaster.

Most farewells are not full of hope, but rather sorrow. Especially is that the case when the one leaving has been a great and loving leader and friend. It is amazing that Moses' farewell to Israel, who has been his very life since youth, is not full of sorrow, but hope. Godly leaders know that God lives on when they die or move on. Therefore the book of Deuteronomy doesn't end with a nostalgic look at an old, great leader, but rather with a future looking hope because of the new things that are coming. There are at least four new reasons for hope in the closing chapters of Deuteronomy.

## The New Leader

First, Moses announced the new leader for the people (Deuteronomy 31:1-8). In front of all the people he lifted up Joshua and he threw his support behind Joshua. Moses then gives the new leader and the people great confidence for their future by saying, **"Be strong and courageous,"** not a strength or courage that's based on numbers, strategy, or physique, but a strength and courage that comes from knowing, **"the Lord your God goes with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you."** (the promise is repeated again in 31:8). This promise is what Joshua often leaned upon during his service to Israel. It is the same promise that comes from God at the beginning of the conquest to prepare Joshua for his work. **"Be strong and courageous. I will never leave you nor forsake you, I will be with you wherever you go"** (Joshua 1:1-9). The same promise is given to us today, **"God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.""** (Hebrews 13:5). Such a promise should keep us from worldliness, and courageous to live for God, distinctly in enemy territory. Israel could face the future with hope because they had a new leader who had the presence and power of their faithful God. Our future



MOSES AND JOSHUA PRESENTED THEIR  
TABLETS TO THE TABERNACLE  
(Exod. 34:1-5)

is similarly bright.

In addition to giving the new leader a promise, he gives him a command. God will not forsake him, but he must not forget God. Therefore, Moses put a copy of Deuteronomy in the hands of the priests to place in the ark, and to read at the Feast of Tabernacles. He knew that only God's Word could make the people the kind of nation God wanted them to be. Obedience and promise would be the basis of hope for this new nation with a new leader.

## The New Song

God then summoned Moses and Joshua to the tabernacle to do something else that was intended to give Israel hope, to write a new song. The song starts and ends by reminding Israel of the greatness of her God (Deuteronomy 32:1-4;39-42. He is "the Rock," who provides shelter and strength. He is the only God who can kill and give life, wound and heal. Then Moses reminds Israel of the grace of God, **"For the Lord's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted inheritance. <sup>10</sup>In a desert land he found him, in a barren and howling waste. He shielded him and cared for him; he guarded him as the apple of his eye"** (Deuteronomy 32:9-10). However, the

### Song of Moses

**Verse 1** – The Greatness of God (32:1-4)

**Verse 2** – The Grace of God (32:5-14,43)

**Verse 3** – The Grief of God (32:15-38)

**Verse 4** – The Greatness of God (32:39-42)



core of the song is more of a lament over the grief Israel will cause God by her unfaithfulness, and God will bring punishment on them accordingly. The hope in this song is in the saying, “To be forewarned is to be forearmed!” Moses applies the song to the people with these words, *“Take to heart all the words I have solemnly declared to you this day, so that you may command your children to obey carefully all the words of this law. <sup>47</sup>They are not just idle words for you—they are your life. By them you will live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to possess.”* (Deuteronomy 32:46-47).

### The New Blessing



Moses further gives Israel hope after his departure by making the time to pronounce blessings on the tribes (Deuteronomy 33). This is reminiscent of Jacob blessing his children before his death. However, here Moses does not name any sin or cursing as Jacob had done. Moses' heart was filled with love for his people, and in this chapter he gives his parting benediction as he asks God's blessing on the various tribes. Note that he begins with the sons of Leah, but leaves out Simeon. This tribe was eventually absorbed into Judah, so Judah's blessing was shared with Simeon. In Jacob's blessing we learned that Judah was the kingly tribe, and when Moses asks God to *“bring him unto his people”* (33:7), he could be referring to Messiah, the Lawgiver promised in Genesis 49:10.

