

DEUTERONOMY

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BIBLE STUDY TEXTBOOK SERIES

DEUTERONOMY

by

Bruce Oberst

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

by Don DeWalt

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION

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SUMMARY

by Adam Clarke

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FOREWORD

The generation in which we live is straining at every seam in its quest for more education. Never have so many people in so many nations been able, because of education, to do so many things. Yet it seems that lawlessness continues to increase. This book is designed to educate the popular mind in the ways of righteousness; to turn the lawless to the laws of God.

Much of the material in this volume was taught in the Hollywood Drive Church where it proved very useful. The author's purpose was to produce a work particularly useful—relevant to twentieth-century Christians. He has accomplished this objective. By the time each person in the class had answered and discussed the questions following each lesson he had become well acquainted with its contents. It is hoped that other churches will find these lessons profitable in the same way.

From the pages of this book the honest inquirer will surely enrich his life by gaining a deeper understanding of such subjects as purity and separation of God's people, the tithes due God that support His work, the fate of those that "wax fat" and forsake God, and many other topics equally applicable to our time.

My acquaintance with Brother Oberst over the years has been both enjoyable and profitable. He has proven himself a preacher and teacher of real worth to the Kingdom. I am happy to have passed a part of the time of this sojourn in fellowship with him. I commend to you his work on Deuteronomy.

Vernon Watkins, elder
Hollywood Drive Church
Anchorage, Alaska
June, 1968

PREFACE

It is believed that the present volume is versatile enough to be useful to Christians in many walks of life—not just preachers, elders, and teachers in the congregation, but every member who desires to further his knowledge of the Word. There is so much in Deuteronomy that has 20th century application. Deuteronomy is a series of *sermons*, and time and again Moses begins his remarks with the phrase, "Hear O Israel . . ." It is, very literally, a dying man's message to dying men. The pathos of Moses' soul is revealed again and again as he implores this nation to turn from its evil ways lest they be destroyed from the Land of Promise.

This volume is divided into twenty-four lessons. With few exceptions, the portion of scripture treated in the lesson progresses naturally with Deuteronomy's present form. The lessons are not precisely uniform in length, though they usually cover approximately the same number of verses. One's pace through them, therefore, should best be determined by a teacher and/or personal needs. One should avoid getting "bogged down" in details. To do so, all too often, is to miss the hortatory or sermonic nature of Moses' message. My own suggestion would be to study in the following manner:

1. Read the entire book of Deuteronomy through, *not* taking time to consult any other book. (Remember nothing, *absolutely nothing*, can replace a face-to-face contact with God's word).
2. Now read the introductory notes. Be sure to check out the scripture references.
3. As each lesson is studied:
 - a) Read carefully the text for *that lesson*, including the Amplified Version.
 - b) With your present knowledge answer the *thought questions*.
 - c) Study the comments.
 - d) Re-read the scripture text of the particular lesson (hopefully with a better understanding). This will be your third time through the scripture itself.
 - e) Reanswer the *thought questions*.
 - f) Now you should be ready for the quiz. On the questions dealing with *meaning*, it does no harm to refer back to the passage.
 - g) Check again all your answers—or check back on those you couldn't answer. The questions are not all designed to be "brain teasers". Indeed, we make no apology for asking

PREFACE

many questions on the *content* of Bible text itself. What is more valuable in life than to know what the *Bible actually says* on important subjects? In a day of gross ignorance of the simple statements of *scripture*, we need more students of the *words of the Holy Spirit!*

It will be noticed that in some quotes the sources are abbreviated. Such titles are given in full in the Bibliography. (Example: I. S. B. E. for The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia).

The reader will notice some repetition of the *Amplified Bible* in the notes accompanying the scripture text. This was caused by the fact that it was decided somewhat late in the manuscript preparation to include this version in the book.

To some, these notes may appear "too detailed", for others perhaps they will seem "too shallow", but our attempt has been to find a happy medium, and to keep in mind the "busy church member" as well as the scholar. The special articles on the authorship by McGarvey and Rotherham will not be of interest to all—but we are acquainted with no finer two articles on the subject.

A special word of thanks must be given here for certain ones of the many who were especially helpful to me in the preparation of these lessons. My wife and four children have been my most encouraging "Cheerleaders" in this project, and they have made many sacrifices so that Dad might have time to write. My sister, Mrs. Ron Leighton, has typed the manuscript through twice. Mrs. Vernon C. Watkins has given much help by her patient proofreading.

Deuteronomy has soul, life, and spirit—it reveals the heart of God and the heart of Moses. Its teachings have infinite applications, and only a few are mentioned here. If these notes will be of some aid to those who seek to know and comprehend "the things that are revealed" (29:29), this servant of God shall feel truly rewarded.

Bandon, Oregon
June, 1968

DEUTERONOMY

DEDICATION

To My Wife, Bonnie

"Thou hast given me courage"

INTRODUCTION

It will be invaluable to our understanding of this book if we can see it in its proper setting. Hence the need of a few words of introduction. But even the reading of these beginning remarks would be made easier if the student, first of all, read the book through. In the final analysis, it is the *Word of God* that we want to understand and implant in our minds. Nothing can replace a constant "face-to-face" contact with the Bible itself! In this last book of the Pentateuch, we certainly have no exception to this rule.

THE NAME

The title "Deuteronomy" is taken directly from the name it was given in the Septuagint Version—the famous Greek translation of the Old Testament made in Egypt about two hundred years before Christ. It literally signifies "*second (or repeated) law*," being derived from the Greek words *deuteros* (second) and *nomos* (law). Thus the popular definitions, "Repetition of the law," or "Second giving of the law," referring of course, to the law of Moses.

The title we have inherited is in some ways unfortunate. *Historically*, it is true, there is practically nothing new recorded in this book; most of the exceptions being the events that relate to Moses' renewal of the covenant between God and Israel, his charge to Joshua, and death—all of which occur in the closing chapters. But there is much more here than a mere repetition of the law given at Sinai as recorded for us in Exodus. For example, in Chapters 22-26 we have such items as:

1. Extirpating false prophets and idolatrous cities
2. Making a battlement around the roof of a residence
3. Expiating uncertain murder
4. Taking down "hanged" malefactors in the evening
5. Punishing rebellious children
6. Distinguishing apparel of the sexes
7. Marriage of captive women and wives of deceased brethren
8. Divorcing wives and the trial of virginity
9. Runaway servants

The above subjects are either not treated *at all* in previous books, or, if they are, are not treated in the same manner as in Deuteronomy. The list could be extended considerably, especially of those subjects that are treated or applied differently in this book, for Moses' point of reference is now vastly different than at any other time in Israel's brief history.

DEUTERONOMY

We must remember that Deuteronomy was originally included as a part of a *single book*—"the book of the law of Moses" (Neh. 8:1) or "the book of Moses" (II Chron. 25:4)—titles which were still understood in Jesus' day to refer to the entire Pentateuch—Luke 24:27, 44; Jn. 5:46, 47. In the Hebrew manuscripts these books were connected in one unbroken roll. "At what time they were divided into five portions, each having a separate title, is not known, but it is certain that the distinction dates at or before the time of the Septuagint translation"—*Robert Jamieson*. In Hebrew the book came to be called *Elleh haddebharim*, 'These (are) the words,' taken from the first line. The modern English translation of the Hebrew ("The Torah"*) has shortened this simply to *Dabbarim*, "words" or "discourses."

THE OCCASION AND OVER-ALL VIEW: THE NECESSITY OF THE BOOK

There was good reason for Israel having the laws and ordinances reiterated to them at this time—with the amplifications and applications God through Moses gave to them. There was also good reason for the new ones he gave. Many of the former laws, by their very nature and importance, *needed* to be repeated—especially in view of the fact that most of the adult Israelites, (those twenty years old and upward**) who were at Sinai were now dead, and the new generation now needed to be reminded and exhorted concerning their responsibilities toward God—especially as they entered the very land that was the goal of their fathers when leaving Egypt. Thus Deuteronomy is "custom made" to fit these "nomads" who were now about to go through the rigors of adjusting to a settled agricultural way of life. "Moses had before him not the men to whom by God's command he delivered the law at Sinai, but the generation following which had grown up in the wilderness. Large portions of the

*Published by the Jewish Publication Society of America.

**Joshua and Caleb were the only persons *among those that were numbered* to enter the Promised Land after leaving Egypt. In both the first (Num. 1:1-3, 45-47; 2:32, 33) and second (Num. 26:1, 2, 51, 62-65) numberings, only those men twenty years old and upward, "able to go forth to war in Israel" are numbered. The Levites were not numbered at all, nor were women, old men, children, or strangers. In Numbers 14:29 we are specifically told that the curse resulting from their rebellion at Kadesh rested only on the group that was numbered. As the "uncursed" group must have been a great multitude, many of them must surely have been alive thirty-eight years later as Israel entered the Promised Land—especially those who were under twenty years of age at the time of the first census.

INTRODUCTION

law necessarily stood in abeyance during the years of wandering; and of his present hearers, many must have been strangers to various prescribed observances and ordinances. Now, however, on their entry into settled homes in Canaan a thorough discharge of the various obligations laid on them by the covenant would become imperative; and it is to this state of things that Moses addresses himself." (*Cook*, in *Barne's Notes*) Similarly, *Halley* states, "In Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, laws had been promulgated at intervals. Now, their wanderings over, on the even of entrance into Canaan, these laws were rehearsed and expounded, in anticipation of, and with applications to, settled life." The forward-looking nature of so many laws in this book is a chief key to its rightful understanding. Of what significance, for example, would a law demanding a battlement atop a new house (22:8), or forbidding the sowing of two kinds of seed in a vineyard (22:9), or forbidding plowing with an ass and an ox together (22:10) have to a vast horde of people in the deserts of the Sinaitic Peninsula?

J. B. Tidwell, writing concerning the occasion and necessity of the book, gives two good reasons Israel needed such laws at this time: "(1) A crisis had come in the life of Israel. The life of the people was to be changed from that of wandering in the wilderness to that of residence in cities and villages, and from dependence upon heavenly manna to the cultivation of the fields. Peace and righteousness would depend upon a strict observance of the laws. (2) They would be tempted by a new religion of Canaan against which they must be put on guard. The most seductive forms of idolatry would be met everywhere and there would be great danger of yielding to it. Especially would they as farmers be tempted to worship Baal, who was thought to be the god of the farm and of crops. A poor crop would tempt them to worship him and bring upon themselves the displeasure of the Lord."*

THE WRITER

That Moses was the writer of the basic content of the book is not only generally accepted truth, but affirmed by the book itself and reaffirmed by our Savior and the apostles. "*And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests*" (31:9). "*So Moses wrote this song the same day, and taught it to the children of Israel*" (31:22). "*And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished . . .*" (31:24).

*In *The Bible Book by Book*, Eighth Edition Revised.

DEUTERONOMY

Being a part of the Pentateuch ("five-fold book") or Torah ("law"), Jesus includes *this* book in "The law of Moses" (Luke 24:44); "Moses" (Matt. 19: 7,8, Luke 24:27, Jn. 5:46); "his [Moses'] writings" (Jn. 5:46, 47); "the scriptures" (Luke 24:27, Jn. 5:39, etc.) and "the word of God" (Mk. 7:13).

The excellent statement of *William Evans*, in his *Outline Study of the Bible*, is here in order: "The question as to the authorship of the five books [Pentateuch] resolves itself into the question, "What think ye of the Christ?" Did he know who wrote the Pentateuch? Or was he mistaken in (supposedly) adopting the popular view which was a mistaken one? If he was in error, what becomes of his omniscience, and how much reliance may we place upon him as a Teacher from God professing to speak the word of God infallibly? Did Jesus Christ know who wrote these books, or not knowing, did he make a pretense of knowing? If so, what becomes of his sincerity; how is he then the Truth?"

Paul attributed the book to Moses' hand (Rom. 10:19) and also to *God* (Heb. 13:5). Likewise, the prophecy of Deut. 18:15-19 was attributed to Moses by Peter and Stephen (Acts 3:22-23, 7:37). To impugn Moses' authorship is to challenge not only the truthfulness of these men, but "the Spirit by which he [they] spake" (Acts 6:10).

We agree with *F. C. Cook* who said: "The alleged anachronisms, discrepancies, and difficulties admit, for the most part, of easy and complete explanation; and no serious attempt has ever been made to meet the overwhelming presumption drawn from the unanimous testimony of the ancient Jewish Church and nation that Moses is the author of this book."

The objections, we believe, surely *can* be met; but destructive critics have at least made many efforts that *they* believe are "serious attempts" to discredit the Mosaic Authorship of the book—usually much of the rest of the Pentateuch as well. For those interested in exploring this subject further, the *Special Study* at the close of this volume will be found profitable. Brother C. C. Crawford's article on "*The Authorship of the Pentateuch*" in his first volume on Genesis (pp. 47-70) is also of great value, and forms an excellent preface to the reading of *any* of the first five books.

TIME COVERED IN DEUTERONOMY

In 1:3 we have the beginning of this record on the first day of the eleventh month of the fortieth year after the exodus from Egypt. In 34:5-8 Moses dies, and is wept over for thirty days. According to Joshua 4:19 Israel crossed the Jordan under Joshua's leadership on the tenth day

INTRODUCTION

of the first month, or two months and ten days after Moses begins his first discourse. Thus the entire book of Deuteronomy was composed in no more than two months, and Moses' three discourses could not have involved more than about a month—possibly a much shorter time. We have recorded for us, then, the history of Israel during one month before Moses' death, and another after it.

This had been a difficult year for Israel, and particularly its leading family. In the first month Miriam, Moses' sister, died (Num. 20:1). In the fifth month, on the first day, his brother Aaron died (Num. 33:38,39) at the age of one hundred and twenty three. And, so far as can be determined, Moses died at about the end of the same year (Deut. 34:7,8) being one hundred and twenty years old.

GENERAL OUTLINE OR STRUCTURE OF DEUTERONOMY

I. THE FIRST DISCOURSE: Review of the Journeys (1:1—4:43)

After a brief historical introduction, the speaker recapitulates the chief events of the last forty years in the wilderness. The Cities of Refuge, east of the Jordan, are set aside.

II. THE SECOND DISCOURSE: The Law of God (4:44—26:19)

Here we have the great bulk of the book, which, in substance, is a review of the law previously given at Sinai, with a number of modifications and additions, and the whole given an "evangelistic" application.

III. THE THIRD DISCOURSE: Future of Israel Foretold (27:1—30:20)

Moses and the elders command the people to erect the stone monument at Mt. Ebal and on it to write "all the words of this law." The curses which are to be pronounced from Ebal, and the blessings from Gerezim, are given, and the covenant is made in Moab. All of this is accompanied by solemn injunctions and promises, a prophecy concerning disobedient Israel, and warnings of the fearful and horrible consequences of breaking the covenant they had made with God.

DEUTERONOMY

IV. MOSES' LAST DAYS (31:1—34:12)

Knowing of his imminent death, Moses encourages the people. After Joshua is commissioned for his new post as successor to Moses, the law is delivered into the custody of the elders and Levites, with the charge that it be read every seven years before all Israel. Finally, we have the "Song of Moses," his blessing upon Israel, and his death.

SUGGESTED LESSON UNITS

(As used with the *Comprehensive Outline*):

- Lesson One: I, A, 1-3 (pp. 13 thru 39)
- Lesson Two: I, A, 4-6 (pp. 40 thru 53)
- Lesson Three: I, A, 7-10 (pp. 54 thru 69)
- Lesson Four: I, B, 1-3 (including Appendix) (pp. 70 thru 85)
- Lesson Five: II, A, 1 (pp. 86 thru 106)
- Lesson Six: II, A, 2-5 (pp. 107 thru 117)
- Lesson Seven: II, A, 6 (pp. 118 thru 128)
- Lesson Eight: II, A, 7, 8 (pp. 129 thru 162)
- Lesson Nine: II, B, 1 (pp. 163 thru 174)
- Lesson Ten: II, B, 2 (pp. 175 thru 185)
- Lesson Eleven: II, B, 3, a, b (pp. 186 thru 192)
- Lesson Twelve: II, B, 3, c (pp. 193 thru 204)
- Lesson Thirteen: II, B, 3, d (pp. 205 thru 212)
- Lesson Fourteen: II, B, 3, e (pp. 213 thru 229)
- Lesson Fifteen: II, B, 3, f (pp. 230 thru 240)
- Lesson Sixteen: II, B, 3, g (pp. 241 thru 252)
- Lesson Seventeen: II, B, 3, h, i, j, k, l, (pp. 253 thru 273)
- Lesson Eighteen: II, B, 3, m (1)-(15) (pp. 274 thru 290)
- Lesson Nineteen: II, B, 3, m (16)-(20) (pp. 291 thru 296)
- Lesson Twenty: II, B, 3, n (pp. 297 thru 305)
- Lesson Twenty-one: III, A, B, C, D (pp. 306 thru 337)
- Lesson Twenty-two: III, E, F (pp. 338 thru 355)
- Lesson Twenty-three: IV, A, B, C (pp. 356 thru 382)
- Lesson Twenty-four: IV, D, E, F. (pp. 383 thru 411)

CONTENTS

	PAGE
FOREWORD	v
PREFACE	vi
DEDICATION	viii
INTRODUCTION	1

COMPREHENSIVE OUTLINE OF DEUTERONOMY

I. THE FIRST DISCOURSE: Review of the Journeys (1:1—4:43)

Introduction, 1:1-5	13
---------------------------	----

A. THE EVENTS FROM SINAI TO THE PRESENT (1:6—3:29)

1. Command to leave Horeb for the Promised Land (1:6-8)	19
2. Civil organization under Moses (1:9-18)	20
3. Two failures at Kadesh-barnea (1:19-40)	24
a. Because of unbelief (1:19-40)	
b. Because of presumption (1:41-46)	
4. Passing through Edom (2:1-8)	40
5. Passing through Moab (2:9-15)	47
6. Passing through Ammon (2:16-23)	51
7. First successful conquest (2:24—3:11)	54
a. Over Sihon, king of Heshbon (2:24-37)	
b. Over Og, king of Bashan (3:1-11)	
"The two kings of the Amorites"	
8. Extent and division of conquered east-side lands (3:12-17) ..	62
9. Warning against settling down prematurely (3:18-20)	65
10. Moses denied entrance into Canaan (3:21-29)	66

B. SIGNIFICANCE OF PAST EVENTS (4:1-40)

1. Blessings promised for those who heed God's all-sufficient law (4:1-8)	70
a. Prosperity (4:1-4)	
b. Respect of the nations (4:5-8)	
2. The temptation to forget God's unique revelation (4:9-31) ..	73
a. God appeared at Horeb by word, not by physical form (4:9-14)	

DEUTERONOMY

- b. Warning against making physical representations of God or gods (4:15-24)
- c. Punishment for idolatry: banishment from the land (4:25-28)
- d. Repentance will reveal God's grace (4:29-31)
- 3. The glory and greatness of Israel's God (4:32-40) 80
 - a. His dealings with Israel are unique (4:32-34;36)
 - b. He is the only God (4:35;39)
 - c. He has loved and chosen Israel (4:37)
 - d. He has preserved them (4:38)
 - e. He offers a blessed future (4:40)
- Appendix: Appointment of eastern cities of refuge (4:41-43)

II. THE SECOND DISCOURSE: The Law of God (4:44—26:19)

- Introduction (4:44-49) 86

A. THE NATURE, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE COVENANT MADE AT SINAI (5:1—11:32)

- 1. The Ten Words reviewed (5:1—6:3) 87
 - a. The commandments given (5:1-21)
 - b. Israel's reaction: fear and devotion (5:22-27)
 - c. God's response: delighted approval (5:28-31)
 - d. Purpose of observing the law: (5:32—6:3)
 - (1) to live
 - (2) to live well
 - (3) to live long
 - (4) to multiply
- 2. Love to be motive for observance—the "Shema" (6:4-9) 107
- 3. Teaching the law (6:7-9; 20-25) 109
- 4. God not to be forgotten (6:10-15) 113
- 5. God not to be tempted (6:16-19) 115
- 6. Defending the faith: Necessity of the Holy War (7:1-26) .. 118
 - a. The reasons for the Holy War (7:1-16)
 - (1) The danger of corruption for Israel (7:1-5, 12-16)
 - (2) The wickedness of the Canaanites (7:5)
 - (3) Israel must be a separate and holy people (7:6-11)

CONTENTS

b. Difficulties of the Holy War (7:17-26)	
(1) The superiority of the foe (7:17-21)	
(2) The gradual nature of the conquest (7:22)	
(3) The rewards and demands of faithfulness (7:20-21, 23-26)	
7. The threat from within (8:1—11:21)	129
a. The danger of prosperity (8:1-20)	
(1) Forgetfulness of past discipline (8:1-16)	
(2) Self-deification (8:17-20)	
b. How to prevent the threat (9:1—11:21)	138
(1) By a realistic self-evaluation (9:1—10:11)	
(2) By an abiding love (10:12-11:1)	
(3) By a constant refreshing of memory (11:2-25)	
8. The blessing and the curse (11:26-32)	159
 B. THE LAW ("the statutes and the ordinances") (12:1—26:19)	
1. One sanctuary (12:1-28)	163
2. One God: death penalties for apostasy (12:29—13:18; 17:2-13)	175
3. One holy people, different from all others (14:1—25:29) ..	186
a. Disfigurement for the dead forbidden (14:1,2)	
b. Their diet a constant reminder (14:3-21)	187
c. Differences in economic practices (14:22—15:23)	193
(1) The tithe (14:22-29)	
(2) The year of release (15:1-6)	
(3) The poor (15:7-11)	
(4) Slavery (15:12-18)	
(5) The offering of the firstling (15:19-23)	
d. Holy Festivals (16:1-17; 21, 22; 17:1)	205
(1) The Passover (16:1-8)	
(2) Pentecost (16:9-12)	
(3) Tabernacles (16:13-15)	
(4) General rules for observance (16:16,17,21,22; 17:1)	
e. The leaders of God's people (16:18-20; 17:2—18:22) ..	213
(1) Judges (16:18-20; 17:2-13)	
(2) Kings (17:14-20)	
(3) Priests (18:1-8)	
(4) Prophets (18:9-22)	
f. The sanctity of life and property (19:1-21; 21:1-9) ..	230
(1) Concerning murder (19:1-13; 21:1-9)	

DEUTERONOMY

(2) Concerning landmarks (19:14)	
(3) Concerning witnesses and judgment (19:15-21; 17:2-7)	
g. Rules for conducting the Holy War (20:1-20; 21:10-14; 23:9-14)	241
(1) Encouragement of the priest (20:1-4)	
(2) Exemptions (20:5-9)	
(3) Treatment of cities of far-off nations (20:10-15)	
(4) Treatment of Canaanite cities (20:16-18)	
(5) Respect for natural resources (20:19,20)	
(6) Marrying women captives (21:10-14)	
(7) Uncleaness (23:9-14)	
h. Family regulations (21:15-21)	253
(1) The right of the first-born (21:15-17)	
(2) Treatment of stubborn sons (21:18-20)	
i. The sanctity of the land: man hanged on a tree (21:22, 23)	255
j. Life in the New Land: Various laws (21:1-12)	256
(1) Lost possessions (22:1-4)	
(2) Appropriate clothing for the sex (22:5)	
(3) Nesting birds (22:6,7)	
(4) Battlements for new buildings (22:8)	
(5) Forbidden mixtures (22:9-11)	
(6) Fringed garments (22:12)	
k. Sex offenses (22:13-30)	262
(1) Virginity of a bride (22:13-21)	
(2) Defilement of a maiden betrothed (22:28,29)	
(3) Defilement of a maiden not betrothed (22:28,29)	
(4) Impurity toward a father's wife (22:30)	
l. Exclusion from the congregation (23:1-8)	269
(1) Permanent exclusion for the sexually mutilated, children born of illegitimate union and certain enemy people (23:1-6)	
(2) Temporary exclusion for Egyptians, Moabites and physically unclean (23:7-14)	
m. Laws of society and domestic relations (23:15—25:16)	274
(1) Treatment of escaped servants (23:15,16)	
(2) Morally illegitimate practices and wages (23:17,18)	
(3) Interest on loans (23:19,20)	

CONTENTS

(4) Making and keeping vows (23:21-23)	
(5) Partaking of a neighbor's crop (23:24,25)	
(6) Divorce and remarriage (24:1-4)	
(7) Bridegroom exempt from warfare (24:5)	
(8) Millstones not to be taken in pledge (24:6)	
(9) Kidnapping a fellow-Israelite (24:7)	
(10) Laws of leprosy to be observed (24:8,9)	
(11) Pledge for a loan (24:10-13)	
(12) Paying the poor hired servant (24:14,15)	
(13) Transgressors to bear own guilt (24:16)	
(14) Justice to the indigent (24:17,18)	
(15) Needy to be considered at harvest time (24:19-22)	
(16) Judging and punishing men in controversy (25:1-3)	
(17) Ox to work unmuzzled (25:4)	
(18) The family name: levirate marriage (25:5-10)	
(19) Protection from another's wife (25:11,12)	
(20) Just weights and measures (25:13-16)	
n. Laws of national import (25:17—26:16)	297
(1) Responsibility to exterminate the Amalekites (25:17-19)	
(2) Offering the first-fruits (26:1-11)	
(3) Tithes of the third year (26:12-15)	
(4) Concluding exhortation to carry out commitments to God and his law (26:16-19)	

III. THE THIRD DISCOURSE: Future of Israel Foretold (27:1—30:20)

A. ALTAR TO BE BUILT UPON MT. EBAL FOR THE RECORDING OF GOD'S LAW (27:1-8)	306
B. CURSES TO BE REPEATED FROM MT. EBAL (27:9-26)	308
C. BLESSINGS TO BE REPEATED FROM MT. GERIZIM (28:1-14)	314
D. FEARFUL CONSEQUENCES OF DISOBEDIENCE FORETOLD (28:15-68)	318
E. REMINDERS OF GOD'S BLESSINGS (29:1-13)	338
1. The present law to be enforced (29:1)	
2. The providence of God (29:2-9)	
3. The purpose of God (29:10-13)	

DEUTERONOMY

F. SOLEMN WARNINGS AND REMINDERS (29:14—30:20) .. 341

1. Covenant all-inclusive (29:14-21)
2. Israel's coming wickedness: the judgment of future generations and foreigners (29:22-29)
3. Jehovah's blessings assured whenever Israel repents (30:1-10)
4. Obedience not impossible (30:11-14)
5. Final encouragement to choose the path of blessing rather than the curse (30:15-20)