It is interesting to note the spiritual position of God's people as described in this chapter: in God's hand and at His feet (33:3); between His shoulders (3:12); and upheld by His everlasting arms (33:27). What a privilege it is to be a child of God!

### The New Home

The book of Deuteronomy ends with the greatest hope, that of a new home. Yes, Israel the wilderness wanderers were about to finally put down roots in their new home, but that was still only a temporary dwelling. Moses became the hope for all Israel that there is a new hope, eternal in the heavens. He had lived powerfully by faith because he *“saw him who is invisible,”* but now he died with greater rewards than Egypt could have ever offered him. He died with great hope *“looking ahead to his reward”* (Hebrews 11:24-28). He had died to himself, and therefore by grace, he would live with God. *Moses died as a pilgrim!* And in this way he is a prototype of the disciple of Christ. We too are pilgrims and strangers, and we die as such. But that does not be we are not citizens. For our citizenship is in heaven, and so was Moses'.



How do we know Moses got to his new home? One day Jesus was troubled about His own impending death and while He was praying Moses and Elijah appeared to Him in their glorified state (Luke 9:28-36). And they talked to Jesus about the death He was soon to endure in Jerusalem. What confidence they could provide to the humanity of Jesus that death is endurable. Moses finally did step foot in the Promised Land that day on the Mount of Transfiguration, but that was nothing compared to the Land of Rest he found the day he went home from Mount Nebo's heights.



## Moses' Obituary

Moses' obituary is recorded in the last three verses of Deuteronomy. They are some impressive words, but even more impressive by the fact that they were written by God.

***“<sup>10</sup>Since then, no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face, <sup>11</sup>who did all those miraculous signs and wonders the Lord sent him to do in Egypt—to Pharaoh and to all his officials and to his whole land. <sup>12</sup>For no one has ever shown the mighty power or performed the awesome deeds that Moses did in the sight of all Israel.”***

(Deuteronomy 34:10-12).

In the final analysis all that really matters is what God thought of your life. I mean, you can have a big funeral, or a small one, and they can put columns and columns in the paper about your life when you die, or nobody could even notice. And people might make a pilgrimage to your grave annually, or you could be buried in an unmarked grave. But in the final analysis all that all that really matters is “What did God write about your life?” What did God put in the book of life about your life? That’s all that matters!



# Seeing The Savior

Hearing The Message Of The Bible



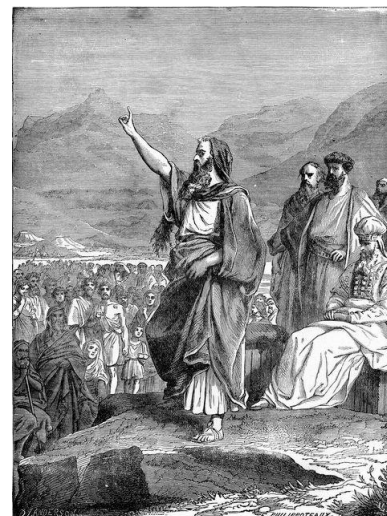
## A Prophet Like Moses Deuteronomy 18

One of the highlights of this thrilling book of Deuteronomy is the prophecy of the Great Prophet to come who will be like Moses (18:15-19). Though some have denied that Moses spoke of Christ, the matter is settled by the testimony of two inspired New Testament spokesmen, Peter (Acts 3:22-23) and Stephen (Acts 7:37).