IV. MOSES' LAST DAYS (31:1—34:12)

A. CHARGE TO JOSHUA (31:1-23) 356

1. Joshua presented to the people (31:1-8)
2. Law delivered to the priests; commanded to be read before all Israel every seven years (31:9-13)
3. Joshua commissioned (31:14-23)
 - a. God confers with Moses and Joshua (31:14,15)
 - b. Moses commanded to write song as a witness against Israel (31:16-22)
 - c. Joshua charged and encouraged (31:23)

B. THE PRESERVATION OF THE BOOK (31:24-29) 365

1. The words of the law finished (31:24)
2. The words of the law preserved (31:25,26)
3. The words of the law a witness to Israel (31:27-29)

C. THE SONG OF MOSES (31:30—32:47) 368

D. MOSES COMMANDED TO ASCEND MOUNT NEBO (32:48-52) 383

E. THE BLESSING OF MOSES (33:1-29) 385

F. THE DEATH OF MOSES (34:1-12) 405

1. Moses shown the Promised Land from Mount Nebo, dies, and is buried (34:1-8)
2. Joshua assumes leadership; a final tribute to Moses (34:9-12)

THE AUTHORSHIP OF DEUTERONOMY—Rotherham 412

THE AUTHORSHIP OF DEUTERONOMY—McGarvey 419

BIBLIOGRAPHY 449

LESSON ONE 1:1-46

I. THE FIRST DISCOURSE

Review of the Journeys (1:1—4:43)

INTRODUCTION 1:1-5

1:1 These are the words which Moses spake unto all Israel beyond the Jordan in the wilderness, in the Arabah over against Suph, between Paran and Tophel, and Paban, and Hazeroth, and Dizahab. 2 It is eleven days *journey** from Horeb by the way of mount Seir unto Kadesh-barnea. 3 And it came to pass in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month, that Moses spake unto the children of Israel, according unto all that Jehovah had given him in commandment unto them; 4 after he had smitten Sihon the King of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon, and Og the king of Bashan, who dwelt in Ashtaroth, at Edrei. 5 Beyond the Jordan, in the land of Moab, began Moses to declare this law, saying,

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 1:1-5

1. Why was it necessary for Moses to speak to all Israel at this particular time?
2. Locate on a map the particular place from which this speech was given.
3. What possible purpose could be served in indicating the distance of "eleven days journey"?
4. How could Moses remember "all that Jehovah had given him in commandment unto them"?
5. Read Numbers 21:21-35 for an understanding of verse 4.
6. What is the meaning of the term "beyond the Jordan" in verse 5 and verse 1?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 1:1-5

These are the words which Moses spoke to all Israel, [still] on the [east] side of the Jordan [River] in the wilderness, in the Arabah [that is, the deep valley running north and south from the eastern arm of the Red Sea to beyond the Dead Sea] over near Suph, between Paran and Tophel, Laban, Hazeroth, and Dizahab.

*In the American Standard Version, used throughout this volume unless otherwise indicated, italicized words in the scripture text are meant to convey thoughts which seem necessary for a clear translation but not actually in the original.

2 It is [only] eleven days' journey from Horeb by the way of Mount Seir to Kadesh-barnea [on Canaan's border; yet Israel took forty years to get beyond it].

3 And in the fortieth year, on the first day of the eleventh month, Moses spoke to the Israelites according to all that the Lord had given him in commandment to them,

4 After he had defeated Sihon king of the Amorites, who lived in Heshbon, and Og the king of Bashan, who lived in Ashtaroth *and* Endrei.

5 Beyond [east of] the Jordan, in the land of Moab, Moses began to explain this law, saying,

COMMENT 1:1-5

Israel, now virtually on the eastern banks of the Jordan after forty years in the wilderness, is to receive final exhortations and solemn injunctions before crossing the river under Joshua's leadership. Moses, their leader up to this hour, is soon to pass from the scene. Thus the exhortations he is about to give constitute his farewell address—and a touching scene it must have been!

The location of Israel is precisely given:

BEYOND THE JORDAN—a phrase understood only by the context. Verse 5 specifies that in this case it is "in the land of Moab"—i.e., on the *east* side of the Jordan. More often than not, this is the meaning of the phrase—Gen. 50:10, 11; Josh. 9:10; Num. 22:1—"eastward, toward the sunrising" (Num. 34:15). But at other times the phrase has reference to the west side—"Mounts Gerizim and Ebal] are they not beyond the Jordan, behind the way of the going down of the sun?" (Deut. 11:30). At first it might seem that the standpoint of the writer or speaker would be the chief factor in determining whether "beyond" refers to the east or west side. But this assumption (while normally true) also has its difficulties, for sometimes "beyond the Jordan" refers to the *same side* as the speaker: Deut. 3:8; Josh. 5:1, 9:1. The solution to this varied use of "beyond" apparently lies in the correct understanding of the Hebrew preposition (*eber*), and the flexibility of its translation. After showing that *eber* may refer to either the same side of the river as the speaker, or the other side, J. W. McGarvey points out: "These examples demonstrate that the Hebrew preposition (*eber*) translated 'beyond' does not, by its own force, locate its object on the opposite side from him who uses it. They demonstrate that the opening words of Deuteronomy, 'These be the words which Moses

spake to all Israel beyond the Jordan in the wilderness,' may have been written by Moses as certainly as by any other writer . . ." Again, "It is impossible that a Hebrew preposition whose object is sometimes located on the same side of the river with the person who uses it, can be uniformly translated 'beyond.' Yet this is what the revisers of our English version have attempted. For example, they make Moses say in Deut. 3:8, 'We took at that time out of the hands of the two kings of the Amorites the land that was beyond Jordan from the river Arnon to Mount Hermon,' though the land mentioned was not beyond Jordan, but on the same side with Moses. They make Joshua say to the two and a half tribes before they crossed the river, 'Your wives, your little ones and your cattle shall remain in the land which Moses gave you beyond Jordan,' [Josh. 1:14] when it was not beyond, but on the same side of the river with themselves; and they make the author of the Book of Joshua, who unquestionably wrote in the country west of the river, speak of 'all the kings which were *beyond* the Jordan westward" [Josh. 12:7]. They were not beyond Jordan, but on the same side with himself.

King James' translators recognized the ambiguity of this Hebrew preposition, and wisely attempted no uniformity in rendering. They ascertained as best they could from the context, the only source of information in case of ambiguous words, on which side of the river the speaker or writer stood, and translated accordingly. They render it *on this side*, *on the other side*, or *beyond*, as the context requires, and in no instance have they made their renderings contradict the facts . . .

This translation has the opening sentence of Deuteronomy rendered, 'These be the words which Moses spake unto all Israel on this side Jordan in the wilderness' (verse 1), and 'on this side Jordan in the land of Moab' (verse 5 [see also 3:29]); and thus it locates the writer of the book on the same side of the river with Moses. This is certainly correct if either Moses or one of his contemporaries wrote this preface."* The question of "editing" is taken up later in this volume. For the present, let it be seen that the word "beyond" (*eber*) does not, in and of itself, determine the location of the writer or speaker or even the object spoken of.

Here, the context absolutely demands that the writer and speaker be located on the east side of the Jordan. The above understanding of the use of "*beyond*" will help unravel several "contradictory" passages as we progress in our study of Deuteronomy.

*The Authorship of Deuteronomy, p. 106-111.

IN THE WILDERNESS, IN THE ARABAH—The Arabah is the valley or hollow that includes the Jordan valley and the Dead Sea, and sometimes the depression that extends southward to the Gulf of Aqaba, an arm of the Red Sea. The Jordan valley is sometimes referred to as the *Ghor*, an Arab name meaning "hollow." Its width varies, but at the "plains of the Jordan" where the river flows into the Salt Sea, it is approximately fourteen miles wide. This wide area is also called "the plains of Moab" (34:1) and "the Plain of the valley of Jericho" (34:3). Our words Arab and Arabian are related to "Arabah"—all being from a root word meaning arid, sterile, dry (*Gesenius*).

OVER AGAINST SUPH, BETWEEN PARAN, AND TOPHEL, AND LABAN, AND HAZEROTH, AND DIZAHAB—4:46 adds, "in the valley over against Beth-peor, in the land of Sihon king of the Amorites." Thus the *general* area of all these locations is known. "And they [Israel] journeyed from the mountains of Abarim, and encamped in the Plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho." (Num. 33:48)

It is questionable as to whether Paran should be identified with "the wilderness of Paran" (Num. 13:26), "mount Paran" (Deut. 33:2), or considered a town by the same name. "Some place named Paran would seem to be referred to in Deut. 1:1; but no trace of such a city has yet been found."—*I.S.B.E.* See also I Kings 11:18.

The travelling time from Horeb (Sinai) to Kadesh-barnea, at the southern edge of the promised land, was only eleven days (verse 2).

OVER AGAINST SUPH—the Authorized Version's reading "over against the Red Sea," is regrettable. The word "sea" is not in the original at all (it occurs later in the Septuagint and Vulgate versions), and they were now farther from the Red Sea than they ever had been! The Hebrew word SUPH should have been left untranslated (as in the American Standard and Revised Standard versions), as it undoubtedly is a city or town in the vicinity of Israel's camp. Ptolemy mentions a people named *Sophonites* that dwelt in *Arabia Petraea*, and it is possible that they took their name from this city.

IT IS ELEVEN DAYS' JOURNEY FROM HOREB BY THE WAY OF MOUNT SEIR UNTO KADESH-BARNEA—Kadesh is located on the southern edge of the promised land (Num. 13:25, 26; 34:4), but it took Israel thirty-eight years to get far beyond it! The Decalogue was given about three months after leaving Egypt (Ex. 19:1) at Sinai. At the foot

of this mountain, the tabernacle was reared up in the first month of the second year (Ex. 40:17). When Israel was first numbered in the wilderness (Num. 1:1) they were thirteen months out of Egypt. On the twentieth day of that month, they set forth from the Mount (Num. 10:11, 12). But it obviously took them longer than the standard journey-time from Sinai to Kadesh via the Mount Seir road (Num. 10:33; 11:3, 19, 20, 35; 12:16; 13:25, 26). It must have taken several months, for in Deut. 2:14 we are told, "And the days in which we came from Kadesh-barnea, until we were come over the brook Zered, were thirty and eight years; until all the generation of the men of war were consumed from the midst of the camp, as Jehovah swore unto them." We have, then, approximately a two year period between Egypt and Kadesh. This, added to the thirty-eight between the first visit at Kadesh and the crossing of the Zered river (which flows into the southeastern shore of the Dead Sea) gives us forty years. When we add the time it took Israel to proceed up the east side and conquer the kingdoms of Sihon and Og, we have "The fortieth year in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month" as the time Moses began our present discourse.

The curse given at Kadesh for Israel's failure to obey God's injunction to lay hold of his promise was, in a sense, retroactive. "After the number of days in which ye spied out the land, even forty days, for every day a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my alienation" (Num. 14:34).

But we cannot leave this passage without asking another question: Why does the sacred writer insert this matter of distances and traveling time? It seems obvious, that it is to show how simply and easily God's chosen people *could* have entered into the land God had assured them *if* they would have marched forth with courage and confidence at Kadesh! It was only "eleven days from Horeb, by way of Mount Seir,—as far as Kadesh-barnea" (*Rotherdam*)—but there the discouraging report of the spies (except Joshua and Caleb) caused the congregation to cower and "made the heart of the people melt" (John. 14:8), causing them to cry, "wherefore doth Jehovah bring us into this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will be a prey: were it not better for us to return to Egypt?" (Num. 14:3). Failure to capitalize upon the promises, opportunities, and privileges God grants to us cannot but have harmful and regrettable results—both to us and our children. The comment of *C. H. Mackintosh* here is excellent: "It

is only too like ourselves. How slowly we get over the ground! What windings and turnings! How often we have to go back and travel over the same ground again and again! We are slow travelers, because we are slow learners . . . We, like them, are kept back by our unbelief and slowness of heart; but there is far less excuse for us than for them, inasmuch as our privileges are so very much higher. Our God is a faithful and wise as well as a gracious and patient Teacher. He will not permit us to pass cursorily over our lessons. Sometimes, perhaps, we think we have mastered a lesson, and we attempt to move on to another; but our wise Teacher knows better, and He sees the need of deeper ploughing. He will not have us mere theorists or smatterers: He will keep us, if need be, year after year at our scales until we learn to sing."

AND IT CAME TO PASS IN THE FORTIETH YEAR, IN THE ELEVENTH MONTH, ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE MONTH THAT MOSES SPAKE UNTO THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, ACCORDING UNTO ALL THAT JEHOVAH HAD GIVEN HIM IN COMMANDMENT UNTO THEM—Thus the faithful servant of God communicated exactly what God had *given him* to communicate! Not his own theories or whims, nor his own speculations or fancies. See I Pet. 1:19-21, Jn. 5:19. He gives it *all*—"all that Jehovah had given him." The responsibility of the true servant of God today has not basically changed. God's word—all of it—*must* be communicated to his people if they are to be guided and directed aright. ". . . the things that are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever" (29:29)—and we must *know* them and be *reminded* of them if we are to "do all the words of this law."

AFTER HE HAD SMITTEN SIHON THE KING OF THE AMORITES, WHO DWELT IN HESHBON, AND OG THE KING OF BASHAN, WHO DWELT IN ASHTAROTH, AT EDREI (v. 4)—The two main conquests of Israel on the east of the Dead Sea. We'll read more about Sihon's defeat in 2:26-37 and a detailed account is also found in Num. 21:21-31. His kingdom's borders were the Arnon river on the south and the Jabbok river on the north. We'll read more about Og of Bashan, just north of Sihon's kingdom, in 3:1-17. An account of his defeat is also found in Num. 21:33-35. These kings both dwelt in their capital cities, Heshbon and Ashtaroth, respectively. Ashtaroth is the plural form of Ashtareth, the Canaanite goddess and counterpart of Baal. Thus the place was probably early associated with her worship.

They combined to battle Israel but were defeated at Erdei—one of the cities of Og (3:10) and not far from Ashtaroth.

A. THE EVENTS FROM SINAI TO THE PRESENT

(1:6—3:29)

1. COMMAND TO LEAVE HOREB FOR THE
PROMISED LAND (1:6-8)

1:6 Jehovah our God spake unto us in Horeb saying, Ye have dwelt long enough in this mountain: 7 turn you, and take your journey, and go to the hill-country of the Amorites, and unto all *the places* nigh there-unto, in the Arabah, in the hill-country, and in the lowland, and in the South, and by the sea-shore, the land of the Canaanites, and Lebanon, as far as the great river, the river Euphrates. 8 Behold, I have set the land before you: go in and possess the land which Jehovah sware unto your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give unto them and to their seed after them.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 1:6-8

7. Where is "Horeb"? Are we to understand that God asked them to conquer Canaan even before they left Sinai?
8. Just what is involved in the act of faith i.e., what is God's part and what is man's part?
9. Please locate on the map the following places: (1) Arabah, (2) the land of the Canaanites and Lebanon, (3) the great river.
10. Read Numbers 34:1-29.

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 1:6-8

6 The Lord our God said to us in Horeb, You have dwelt long enough on this mountain;

7 Turn and take up your journey, and go to the hill country of the Amorites, and to all their neighbors in the Arabah, in the hill country, in the lowland, in the South [the Negeb], and on the coast, the land of the Canaanites, and Lebanon, as far as the great river, the river Euphrates.

8 Behold, I have set the land before you; go in and take possession of the land which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give to them and to their descendants after them.

COMMENT 1:6-8

Here we have the command to conquer given before Israel ever arrives at Kadesh. All they had to do was to *believe and obey*—to launch out in total faith and confidence in the promise and assurance

of God. He had given a similar faith-demanding command some months before. When the Israelites attempted to cross the Red Sea, God had said to Moses "speak unto the children of Israel, **THAT THEY GO FORWARD.**" (Ex. 14:15) The command of God was heeded, "and the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea" (that took some faith, too) "upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left." (Ex. 14:22) Israel's whole journey, whether crossing the Red Sea or the Jordan, whether fighting with fierce Canaanites or depending on Providence for food and water, was an operation of *faith*! Implicitly trusting God *always* meant eventual success; disbelief meant failure every single time. "By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were swallowed up. By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they had been compassed about for seven days." (Heb. 11:29, 30) How many times has God told *us*, "Go in and possess the land" and we have *not*! Opportunities to learn his will, to witness, to help, to encourage, to inspire, to strengthen, to serve, all too often go begging because we are content to wander in the deserts of doubt, distrust, hesitancy, and indecision. After Israel had received God's commands and instructions at Sinai, it was time to "get going!" "Ye have dwelt long enough in this mountain"—You have my law now; you know what to do; your tabernacle is now ready. Its time now to *proceed*, to do, to act, to obey. Once a man *understands* his Lord's commands, (and he needs to bend every effort toward that end) it becomes a matter of character, morality, and faithfulness that he now place himself in the hands of God and *act* on what he knows! "But the righteous [note, the *righteous*] shall live by faith." (Rom. 1:17)

2. CIVIL ORGANIZATION UNDER MOSES (1:9-18)

1:9 And I spake unto you at that time, saying, I am not able to bear you myself alone: 10 Jehovah your God hath multiplied you, and, behold, ye are this day as the stars of heaven for multitude. 11 Jehovah, the God of your fathers, make you a thousand times as many as ye are, and bless you, as he hath promised you! 12 How can I myself alone bear your cumbrance, and your burden, and your strife? 13 Take you wise men, and understanding, and known, according to your tribes, and I will make them heads over you. 14 And ye answered me, and said, The thing which thou hast spoken is good *for us* to do. 15 So I took the heads of your tribes, wise men and known, and made them heads over you, captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds, and

captains of fifties, and captains of tens and officers, according to your tribes. 16 And I charged your judges at that time, saying, Hear *the causes* between your brethren, and judge righteously between a man and his brother, and the sojourner that is with him. 17 Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; ye shall hear the small and the great alike; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; For the judgment is God's: and the cause that is too hard for you ye shall bring unto me, and I will hear it. 18 And I commanded you at that time all the things which ye should do.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 1:9-18

11. At what time did Moses say "I am not able to bear you myself alone:"? Cf. Ex. 18:13-27.
12. What promise was fulfilled in verse 10? Ff. Genesis 15:5.
13. Has the promise (or benediction) of verse 11 been fulfilled? How?
14. Please notice carefully the words of verse 13 as an example for the selection of elders and deacons for today. "wise, understanding, known."
15. According to the arrangement described in verse 15, how many judges were there to be in 1,000 Israelites?
16. What is meant by the expression "sojourner"—from where would they come?
17. What are the causes for "respect of persons"? Name two.
18. What makes one man "small" and another man "great"?
19. Try to approximate the circumstance of judgment when the judge would be sorely tempted to "fear the face of man."
20. What is meant by the phrase, "For the judgment is God's." If the judgment is God's how could a case be too hard for the judge?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 1:9-18

9 I said to you at that time, I am not able to bear you alone;

10 The Lord your God has multiplied you, and behold, you are this day as the stars of the heavens for multitude.

11 May the Lord, the God of your fathers make you 1,000 times as many as you are, and bless you, as He has promised you!

12 How can I bear alone the weariness and pressure and burden of you and your strife?

13 Choose wise, understanding, experienced and respected men, according to your tribes, and I will make them heads over you.

14 And you answered me, The thing which you have spoken is good for us to do.

15 So I took the heads of your tribes, wise, experienced *and* respected men, and made them heads over you, commanders of thousands, and hundreds, and fifties and tens, and officers according to your tribes.

16 And I charged your judges at that time, Hear the cases between your brethren, and judge righteously between a man and his brother or the stranger or sojourner who is with him.

17 You shall not be partial in judgment; but you shall hear the small as well as the great; you shall not be afraid of the face of man, for the judgment is God's; and the case that is too hard for you, you shall bring to me, and I will hear it.

18 And I commanded you at that time all the things that you should do.

COMMENT 1:9-18

See also the original record of this event in Ex. 18:13-27. The procedure here described was adopted at the suggestion of Jethro, Moses' father-in-law. The Exodus account portrays him as a God-fearing man, though he did not join Israel.

Moses here invokes an astounding blessing upon God's people: "God . . . make you a thousand times as many as ye are . . ." But has it not come to pass? There were nearly six hundred and two thousand *numbered* Israelites at that time (Num. 26:51). This number would probably be *at least* two or three million when the unnumbered children, priests, etc. were included (See the *Introduction*, II footnote). What is their number now, throughout the world? Will the goodness of God ever lead them to repentance? The Jews have wandered far from God, and his Son who came to save them. Yet, "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." (Ecc. 8:11)

(The very fact that such a great horde of people, wandering about that barren wasteland, *kept alive*, was miraculous in every way—and the result of God's goodness. And so it has been down through the years with God toward this people. As these words are being penned, Israel has just returned from a devastating victory over Jordan [in the face of *overwhelming* odds!], regaining much of their former land. How long will these people whom God has blessed beyond all measure refuse His grace and goodness?)

No one can justly challenge the wisdom and prudence involved in this decision and the procedure here described. It meant a much more efficient and effective judicial system for Israel—a system not entirely unlike that presently existing in democratic countries throughout the world.

Exodus 18:23 would appear to indicate that God endorsed and blessed this plan. The more difficult cases were still brought to Moses, who brought them before God, v. 17. (See also Ex. 18:19, 20. Compare Numbers 9:8, 27:5, etc.) With God's blessing upon the entire arrangement, and the final cases coming before him through Moses, the law-giver could rightly say, "the judgement is God's" (v. 17).

Certain critics* have found a contradiction in the two accounts in trying to maintain that Moses here asserts that the plan originated with himself, while the Exodus account has the proposal originating with Jethro. But it is not said here that the plan *originated* with Moses. If this *had* been said, it would have been a contradiction. McGarvey comments pointedly, "Does this conflict with the statement in Exodus that Jethro had just suggested the plan to Moses before he submitted it to the people? If it does, then, should the President of the United States submit a measure to Congress, and should it afterward be discovered that it was suggested to him by one of his secretaries, our modern scientific critics would find here an irreconcilable inconsistency! The President, as everybody knows, is not bound to tell whether the measure which he proposes originated with himself or with some of his advisors; neither was Moses obliged to tell the people that his judiciary scheme originated with Jethro. As Jethro was not an Israelite, there may have been prudence in withholding from them this information until they themselves expressed approval of the measure."***

The delegating of responsibility has always been a necessity for the smooth functioning of God's work—in whatever age (Acts 6:1-6, Eph. 4:11). Moses, like Christ (see 18:15-19 and notes) was God's chosen law-giver and leader—but he needed help!

It is significant that the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram against Moses and Aaron on the very issue of delegated authority was *after* this appointment of judges. "Ye take too much upon you . . .

*Driver, *Commentary on Deuteronomy*, p. XXV (1895). Wellhausen completely confuses matters by denying that Moses stayed at Mount Sinai as described in Exodus, and declares that Jethro's advice was given, not at Mount Sinai, but "at the well of Kadesh." (Article, "Israel," *Encyclopedia Britannica*.) He gives no reason for falsifying the Biblical history.

***Authorship of Deuteronomy, pp. 83, 84.

wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the assembly of Jehovah?" (Num. 16:1-3). Thus any leader among God's people, who stands on the authority of his sacred Word, runs the risk of such accusations as Moses received—though he be ever so careful to avoid such.

Note the charge of impartiality given to the judges. "Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; ye shall hear the small and great alike; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man . . ." (v. 17) Cf. 16:18-20, 24:17. Impartiality is a characteristic of God (10:17, II Pet. 2:4, etc.) and thus salvation and all its blessings are available to all people, Acts 10:28, 34, 35. "To have respect of persons in judgement is not good" (Prov. 24:23)—so in the Old Testament, so in all ages. Paul told Timothy, "I charge thee in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without prejudice (Margin, *preference*), doing nothing by partiality." (I Tim. 5:21). See also Ex. 23:1-3, Lev. 19:15-18.

God judges us individually and impartially (Rom. 2:5-11, II Cor. 5:10). "And if ye call on him as father, who without respect of persons judgeth each man's work, pass the time of your sojourning in fear" (I Pet. 1:17). Is he not our perfect example? Will not he, through Christ, be our judge on the last day (Jn. 5:22, Acts 10:40-42, 17:31)?

There is a great moral and spiritual lesson for all of us to learn here in the exhortation God through Moses gave to the judges. Partiality and preference is condemned everywhere in the Word of God—Old Testament and New. "Ye shall not be afraid of the face of man"—*that* is the great and constant danger! Fear of men is the greatest enemy of impartiality, and "the fear of man worketh a snare" (Prov. 29:25). "Ye shall not be afraid of the face of man"—though that face be ever so threatening, disapproving, and fierce in its look. "A wicked man hardeneth his face; But as for the upright, he establisheth his ways." (Prov. 21:29) Let us remember that God, whose face is to be respected far above man's, is ever watching and observing, and "If God is for us who is [successfully] against us?" (Rom. 8:31). Let us be Godlike! Let our judgments toward others be impartial, fair, and just.

3. TWO FAILURES AT KADESH-BARNEA (1:19-46)

a. BECAUSE OF UNBELIEF (1:19-40)

1:19 And we journeyed from Horeb, and went through all that great and terrible wilderness which ye saw, by the way to the hill-country of the Amorites, as Jehovah our God commanded us; and we

came to Kadesh-barnea, 20 And I said unto you, Ye are come unto the hill-country of the Amorites, which Jehovah our God giveth unto us. 21 Behold Jehovah thy God hath set the land before thee: go up, take possession, as Jehovah the God of thy fathers, hath spoken unto thee; fear not, neither be dismayed. 22 And ye came near unto me every one of you, and said, Let us send men before us, that they may search the land for us, and bring us word again of the way by which we must go up, and the cities unto which we shall come. 23 And the thing pleased me well; and I took twelve men of you, one man for every tribe: 24 and they turned and went up into the hill-country, and came unto the valley of Eshcol, and spied it out. 25 And they took of the fruit of the land in their hands, and brought it down unto us, and brought us word again, and said, It is a good land which Jehovah our God giveth unto us.