The Prophecy	The Fulfillment	The Identification
<p><sup>15</sup>The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him. ...I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him. <sup>19</sup>If anyone does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name, I myself will call him to account.” (Deuteronomy 18:15,18-19).</p>	<p><sup>1</sup>In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, <sup>2</sup>but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son.” (Hebrews 1:1-2).</p>	<p><b>By Peter</b> <sup>22</sup>For Moses said, ‘The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you. <sup>23</sup>Anyone who does not listen to him will be completely cut off from among his people.’” (Acts 3:22-23).</p> <p><b>By Stephen</b> <sup>37</sup>“This is that Moses who told the Israelites, ‘God will send you a prophet like me from your own people.’” (Acts 7:37).</p>

The emphasis of Moses’ prophecy is that this Prophet would speak the words of God, and anyone who rejected His words would stand condemned before God. This speaks of Jesus being God’s exclusive and final communicator of God. Jesus claimed to be THE Way, THE Truth, THE Life and that no one could see the Father but through Him (John 14:6). When people rejected His teaching and were afraid to follow Him He made this promise, **“There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day.”** (John 12:48). This prophecy in Deuteronomy 18 points to Jesus being the ultimate prophet, God’s final word to man, and God’s final standard of judgment.

Moses was therefore in several particulars, a type of Jesus. Note the following: both were threatened with death at birth; both left a regal realm for a mission of rescue; both were frequently rejected by their brethren; both were given “signs” to document their ministry; both gave a law; both served as mediators; both had a “baptism” that delivered from bondage; both spoke with God’s authority and demanded obedience. In the final analysis, however, **“Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses”** (Hebrews 3:3), because the latter was a mere man, while the former is God’s Son.

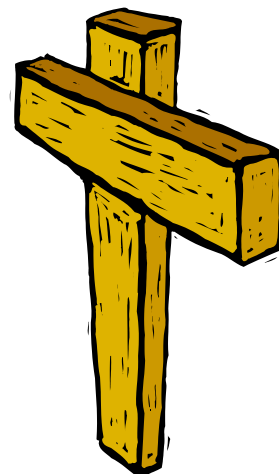


*\*For a more extensive development of the parallels between Moses and Christ see pages 65 & 66.\**

## The Curse Of The Tree

## Deuteronomy 21

In Deuteronomy 21 there is what seems to be a rather obscure law, which has great New Testament significance. The law concerns a person who has been executed for his crimes. After they stoned the man for his crimes they would then put the body on a tree to show all that justice had been done, and so that all Israel would know how much God abhorred sin. God wanted people to respect the human body, so even the body of a criminal had to be treated with honor. If the expected person's body were hung on a tree, they were not to leave the body exposed overnight. The corpse must be buried on the day of the execution so that the land would not be defiled by it (Deuteronomy 21:22-23).



During David's reign a famine came from God, and the Lord said it was because Saul had slain many Gibeonites who were consecrated to the Lord's service. To atone for Saul's crime David was required to put seven of Saul's sons to death. Afterward they were hung on a tree for the birds to eat, but Rizpah their mother guarded them and drove the birds away until David took pity on her and buried the corpses. Only after the corpses were buried did God lift the plague (2 Samuel 21:1-14).

Jesus was actually killed on a tree where He hung for a time after His death, taking the curse for us. God saw to it through the kindness of Joseph of Arimathea that the law of Deuteronomy 21:23 was fulfilled, in that Jesus was buried on the day he died. Paul saw even greater significance in this law, being a foreshadow of what Jesus did for us on the cross. The gospel offers salvation on the basis of faith in One who did live perfectly, and then was willing to accept the curse that you rightfully incurred.



Galatians 3:13 quotes from this text, "*Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us. For it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who hung on a tree'*" (3:13). When you break a law of God, you come under the curse of God! And Paul says, "You've got to options. You can be saved by law and don't sin once. Or, you can put faith in the one who lived perfectly and then was hung to take your curse for you." And don't misunderstand what Paul is saying. Jesus Christ became cursed on that cross! And God forsook Him, and He shouted in pain (See that cursed in Matthew 25:41 "cursed" means to be parted from God). And all of the fury of God's wrath was spent on that cross. Cursed for us!