26 Yet ye would not go up, but rebelled against the commandment of Jehovah your God: 27 and ye murmured in your tents, and said, Because Jehovah hated us, he hath brought us forth out of the land of Egypt, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us. 28 Whither are we going up? Our brethren have made our heart to melt, saying, The people are greater and taller than we; the cities are great and fortified up to heaven; and moreover we have seen the sons of the Anakim there. 29 Then I said unto you, Dread not, neither be afraid of them. 30 Jehovah your God who goeth before you, he will fight for you, according to all that he did for you in Egypt before your eyes, 31 and in the wilderness, where thou hast seen how that Jehovah thy God bare thee, as a man doth bear his son, in all the way that ye went, until ye came unto this place. 32 Yet in this thing ye did not believe Jehovah your God, 33 who went before you in the way, to seek you out a place to pitch your tents in, in fire by night, to show you by what way we should go, and in the cloud by day.

34 And Jehovah heard the voice of your words, and was wroth, and sware, saying, 35 Surely there shall not one of these men of this evil generation see the good land, which I sware to give unto your fathers, 36 save Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it; and to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children, because he hath wholly followed Jehovah. 37 Also Jehovah was angry with me for your sakes, saying, Thou also shalt not go in thither: 38 Joshua the son of Nun, who standeth before thee, he shall go in thither: encourage thou him; for he shall cause Israel to inherit it. 39 Moreover your little ones, that ye said should be a prey, and your

children, that this day have no knowledge of good or evil, they shall go in thither, and unto them will I give it, and they shall possess it.
40 But as for you, turn you, and take your Journey into the wilderness by the way to the Red Sea.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 1:19-40

21. Locate Kadesh-barnea on the map.
22. Was it wrong to send out the twelve spies?
23. Was God punishing the Amorites at the same time He gave possession to the Israelites? Discuss.
24. Try to share in the feelings of the faithless Israelites; what capacity in their faith was lacking? Was it courage? Memory? Love? Obedience?
25. Caleb and Joshua believed. What made them different? Isn't there encouragement for all in the fact that out of the same background God raised up two grand leaders? Discuss.
26. There is irony in verse 39, what is it?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 1:19-40

19 And when we departed from Horeb, we went through all that great and terrible wilderness, which you saw on the way to the hill country of the Amorites, as the Lord our God commanded us; and we came to Kadesh-barnea.

20 And I said to you, You have come to the hill country of the Amorites, which the Lord our God gives us.

21 Behold, the Lord your God has set the land before you; go up and possess it, as the Lord God of your fathers has said to you; fear not, neither be dismayed.

22 Then you all came near to me and said, Let us send men before us, that they may search us out the land, and bring us word again by what way we should go up, and the cities into which we shall come.

23 The thing pleased me well, and I took twelve men of you, one for each tribe.

24 And they turned and went up into the hill country, and came to the Valley of Eshcol and spied it out.

25 And they took of the fruit of the land in their hands, and brought it down to us, and brought us word again, and said, It is a good land which the Lord our God gives us.

26 Yet you would not go up, but rebelled against the commandment of the Lord your God;

27 You were peevish *and* discontented in your tents, and said, Because the Lord hated us He brought us forth out of the land of Egypt, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us.

28 To what are we going up? Our brethren have made our hearts melt, saying, The people are bigger and taller than we are; the cities are great and fortified to the heavens; and moreover we have seen the [giant-like] sons of the Anakim there.

29 Then I said to you, Dread not, neither be afraid of them.

30 The Lord your God Who goes before you, He will fight for you just as He did for you in Egypt before your eyes,

31 And in the wilderness, where you have seen how the Lord your God bore you, as a man carries his son, in all the way that you went until you came to this place.

32 Yet in spite of this word you did not believe [trust, rely on and remain steadfast to] the Lord your God;

33 Who went in the way before you to search out a place to pitch your tents, in fire by night, to show you by what way you should go, and in the cloud by day.

34 And the Lord heard your words, and was angered, and He swore,

35 Not one of these men of this evil generation shall see that good land which I swore to give to your fathers,

36 Except [Joshua, of course; and] Caleb son of Jephunneh, he shall see it, and to him and to his children I will give the land upon which he has walked, because he has wholly followed the Lord.

37 The Lord was angry with me also for your sakes, and said, You also shall not enter Canaan.

38 But Joshua the son of Nun, who stands before you, he shall enter there; encourage him, for he shall cause Israel to inherit it.

39 Moreover your little ones, who you said would become a prey, and your children, who at this time cannot discern between good and evil, they shall enter Canaan, and to them I will give it, and they shall possess it.

40 But as for you, turn and journey into the wilderness by way of the Red Sea.

COMMENT 1:19-40

The parallel account is in Numbers 13:1—14:25. We have said this was a failure because of *unbelief*, for this was the underlying cause of their disobedience. "... ye did not believe in Jehovah your God" (v. 32). "And Jehovah said unto Moses, How long will this

people despise me? and how long will they not believe in me, for all the signs which I have wrought against them?" (Num. 14:11). Faith, on the other hand, was the crowning virtue of Caleb and Joshua, and their confidence in God stood in marked contrast to the doubting fearful response of the other spies and the congregation. "Let us go up at once," Caleb said upon returning from their mission, "and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it." (Num. 13:30) And these two men joined in saying, "If Jehovah delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it unto us . . . only rebel not against Jehovah, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us; their defence is removed from over them . . ." (Num. 14:8, 9). Faith in God and his promises always has been and ever shall be a prerequisite for conquering his enemies. There are no limits to his power—or what his people can do when they believe *in* his power!

KADESH-BARNEA (v. 19)—(See also under v. 1 and v. 46). This station was, more than any other one place, "home base" or headquarters" for the Israelites during their wanderings. In Num. 33:36 we are told Israel "encamped in the wilderness of Zin (the same is Kadesh)"—a statement that lends credence to the idea held by many students, that the term included an area much larger than a town. Others, however, would translate that passage, "the wilderness of Zin—namely Kadesh" (Berkeley. The R.S.V., Moffatt, Meek, and the Torah are similar). This latter translation is more in harmony with Num. 20:1: "And the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, came into the wilderness of Zin in the first month [this is their second visit, in the fortieth year]: and the people abode in Kadesh . . ." Kadesh was such a leading oasis of that area that it was *the* encampment in the wilderness of Zin. Thus it was almost a synonym for it. The wilderness of Paran, a much larger area, contained both Kadesh and the wilderness of Zin (Num. 13:26).

THAT GREAT AND TERRIBLE WILDERNESS—Indeed it was, and still is! ". . . *wherein were* fiery serpents and scorpions, and thirsty ground where there was no water" (8:15). "He found him a desert land, And in the waste howling wilderness . . ." (32:10. See also Jer. 2:6. McGarvey, after visiting this area in 1897 could say, "it is still, and it was anciently, 'a waste howling wilderness,' almost totally uninhabited, and seldom traversed even by the Bedawin Arabs."* And eighty years later a modern writer can say. "In recent times this whole area [of the

*Lands of the Bible, pp. 494, 495.

wanderings] has not been able to support more than about seven thousand underfed wanderers." What a wilderness it must have been in those ancient days to almost a hundred times that many people, completely inexperienced in the rigors of this arid steppe! As in Bible times, there are still long waterless stretches, with infrequent brackish wells, any one of which may have been Marah. One tempting oasis of palm trees and clear, good water still exists, which is probably biblical Elim."*

THE HILL-COUNTRY OF THE AMORITES, WHICH JEHOVAH OUR GOD GIVETH UNTO US (v. 20)—a fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham, Genesis 15:16. We'll learn more about the Amorites and their conflicts with Israel in chapter three.

22 AND YE CAME NEAR UNTO ME EVERY ONE OF YOU AND SAID, LET US SEND MEN BEFORE US, THAT THEY MAY SEARCH THE LAND FOR US, AND BRING US WORD AGAIN OF THE WAY BY WHICH WE MUST GO UP, AND THE CITIES UNTO WHICH WE SHALL COME. 23 AND THE THING PLEASED ME WELL; AND I TOOK TWELVE MEN OF YOU, ONE MAN FOR EVERY TRIBE: 24 AND THEY TURNED AND WENT UP INTO THE HILL-COUNTRY, AND CAME UNTO THE VALLEY OF ESHCOL, AND SPIED IT OUT.

The destructive critics have attacked these verses in much the same manner as they have the appointment of the judges (verses 12-14). They find a discrepancy in the fact that while the record here speaks of the *people* recommending the sending forth of spies, in Num. 13:1-3 it is *God* issuing the command and working directly through Moses. And though here the spies are said to have gone as far north as the valley of Eschol (Hebron), v. 24, in Numbers 13:21 they are said to have gone as far north as "the entrance of Hamath"—a much farther distance.

The rebuttal by McGarvey is excellent; "Nothing in the experience of the people addressed by Moses could have been more familiar than this piece of history; for it furnished the reason why, instead of entering the promised land within less than two years after they left Egypt, they had been kept out of it for more than thirty-eight years longer. It explained the deplorable fact that all the fathers and mothers** of the persons addressed, to the number of more than a million, had

**Story of the Bible World*, by Nelson Beecher Keys, p. 28. The Reader's Digest Association, Pleasantville, N.Y.

**See footnote under number II in the Introduction. Only the numbered Israelites were cursed.

perished in the wilderness. In referring to it, therefore, as a warning, Moses could with perfect propriety mention such parts of the story as suited his horatatory purpose, and omit all others, without the slightest appearance of ignoring them, much less of denying their existence. He accordingly treats the whole subject in the space of *twenty-four verses* (1:24-46), whereas the original account in Numbers contains seventy-eight. He abbreviates by omitting many well-remembered incidents. He omits the names of the twelve spies and those of the tribes which they respectively represented (4-16); he omits the whole of the long list of directions which he gave them (17-20); he omits the season of the year in which they were sent (21); he omits the names of the giants whose people were found at Hebron (21, 22); he omits the number of days that were occupied in the journey (25); he omits the detailed account the spies gave of the location of the different tribes in the land (29); he omits the thrilling incidents of himself and Aaron falling on their faces before the people, of the urgent pleadings by Caleb and Joshua, and the proposal of the people to stone these four men (14:5-10); he omits his own long and earnest pleading with God against the latter's proposal to slay the whole multitude and raise up a people from Moses to "inherit the land" (11-21); he omits the greater part of the final sentence upon the rebels (28-35); and he omits the fact that the ten false spies died of a plague (36, 37). In the midst of such a multitude of omissions, why should it be thought strange that he omitted to state the whole distance that the spies journeyed, and the fact that God directed him to send them? To look all the facts in the face is all that is necessary to see the impertinence and absurdity of the charge of contradiction." The admission of Driver is then cited.

"No doubt the two representations are capable, in the abstract, of being harmonized: Moses, it might be supposed, approving personally of the purpose (Deut. 1:23), desired to know if it had Jehovah's sanction; and the command in Numbers (xiii. 1-3) is really the answer to his inquiry."

What could be more reasonable than this, especially as Moses was not in the habit of adopting measures that might involve the lives of a dozen eminent men without God's approval?"*

THE SONS OF THE ANAKIM (v. 28)—See under 9:2.

*Authorship of Deuteronomy, pp. 88-90.

JEHOVAH YOUR GOD, WHO GOETH BEFORE YOU, HE WILL FIGHT FOR YOU—(v. 30)—cf. 3:22, 20:4. When God is on our side—"the Lord of hosts"—we are unconquerable. If *God* be for us, who can be against us? He who created the world and all it contains; he who made *us*—how can we *insult* him by limiting his power and might? *His* kingdom shall stand forever (Dan. 2:44) and the gates of hades shall *not* prevail against it (Matt. 16:18).

But suppose God is *not* on your side—*not* undergirding you with his strength, not filling you with his Spirit, not directing you by his word. What then? "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you" (Jas. 4:8). But what of those who draw *away* from him and *reject* his counsels? "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10:31).

YET IN THIS THING YE DID NOT BELIEVE JEHOVAH YOUR GOD (v. 32)—Their trouble all along, time after time in the wilderness. "Take heed, brethren," the writer of Hebrews exhorts us, "lest haply there shall be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief, in falling away from the living God: but exhort one another day by day, so long as it is called Today; lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin: for we are become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence firm unto the end: while it is said,

Today if ye shall hear his voice.

Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.

For who, when they heard, did provoke? Nay, did not all they that came out of Egypt by Moses? And with whom was he displeased forty years? Was it not with them that sinned, who bodies fell in the wilderness? And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that were disobedient? And we see that they were not able to enter in BECAUSE OF UNBELIEF" (Heb. 3:12-19). That was it exactly, for "the word of hearing did not profit them, because it was not united by faith with them that heard" (Heb. 4:2). THEY were not able to enter in because of unbelief—WE cannot enter in to the antitype, heaven, with an unbelieving heart, for "without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing *unto him*; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him" (Heb. 11:6). Israel exercised faith at the beginning: "By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land; which the Egyptians assaying to do were swallowed up" (Heb. 11:29). That was a fine *beginning*. And the next verse in Hebrews gives us another example

of Israel's faith—forty years later! "*By faith*, the walls of Jerocho fell down . . ." Where was the faith in the interim? The "hall of faith" has no illustration from Israel during this period! The reason is, "with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were over-thrown in the wilderness" (I Cor. 10:5). Will we learn? Will we see the lesson in these things for us? Will we ever recognize that "whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning . . ." (Rom. 15:4)? Far too often, "A servant will not be corrected by words; For though he understand, he will not give heed" (Prov. 29:19). Must we, like Israel, be chastized with God's rod before we begin to heed his will? Is not his *word* enough? "Now these things happened unto them by way of example; and they *were written* for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come." (I Cor. 10:11).

CALEB . . . HATH WHOLLY FOLLOWED JEHOVAH—A wonderful compliment to any child of God! Our Lord demands one hundred percent—will accept nothing less. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your spiritual service" (Rom. 12:1). This is demanded of every true disciple. "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man [note that: *ANY* man!] would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross [Luke adds, "daily"], and follow me" (Matt. 16:24). And if such consecration is needed in all, it is surely a "must" among today's spiritual leaders. What Paul told Timothy he would tell all the servants of Christ: "Be diligent in these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy progress may be manifest unto all" (I Tim. 4:15).

THOU [MOSES] SHALT NOT GO IN THITHER—Moses' exclusion from the promised land was in punishment for his sin of rebellion and unbelief in response to the striving and murmuring of Israel because of the lack of water (See Num. 20:1-13). Aaron was excluded for the same reason. The basic sin is stated in Numbers 20:12: "Because ye believed not in me, to sanctify me in the eyes of Israel . . ." Proper action at that time on Moses' part would have exalted, glorified, and elevated God in the eyes of Israel. This lack of trust—disbelief—caused him to do all sorts of wrong things:

1. Moses *said* the wrong thing: "Hear now, ye rebels, shall *we* bring you forth water out of this rock?" (v. 10). "Possibly Moses was not aware of the significance of what he had been ordered to do, but God held him responsible for not obeying him exactly, nevertheless. Obedience to his will is vitally important, whether we understand his

purpose or not, 'God's will, nothing more; nothing less; nothing else; at any cost,' would have been priceless to Moses and Aaron that day, if they had only followed it."*

God had said, Speak to the *rock*: Moses spoke to the *people*.

"They angered him also at the waters of Meribah,
So that it went ill with Moses for their sakes;
Because they were rebellious against his spirit,
And he spake unadvisedly [*Rotherham*, rashly] with his lips."
(Ps. 106:32, 33).

And when he spoke, it was with a question mark: "Shall we bring you forth water. . .?" A question was not involved in God's *command*.

2. In addition, instead of speaking to it, as instructed, he smote it twice! Speaking to it wasn't enough—so he didn't speak to it *at all*, but rather struck it savagely twice! At Rephidim, at the foot of Horeb, Moses was commanded to smite the rock (Ex. 17:6).** He may have *assumed* such a commandment here—but we cannot *assume* God's will to be other than that which he has already spoken! He struck the rock twice, "which certainly in this case indicates a great perturbation of spirit and want of attention to the presence of God" (Clarke).

Through this entire incident, then, Moses failed to sanctify God in the eyes of the people—and this "Because ye believed not in me." Why would Moses and Aaron, God's great chosen leaders, lack faith? One need not go far for the answer. It is found in the pressing and distressing circumstances of the hour—and the fact that they were becoming exasperated, exhausted, and disgusted with the everlasting complaining of the multitudes.

From a purely *human* standpoint, we would *excuse* Moses. We would say, "Surely God will not keep this great man from the promised land just for loosing his temper this one time!" But that is *human* reasoning, not divine. God *despises* sin, and his ways are not our ways. Uzzah was killed for staying the ark with his hand; Nadab and Abihu were killed for offering strange fire; Achan was executed, along with his family, for stealing a few articles of the consecrated booty; Korah, Dathan, and Abiram were swallowed up by the earth for murmuring against God's chosen leadership; Ananias and Saphira were struck dead for lying about their offering to the church—and so on and on could we extend this list. But what is the lesson for us all? That God

*Amplified Old Testament, comment under Numbers 20:11.

**But never is he instructed to strike it twice.

despises sin—hates disobedience to his commands, and abhors the faithless heart!

Moses, the Man of meekest heart,
Lost Caanan by Self-Will,—
To show where grace has done its part
How sin defiles us still.

MOREOVER YOUR LITTLE ONES, THAT YE SAID SHOULD BE A PREY, AND YOUR CHILDREN, THAT THIS DAY HAVE NO KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD OR EVIL, THEY SHALL GO IN THITHER, AND UNTO THEM WILL I GIVE IT, AND THEY SHALL POSSESS IT. (v. 39)—And now, as they were poised on the east of the Jordan, this very prophecy (see Numbers 14:1-3, 26-33) was being fulfilled. The children were not under the curse, as they were not numbered. It is difficult to estimate their number. There were 603,550 *numbered* Israelites after a little over a year in the wilderness (Num. 1:46), and 601,730 as they entered Canaan (Num. 26:51). Between these numberings, the older generation of numbered Israelites died, except Joshua and Caleb. We have already pointed out (see the *Introduction*) that these numberings did not include many people in Israel's camp. Levites (Num. 2:33, 26:62), women, children (all those under twenty years old), strangers, and the physically unfit were not counted, for the counted ones (and therefore the recipients of the curse) were only those "from twenty years old and upward, by their fathers' houses, ALL THAT ARE ABLE TO GO FORTH TO WAR IN ISRAEL" (Num. 26:2). This is why we have the divine record worded as it is in Deut. 2:14 ". . . thirty and eight years; until all the generation of the MEN OF WAR were consumed from the camp, as Jehovah sware unto them."

BUT AS FOR YOU, TURN YOU, AND TAKE YOUR JOURNEY INTO THE WILDERNESS BY THE WAY OF THE RED SEA (v. 40)—This is the "wandering" part of Israel's journeys—roughly thirty-eight years. Kadesh was more or less "home base" at this time (see v. 26, Cf. under v. 19). "Now the Amalekite and the Canaanite dwelt in the valley: tomorrow turn ye, and get you into the wilderness by the way of the Red sea" (Num. 14:25).

b. BECAUSE OF PRESUMPTION (1:41-46)

1:41 Then ye answered and said unto me, We have sinned against Jehovah, we will go up and fight, according to all that Jehovah our God commanded us. And when ye had girded on every man his weapons

of war, and were forward to go up into the hill-country. 42 and Jehovah said unto me; Say unto them, Go not up, neither fight; for I am not among you; lest ye be smitten before your enemies. 43 So I spake unto you, and ye hearkened not; but ye rebelled against the commandment of Jehovah, and were presumptuous, and went up into the hill-country. 44 And the Amorites, that dwelt in that hill-country, came out against you, and chased you, as bees do, and beat you down in Seir, even unto Hormah. 45 And ye returned and wept before Jehovah; but Jehovah hearkened not to your voice, nor gave ear unto you. 46 So ye abode in Kadesh many days, according unto the days that ye abode *there*.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 1:41-46

27. There is a vast difference between remorse and repentance; discuss that difference as indicated in these verses.
28. What is involved in the sin of presumption?
29. Why didn't the Lord pity these people and forgive them?
30. How could they abide in Kadesh and yet wander for thirty eight years in the wilderness?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 1:41-46

41 Then you said to me, We have sinned against the Lord; we will go up and fight, as the Lord our God commanded us. And you girded on every man his battle weapons and thought it a simple matter to go up into the hill country.

42 And the Lord said to me, Say to them, Do not go up or fight, for I am not among you; lest you be dangerously hurt by your enemies.

43 So I spoke to you; and you would not hear, but rebelled against the commandment of the Lord, and were presumptuous and went up into the hill country.

44 Then the Amorites who lived in that hill country came out against you and chased you as bees do and struck you down in Seir as far as Hormah.

45 And you returned and wept before the Lord; but the Lord would not heed your voice or listen to you.

46 So you remained in Kadesh; many days you remained there.

COMMENT 1:41-46

Here we have the second failure of Israel at Kadesh—and in some ways this is more pitiable than the first. Trapped now by the curse of the Lord—he who had before promised to fight *for* and *with* them in

all their battles—they suddenly decided to put on a show of repentance and courage!

THEN YE ANSWERED AND SAID UNTO ME, WE HAVE SINNED AGAINST JEHOVAH, WE WILL GO UP AND FIGHT, ACCORDING TO ALL THAT JEHOVAH OUR GOD COMMANDED US (v. 41).—How useless! God was not with them. "Except Jehovah build the house, They labor in vain that build it: Except Jehovah keep the city, The watchman waketh but in vain" (Ps. 127:1). How can we ever hope to accomplish the Lord's *will* and *purpose* in life, without the Lord's *blessing*? "I can do all things *in him that strengtheneth me*" (Philippians 4:13). And we will find it hard, as Saul did, to kick against the goads—especially the goads of God! No, Israel could not fight the very enemies of God without his blessing and oversight—nor can *we*! "It was quite impossible for Jehovah to accompany them along the path of self-will and rebellion; and, most assuredly, Israel, without the divine presence, could be no match for the Amorites. If God be for us and with us, all must be victory; but we cannot count on God if we are not treading the path of obedience. It is simply the height of folly to imagine that we have God with us if our ways are not right. 'The name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous runneth into it and is safe.' But if we are not walking in practical righteousness, it is wicked presumption to talk of having the Lord as our strong tower."—*Mackintosh*

SAY UNTO THEM, GO NOT UP, NEITHER FIGHT: FOR I AM NOT AMONG YOU; LEST YE BE SMITTEN BEFORE YOUR ENEMIES (v. 42).—Now proud, haughty, and rebellious, the advice was summarily rejected, and matters were taken into their own hands. This *always* means disaster—it cannot be otherwise, in that age or this! To go contrary to the Lord's appointed purpose is, in essence, to be found "fighting against God" (Acts 5:39). No one fights against our Maker and wins!

YE HEARKENED NOT: BUT YE REBELLED AGAINST THE COMMANDMENT OF JEHOVAH, AND WERE PRESUMPTUOUS, AND WENT UP INTO THE HILL COUNTRY (v. 43).—The Hebrew word for presumptuous (*Zud* or *Zid*) is from a root meaning *to boil*, *to boil over* (speaking of water). It is onomatopetic, as the English *to seethe*, the Greek *Zeo*, the German *sieden*. Gesenius states, "Like the Gr. *Zeo* and Lat. *ferveo*, it is transferred to the *violence* or *fierceness* of a passionate mind . . . and thus to *insolence* and *wickedness*," giving the meaning here as "*to act insolently, fiercely, wickedly*, especially in speaking of those who sin knowingly and purposely against the precepts of God."

Acting upon such a rebellious impulse, the will of God was cast aside: "the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God" (Jas. 1:20).

AND THE AMORITES, THAT DWELT IN THE HILL-COUNTRY, CAME OUT AGAINST YOU, AS BEES DO, AND BEAT YOU DOWN IN SEIR, EVEN UNTO HORMAH (v. 44)—the inevitable result of their rebellion and presumption. See Numbers 14:40-45. The Ark of God, the symbol of his presence, did not leave the camp. These men were strictly on their own—without the endorsement, encouragement, or blessing of God. All such enterprises must fail! Israel was God's chosen nation and his beloved people, but they could not accomplish his grand purpose for them without resting their all upon his divine authority. And though they confessed their guilt in their first rebellion ("we have sinned," v. 41, cf. Num. 14:40), they only sinned *again* by supposing they could assault the Amorites without divine direction. Mere confession of guilt does not relieve one of his responsibilities toward God! Even when they "wept before Jehovah" (v. 45) their curse was not retracted. Again and again God had endured their murmurings and rebellion. But though he was longsuffering, Israel continued to disobey. ". . . all those men that have seen my glory, and my signs, which I wrought in the wilderness, yet have tempted me these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice" (Num. 14:22). Besides, their confession and weeping seems to be much more of an emotional outburst from those who were totally unqualified to carry out God's purposes, than true repentance. "Such people are rejected not because God is unmoved by pity but because they can never successfully fight his battles."—*Francisco*

SO YE ABODE IN KADESH MANY DAYS (v. 46)—See also our comments under v. 19. If we understand "and we came to Kadesh-barnea" (v. 19) to refer to Israel's *first* arrival at that place, and the present statement to be a *general* one (including the many days spent there after the return from the approximate thirty-eight years in the wilderness, we have no trouble taking up in chapter two in the *fortieth* year after Israel's exodus from Egypt, (Note carefully our comments and the quote from McGarvey under 2:1 of the next lesson, where the problem of harmonizing the chronology of Numbers and Deuteronomy is more fully discussed).

From Numbers 20:1 we learn that Israel did not begin its circuit of Mt. Seir until after their second visit to that place. They "came into the wilderness of Zin in the first month: [of the fortieth year, as the

consequent context will show] and the people abode in Kadesh; and Miriam died there, and was buried there." Before Israel leaves Kadesh he requests and is refused passage through Edom (Num. 20:20). Then, "they journeyed from Kadesh" (Num. 20:22). The vast period of time between being repulsed by the Amorites (Deut. 1:44, 45) and the journey around Edom (2:1) is not surprising when we remember two things: (1) Very little is said about this nearly thirty-eight year period between visits at Kadesh in *any* of the accounts; and (2) it simply was not important to Moses' present purposes of exhortation. We know that from the first visit to Kadesh until their arrival at the brook Zered at the southeast corner of the Dead Sea, was thirty-eight years (2:14).