Contribution from "Before the Face of God" Book 3, R.C. Sproul

## The Altar Of Uncut Stones

## Deuteronomy 27:5

God wanted that altar in the valley between Gerizim and Ebal to be made out of "*uncut stones.*" (Deuteronomy 27:5; Joshua 8:31). God did not want any tool to touch the altar. Why? I believe God wanted to teach a spiritual principle, "When you come before God with your sin, you don't bring any human effort to it." God doesn't want sinners to think that anything they do impresses Him and earns His forgiveness. The only thing God notices is not the altar you built, but the blood that's on it!

The reason you and I can come near to God even after a defeat, like they suffered at Ai, is not because our track record is so perfect, but we've come with the perfect blood of Jesus covering us (1 John 1:7-9).

*“<sup>19</sup>Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, <sup>20</sup>by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, <sup>21</sup>and since we have a great priest over the house of God, <sup>22</sup>let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. <sup>23</sup>Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.”*

(Hebrews 10:19-23).

The key to a victorious Christian life is not in never failing, it is your willingness to stand up after a failure and bring the failure to the foot of the cross. Israel could reaffirm their covenant with God, because they had appealed first through the blood of the altar.

## Battle For The Body

## Deuteronomy 34:1-6

Jude writes about teachers who had slipped in unnoticed among God's people and corrupted the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. As usual Satan was destroying God's people by appearing as an angel of light. However, Jude gives his readers three ways of identifying them. Number one, he says, *“They defile the flesh”* (Jude 8). Their teachings promote worldliness, selfish thinking, rather than devotion and faithfulness to the will of God. Second, *“they will deny authority”* (Jude 8). They will ignore the Scriptures, and they will despise those to whom God has given authority to oversee and to teach. And the final means of identification is, *“they revile angelic majesties”* (Jude 8). In other words, “They have a habit of slandering celestial beings.” Jude gives an illustration which to his readers was very familiar and to us in very surprising. It was a story that every Jewish child learned growing up.

- 
- ✦ Passions Over Purity  
“They defile the flesh”
  - ✦ Supremacy Over Submission  
“The deny authority”
  - ✦ Rationality Over Revelation  
“They speak evil of what they don't understand”
- 

When Moses was buried he went up to Mount Nebo alone, and God buried him. (Deuteronomy 34:1-6). God did not want man to know where Moses was buried. Perhaps because Moses was the greatest spiritual leader of his day and God did not want his tomb to become an idol for men to worship. There, as he died, Michael took Moses' body to bury it, and the devil met Michael. Michael took the body of Moses and the devil confronted him, and the devil said, “That man was a sinner, and that man was a murder, and that man died, and therefore his body belongs to me.” The devil probably intended to make the grave a Moses a site of worship, which is exactly what God didn't want. Now, Michael rather than rebuke and revile the devil, just simply said, *“The Lord rebuke you,”* and went on his way.

Jude's point, here is the greatest, most glorious angel in the heavens, speaking to the lowest being in the spiritual realm, and even he didn't revile the devil. He just said, “The Lord rebuke you.” Here are some who think they are so advanced, and they think they are so enlightened, and so progressive and free that they come to a realm they don't know anything about, (the realm of the angels) and they can be cynical and caustic as they talk about that realm.

You see, Jude’s antagonists apparently live strictly on a rational plane. Accepting only what seemed reasonable, and empirically verifiable. He said in verse 10, *“These men speak evil of whatever they do not understand.”* That is a perfect definition of what is called “liberalism.” People who don’t have any place for the miracles of Jesus, they say those are just legends. They don’t talk very much about heaven or hell. They laugh at you if you say you believe in a personal devil. You see, they don’t understand those things, and their attitude is, “If I can’t understand it, it can’t be real.” Therefore they speak against it and denounce it. Anything out of their orb of experience they regard as worthless and irrelevant. In other words, they reject the authority, the truthfulness of God’s word, in favor of their own rationality.

**Where We’ve Been!** (Trace the path of the wilderness wandering.)