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER ONE

Introduction to the book, 1, 2. Moses addresses the people in the fortieth year after the exodus from Egypt, 3-5; and shows how God had spoken to them in Horeb, and the directions he gave them, 6-8. How, at the commandment of the Lord, he had appointed officers, judges, &c., to share the government with him, 9-18. Of their travels in the terrible wilderness, 19-21. The people's request to have spies sent to search out the land, 22-25. Of their murmuring and rebellion when they heard the report of the spies, 26-28. How Moses encouraged them, 29-33. The displeasure of the Lord against them because of their murmurings, and his purpose to exclude them from the good land, and give it to their children only, 34-40. How they repented, and yet, without the authority of God, went against the Amorites, by whom they were defeated, 41-44. Their return to Kadesh, where they abode many days, 45, 46.

QUESTIONS, LESSON ONE (1:1-46)

ON THE INTRODUCTION . . .

1. Have you read Deuteronomy completely through before beginning this study?
2. Explain the meaning of "Deuteronomy."
3. Explain why the concept of a book that simply duplicates certain laws of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers is so erroneous?
4. Deuteronomy is a part of what was at first a single book or scroll. Give a *Bible* name for this entire book.
5. Explain how the situation in Israel now justified the words and unique message of Deuteronomy.

6. Specifically, upon whom did the curse (of exclusion from the promised land) rest? Among those who left Egypt, who entered Canaan?
7. Does Deuteronomy claim to be from the hand of Moses? Where?
8. Show that Jesus believed Moses to be the writer of Deuteronomy.
9. Chronologically, where are we in Israel's history as the book begins? About how much time is covered in the book itself?
10. Summarize the *basic* outline of the book, including the scripture limitations for the four main divisions.

OVER CHAPTER ONE . . .

11. How can we know the meaning of "beyond the Jordan" in Chapter 1? What is the basic rule for understanding this phrase?
12. What is the Arabah?
13. Be as exact as you can in giving these times:
 - (a) From Egypt to Kadesh-barnea;
 - (b) From Kadesh-barnea to the Brook Zered;
 - (c) From the Brook Zered to the Plains of Moab.
14. What basic trait of a Godly life was shown to be lacking when the eleven spies and the multitude failed to go up and take the promised land as directed? Explain.
15. The breakdown of authority among the judges involved captains over ____ (highest number), ____, ____, and ____ (lowest number).
16. With what moral responsibility were the judges charged?
17. How did Moses fit into this new judiciary system?
18. In what way was Kadesh-barnea so important in Israel's wilderness history?
19. Who would fight for Israel (v. 20)?
20. Finish: "Yet in this thing ye did not _____ Jehovah your God" (v. 33).
21. What reason is given here (v. 36) for Caleb entering the promised land with Israel?
22. Why did not God go with Israel in battle, after they said, "we have sinned against Jehovah" (v. 41)?

LESSON TWO 2:1-23

4. PASSING THROUGH EDOM (2:1-8)

Then we turned, and took our journey into the wilderness by the way to the Red Sea, as Jehovah spake unto me; and we compassed mount Seir many days. 2 And Jehovah spake unto me, saying, 3 Ye have compassed this mountain long enough: turn you northward. 4 And command thou the people, saying, Ye are to pass through the border of your brethren the children of Esau, that dwell in Seir; and they will be afraid of you. Take ye good heed unto yourselves therefore; 5 contend not with them; for I will not give you of their land, no, not so much as for the sole of the foot to tread on; because I have given mount Seir unto Esau for a possession. 6 Ye shall purchase food of them for money, that ye may eat; and ye shall also buy water of them for money, that ye may drink. 7 For Jehovah thy God hath blessed thee in all the work of thy hand; he hath known thy walking through this great wilderness: these forty years Jehovah thy God hath been with thee; thou hast lacked nothing. 8 So we passed by from our brethren the children of Esau, that dwell in Seir, from the way of the Arabah from Elath and from Eziongeber.

And we turned and passed by the way of the wilderness of Moab.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 2:1-8

31. Please notice the time element in 2:1, "Then we turned,"—when?
32. Trace on the map the journey here mentioned.
33. How many years from the time that Jacob and Esau parted company until the day when Israel was to pass through the territory of Esau?
34. Was there some reason for the fear of the children of Esau?
35. Why had Jehovah blessed Esau? In what manner?
36. Where did Israel obtain the money for purchase of food and water?
37. Give two events that occurred on their way from Kadesh to Zered.
38. How is it that the attitude of Esau has changed so radically?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 2:1-8

Then we turned, and took our journey into the wilderness by the way of the Red Sea, as the Lord directed me; and for many days we journeyed around Mount Seir.

2 And the Lord spoke to me [Moses], saying,

3 You have roamed around this mountain country long enough; turn northward.

4 And command the Israelites, You are to pass through the territory of your kinsmen the sons of Esau, who live in Seir; and they will be afraid of you. So watch yourselves carefully;

5 Do not provoke *or* stir them up; for I will not give you of their land, no, not enough for the sole of your foot to tread on, for I have given Mount Seir to Esau for a possession.

6 You shall buy food of them for money, that you may eat, and you shall also buy water of them for money, that you may drink.

7 For the Lord your God has blessed you in all the work of your hand; He knows your walking through this great wilderness; these forty years the Lord your God has been with you; you have lacked nothing.

8 So we passed on from our brethren the sons of Esau, who dwelt in Seir, away from the Arabah (wilderness) and from Elath, and from Ezion-geber. We turned and went by the way of the wilderness of Moab.

COMMENT 2:1-8

THEN WE TURNED (v. 1)—That is, from Kadesh (v. 46). Now the "punishment" period of Israel's stay in the wilderness is over. They are not now wandering about from camp to camp, but given definite direction to proceed toward their promised home in Canaan.

We have treated the statement of Moses in 1:46, "So ye abode in Kadesh many days," as a summary statement which is not intended to tell all that went on *at* Kadesh, or how many times Israel encamped there. The fact of the matter is, that there is an approximate thirty-seven* year interim between chapters one and two of Deuteronomy. The reason for omitting the details of that long wandering period is simple: it does not suit the hortatory nature of Moses' address to Israel. The "many days" at Kadesh include a prolonged stay upon the first visit, a return to it after years of wandering, and another prolonged stay. Chapter two, which begins Israel's journey around Edom, comes at the conclusion of their wilderness journeys and at the end of their second stay at Kadesh. This is such an important concept in the chronology that we feel compelled to include McGarvey's excellent treatment of the case. The design of his remarks are primarily to refute certain "Higher Critic's" charges that the account in Numbers concerning the length of stay in Kadesh *differs* with the record of Deuteronomy—

*Thirty-eight by the time Israel reaches the Zered river. See 2:14 and notes.

hence showing different authorship. His refutation is also a very competent *explanation* of Deut. 1:46—2:1. The reader will do well to follow it carefully.

"It is universally assumed by destructive critics that the stay of Israel at Kadesh-Barnea is represented in Numbers as lasting thirty-eight years; while in Deuteronomy, contrary to this, they spent the thirty-eight years circling Mount Seir . . ."

The only way to determine the reality of this alleged contradiction is to trace carefully the representations in the two books separately, and then compare them to see their differences, if any appear. We begin with that in Numbers. In xiv. 25, after the sentence has been pronounced on the men of that generation, God issues the command, 'Tomorrow turn ye, and get you into the wilderness by the way to the Red Sea.' Driver says of this, 'Whether they did this, is not stated;' and it is true that it is not stated; but the command was given, and Moses, who was the leader and commander of the host, always moved at God's command; and the pillar of cloud, which guided every movement, undoubtedly did the same. It is not necessary, then, that the text should say that they did move. On the contrary, it would require a statement of the text that they did not move, to justify us in supposing that they did not. But this inference, plain as it is, is not our only ground for concluding that they obeyed the command. In later verses of the same chapter (32, 33) God says to the people: 'Your carcasses shall fall in the wilderness. And your children shall be wanderers in the wilderness forty years, and shall bear your whoredoms, until your carcasses be consumed in the wilderness.' How could they be 'wanderers in the wilderness forty years' if they remained thirty-eight years at Kadesh? It is necessarily implied that they were to leave Kadesh and wander about. [In Deuteronomy, this entire period of wandering (i.e. the period of punishment or curse after their refusal to go up and conquer the land) is covered in six verses—1:40-46.]

*Statements by Driver and Wellhauser are then cited. In part, Driver's statement is, "...the representation in Deut. ii. 1, 14, according to which the thirty-eight years of the wanderings are occupied entirely with circling Mount Seir, will be irreconcilable with JE (that is, with Numbers)." He has followed Wellhausen who said the emigrants "settled" at Kadesh, remaining there for "many years".

The narrative next proceeds through chapters xv.-xix. of Numbers, with a group of new statutes (xv. 1-41); the account of the rebellion of Korah, Dathan and Abiram (xvi. 40); the punishment of those who murmured over the fate of these men and their fellow conspirators (41-50); the confirmation of Aaron's priesthood (xvii. 1-13); some new statutes in reference to the priesthood and the Levites (xviii. 1-32); and the statute in reference to the ashes of the red heifer (xix. 1-22). Then comes the statement: 'And the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, came into the wilderness of Zin in the first month; and the people abode in Kadesh; and Miriam died there, and was buried there' (xx. 1). How could it be here said that after these intervening events 'they came into the wilderness of Zin in the first month, and abode in Kadesh,' if they had been in Kadesh during the whole intervening time? Undoubtedly, this is a *return* to Kadesh; and the assertion that they 'abode in Kadesh,' [also in Deut. 1:46] grossly misinterpreted as referring to the whole thirty-eight years, clearly refers to the stay there *after this return*. The first month here mentioned, as all parties agree, is the first month of the fortieth year. We need not go outside the Book of Numbers, then, the very book which is charged with teaching that Israel abode at Kadesh thirty-eight years, to see that by necessary implications it shows that they left Kadesh after the affair of the spies, wandered in the wilderness until all but the last of the forty years had expired, and then returned again to Kadesh.

This conclusion, drawn from the course of events, is sustained by the evidence of the itinerary of the wilderness wanderings, also recorded in Numbers. In this itinerary (Num. xxxiii.) Kadesh is mentioned only once, it being the intention of the writer to name the forty-two places of formal encampment, without regard to the number of times that Israel may have encamped at any one place. When Kadesh is mentioned, it is, as we have seen, in connection with the arrival there in the first month of the fortieth year. But they reached that place [the first time], and sent forth the twelve spies at the time of the first ripe grapes in the second year out of Egypt (xiii. 20). Hazeroth is the last camping-place mentioned in the account of the journey before reaching Kadesh (xii. 16,

cf. xiii. 26); but in the itinerary there are between Hazeroth and Kadesh *nineteen* encampments. This could not have been true of the first arrival in Kadesh: consequently we must conclude that these nineteen encampments were made between the first and second arrival in that place, or during the wanderings of thirty-eight years, of which we know but little. Thus it appears, from every point of view furnished by the Book of Numbers, that this interval of thirty-eight years was not spent at Kadesh, but at encampments lying in between the first and second visit to that place.

Now let us turn to Deuteronomy, and see if there is anything there to contradict this conclusion. Here in (ii. 14), Moses says to the people: 'And the days in which we came from Kadesh-Barnea, until all the generation of the men of war were consumed from the midst of the camp, as Jehovah swore unto them.' The terms here employed show that he is counting from the time that Jehovah swore this; that is, from the first visit to Kadesh. This is made equally clear by the fact that the places of encampment since the last visit to that place are named in Num. xxxiii. 38-44, and they are only five in number. The first of them, Mount Hor, was reached in the fifth month of the last year of the wanderings (xxxiii. 38), and the others were passed a little later in the same year. The 'many days' that were passed in compassing Mount Seir (the land of Edom), which Driver understands as including the thirty-eight years, were spent after leaving Kadesh the last time; for Moses says: 'So ye abode in Kadesh many days, according to the days that ye abode there. Then we turned, and took our journey into the wilderness by the way to the Red Sea, as Jehovah spake to me: and we compassed mount Seir many days' (Deut. i. 46—ii. 1). The circuit occupied many days compared with the small space around which they had to pass. The many days which they spent in Kadesh included the forty spent by the spies in their march through Canaan, together with some days previous, and some days after this march, and, during the last visit, the days of mourning for Miriam, probably thirty, [cf. Num. 20:29, Deut. 34:8] and much the greater part of the time from the first month to the fifth, in which they reached Mount Hor (Num. xx. 1, 22 [and 33:38, 39])."*

*Authorship of Deuteronomy, pp. 91-94. Our additions are in brackets.

AND TOOK OUR JOURNEY INTO THE WILDERNESS BY THE WAY TO THE RED SEA (v. 1)—A glance at the map will show that their journey brought them next to the northeast arm of the Red Sea, the gulf of Aqaba, in their journey around mount Seir.

AND WE COMPASSED MOUNT SEIR MANY DAYS (v. 1)—"This was literally true. Commencing their journey at Kadesh on the west, they travelled along the western side of the mountain range of Seir or Edom to Ezion-geber; then they turned and passed close to its southern border; then they turned again and traversed the wilderness of Arabia, close to the eastern border; and they finally entered and marched across Moab on its northern border."*

This was the land of Esau or Edom (cf. v. 8, Num. 21:4, Gen. 32:3). The Number's account of this journey (21:4-9) indicates an especially difficult one, for "the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way," and they "spake against God, and against Moses." The result was the sending of the fiery serpents and "much people of Israel died." The Apostle Paul therefore exhorts us, "Neither murmur ye, as some of them murmured, and perished by the destroyer" (I Cor. 10:10). A fiery serpent of brass was made at the command of God, and set upon a standard, "and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he looked unto the serpent of brass, he lived" (Num. 21:9)—a blessed figure of Christ himself: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth may in him have eternal life" (Jn. 3:14, 15).

Unfortunately, this brazen serpent was later worshipped as an idol. It was finally destroyed during Hezekiah's reign (II K. 18:4).

On the time involved in this journey, see under v. 14.

YE ARE TO PASS THROUGH THE BORDER OF YOUR BRETHREN THE CHILDREN OF ESAU (v. 4)—Compare this statement with verse eight, "So we passed by from our brethren the children of Esau . . ." That is, they went *through* the *east side* of Edom, thus, in a sense, went "by" them.** They bypassed mount Seir as such. Israel had previously attempted to go through by entering from the southwest, sending messengers from Kadesh (Num. 20:14-22), but this was neither the will of Edom nor of God. ". . . And Edom came out against him with

*Josiah L. Porter, in *The New Self-Interpreting Bible Library*

**Others understand verse eight to mean simply, "so we got by (past) our other brethren the children of Esau"—i.e., without any trouble or battle. Nevertheless, Israel's course was "through" part of their country.

much people, and with a strong hand Thus Edom refused to give Israel passage through his border: wherefore Israel turned away from him." (Num. 20:20, 21) Had God intended for Israel to take this route, defeat of the Edomites would have been no problem. But his directions were otherwise. Moses' record states, "Then we turned, and took our journey into the wilderness by the way to the Red Sea, *as Jehovah spake unto me . . .*" (v. 1). One observes God's specific directions all through this passage. And their bitter defeat at Hormah (1:44) when they attempted to battle the Amorites without God's approval, must still have been in the minds of the very few of the older generation that were still alive.

The first route would have been much shorter and easier, for it was to be along "the king's highway" (Num. 20:17) whereas this route was extremely difficult, "and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way" (Num. 21:4). But Israel was always blessed when God's directions were followed—even if such obedience meant difficulties.

Their first attempt to pass through this country, prior to encompassing the land, had been flatly refused (Num. 20:14-21) This was after the nearly thirty-eight years of punishment, for their return to Kadesh was on the first month of the fortieth year (Num. 20:1). Israel's offer at that time was generous and kind enough: "Let us pass, I pray thee, through thy land: we will not pass through field or through vineyard, neither will we drink of the water of the wells: we will go along the king's highway; we will not turn aside to the right hand nor to the left, until we have passed thy border. . . . And if we drink of thy water, I and my cattle, then will I give the price thereof: let me only, without *doing* anything *else*, pass through on my feet" (Num. 20:17, 19). Edom's answer was an armed troop that came out against Israel. ". . . wherefore Israel turned away from him . . . And they journeyed from Kadesh"—a statement that coincides exactly with Deut. 1:46—2:1. Then follows (in Numbers) the death of Aaron at mount Hor, mourning for him for thirty days, a victory over the Canaanites at Hormah, and the long discouraging circuit of mount Seir, with the murmuring and the punishment by serpents.

Finally, God is able to say "Ye have compassed this mountain long enough: turn you northward" (v. 3). And now, after "many days," somehow Edom's whole disposition toward Israel has drastically changed! The very privileges Edom had previously refused, are now

allowed. Water and food are purchased (v. 6). "So we passed by from our brethren the children of Esau" (v. 8).

Why the great change in Edom's attitude? Why the kindness now, where there had been hostility and enmity? Simply because God had now decided that his people were to go through. In his own good time, God decrees the blessings that are appropriate for his people—and no earthly power is able to thwart *his* designs. Nebuchadnezzar expressed this very truth when he said of God, "... he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth" (Dan. 4:35); and Daniel himself could say to Belshazzar that "the Most High God ruleth in the kingdom of men, . . . he setteth up over it whosoever he will" (Dan. 5:21).

5. PASSING THROUGH MOAB (2:8-15)

And we turned and passed by the way of the wilderness of Moab. 9 And Jehovah said unto me, Vex not Moab, neither contend with them in battle; for I will not give thee of this land for a possession; because I have given Ar unto the children of Lot for a possession. 10 (The Emim dwelt therein aforetime, a people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakim: 11 these also are accounted Rephaim, as the Anakim; but the Moabites call them Emim. 12 The Horites also dwelt in Seir aforetime, but the children of Esau succeeded them; and they destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their stead; as Israel did unto the land of his possession, which Jehovah gave unto them.) 13 Now rise up, and get you over the brook Zered. And we went over the brook Zered. 14 And the days in which we came from Kadesh-barnea, until we were come over the brook Zered, were thirty and eight years; until all the generation of the men of war were consumed from the midst of the camp, as Jehovah sware unto them. 15 Moreover the hand of Jehovah was against them, to destroy them from the midst of the camp, until they were consumed.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 2:8-15

39. From whence came the Moabites? Cf. Gen. 19:30-38.
40. There are three names for giants; what are they?
41. What and where is "Ar"?
42. Compare Numbers 13:33 with Deuteronomy 2:10 and state the significance.
43. How did Moses know of this history of the Rephaim and Horites?

44. Is there a time when the mercy of God ends and judgment begins?
At what point?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 2:9-15

9 And the Lord said to me, Do not trouble or assault Moab or contend with them in battle, for I will not give you any of their land for a possession, because I have given Ar to the sons of Lot for a possession.

10 (The Emim dwelt there in times past, a people great and many, and tall as the Anakim;

11 These also are known as Rephaim [of giant stature], as are the Anakim, but the Moabites call them Emim.

12 The Horites also formerly lived in Seir, but the sons of Esau dispossessed them and destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their stead; as Israel did to the land of their possession, which the Lord gave to them.)

13 Now rise up, and go over the brook Zered. So we went over the brook Zered.

14 And the time from our leaving Kadesh-barnea until we had come over the brook Zered was thirty-eight years, until the whole generation of the men of war had perished from the camp, as the Lord had sworn to them.

15 Moreover the hand of the Lord was against them, to exterminate them from the midst of the camp, until they were all gone.

COMMENT 2:8-15

Numbers 21:10-13 supplies us with a geographical link between this passage and the former. "And the children of Israel journeyed, and encamped in Oboth" (v. 10). Oboth (meaning *water skins*) is located near the south end of the Dead Sea and east of Edom. After Oboth they encamped at Iye-abarim (Literally, *ruins of Abarim*) "in the wilderness which is before Moab, toward the sunrising" (v. 11). Num. 33:44 simply refers to the latter station as "in the border of Moab."

VEX NOT MOAB (v. 9)—Moab and Ammon were the incestuous sons of Lot, Abraham's nephew, (Gen. 11:27, 28; 19:30-38). Thus as in v. 8 the Edomites as "our brethren the children of Esau" (because Esau was Jacob's brother) were not to be molested, so here "the children of Lot," whom God had given this land, were not to be attacked in battle.

BECAUSE I HAVE GIVEN AR UNTO THE CHILDREN OF LOT FOR A POSSESSION (v. 9)—In v. 18 Ar is called "the border of Moab," and is apparently "the city of Moab," Num. 22:36, where we have the additional statement, "which is on the border of the Arnon which is in the utmost part of the [eastern] border." "Ar of Moab" (Num. 21:28, Isa. 15:1) was a leading city on the upper reaches of the Arnon river. It appears from both this context and the various happenings in the closing chapters of Numbers, that at this period the northern boundary of Moab extended along the northeast shore of the Dead Sea to the mouth of the Jordan (Num. 33:49). They are still in "the plains of Moab" and "the land of Moab" as Deuteronomy closes (34:1, 5-8).

THE EMIM DWELT THEREIN AFORETIME, A PEOPLE GREAT, AND MANY, AND TALL, AS THE ANAKIM; THESE ALSO ARE ACCOUNTED REPHAIM, AS THE ANAKIM; BUT THE MOABITES CALLED THEM EMIM. (v. 10, 11)—The Rephaim, an ancient race of large stature, dwelt in quite an extensive area surrounding the Dead Sea. The Moabites called them Emim, but the Ammonites called them Zamzummim (v. 20). We first encounter them in the siege of Chedorlaomer (Gen. 14:5), and God had pledged their land to Abraham's seed (Gen. 15:18-21). The word is rendered "giant" with reference to Goliath in I Chron. 20:4. "It appears that the *Emim*, the *Anakim*, and the *Rephaim*, were probably the same people, called by different names in the different countries where they dwelt; for they appear originally to have been a kind of wandering free-booters, who lived by plunder."—*Clarke*

Such persons had originally struck terror into the heart of the spies and then the people (Num. 13:33). But now Israel goes forth to conquer the same gigantic race!

THE HORITES ALSO DWELT IN SEIR AFORETIME, BUT THE CHILDREN OF ESAU SUCCEEDED THEM . . . AS ISRAEL DID UNTO THE LAND OF HIS POSSESSION, WHICH JEHOVAH GAVE UNTO THEM (v. 12)—If Moses wrote these words on the plains of Moab as stated in 1:1 (cf. 34:1; see also 31:9, 24), there is no need to suppose this passage to be the work of some editor or redactor. But even if this, and other brief historical passages we will meet in this book, be the work of a later editor, the inspiration and veracity of Deuteronomy is not altered one iota. It was universally accepted by the Jews that Ezra was the writer of these historical notes, and he was just as inspired as Moses.*

*See the article on the authorship at the conclusion of this volume.

Israel had, indeed by that time dispossessed many of the native inhabitants east of the Jordan. "And Israel took all these cities: and Israel dwelt in all of the cities of the Amorites, in Heshbon, and in all the towns thereof . . . So they smote him [Sihon, king of the Amorites at Heshbon], and his sons and all his people, until there was none left him remaining: and they possessed his land" (Num. 21:25, 35).

AND WE WENT OVER THE BROOK ZERED (v. 13)—Later, the natural boundary between Edom and Moab, flowing northwesterly into the Dead Sea at its southern extremity.

AND THE DAYS IN WHICH WE CAME FROM KADESH-BARNEA, UNTIL WE WERE COME OVER THE BROOK ZERED, WERE THIRTY AND EIGHT YEARS; UNTIL ALL THE GENERATION OF THE MEN OF WAR WERE CONSUMED (v. 14)—That is, from their *first* visit at Kadesh, mentioned in 1:19. See notes under 1:46 and 2:1. It had only been a matter of months from their second visit to that place, for their second arrival was in the first month of the fortieth year (Num. 20:1). After that, Miriam died (mourned for thirty days?), the incident at Meribah takes place, and Israel is refused passage through Edom (Num. 20:2-21). Then "they journeyed from Kadesh" (Num. 20:22), stopping soon at Mount Hor, where Aaron died and was mourned for thirty days (Num. 20:22-29). His death was on the first day of the fifth month of the fortieth year (Num. 33:38). Then follows a victory over the Canaanite king Arad (Num. 21:1-3), the discouraging trip around mount Seir just mentioned (which includes the Brazen Serpent incident) and finally their arrival at the Zered river. And by the time Moses begins this discourse just east of the Jordan, it is "the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month" (1:3). Thus though we do not know how long a time is covered by the "many' days" of v. 1, we *do* know that from Aaron's death and mourning period (40th year, 6th month) till their arrival at the Zered river was a period of six months.

MOREOVER, THE HAND OF JEHOVAH WAS AGAINST THEM (v. 15)—That is, his decree (that the numbered Israelites be destroyed) was to be fulfilled before Israel could enter their promised country. All the men of war were dead by the time they crossed the northeastern border of Moab (v. 16-18).

6. PASSING THROUGH AMMON (2:16-23)

16 So it came to pass, when all the men of war were consumed and dead from among the people, 17 that Jehovah spake unto me, saying, 18 Thou art this day to pass over Ar, the border of Moab; 19 and when thou comest nigh over against the children of Ammon, vex them not, nor contend with them; for I will not give thee of the land of the children of Ammon for a possession; because I have given it unto the children of Lot for a possession. 20 (That also is accounted a land of Rephaim: Rephaim dwelt therein aforetime; but the Ammonites call them Zamzummim, 21 a people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakim; but Jehovah destroyed them before them; and they succeeded them, and dwelt in their stead; 22 as he did for the children of Esau, that dwell in Seir, when he destroyed the Horites from before them; and they succeeded them, and dwelt in their stead even unto this day: 23 and the Avvim, that dwelt in villages as far as Gaza, the Caphtorim, that came forth out of Caphtor, destroyed them, and dwelt in their stead.)

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 2:16-23

45. Whence came the Ammonites?
46. Locate and identify the Zamzummim, the Avvim, the Cophtorim.

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 2:16-23

16 So when all the men of war had died from among the people.
 17 The Lord spoke to me [Moses], saying,
 18 You are this day to pass through Ar, the border of Moab.
 19 But when you come near the territory of the sons of Ammon, do not trouble or assault them, or provoke or stir them up, for I will not give you any of the land of the Ammonites for a possession, because I have given it to the sons of Lot for a possession.

20 (That also is known as the land of Rephaim [of giant stature]; Rephaim dwelt there formerly, but the Ammonites call them Zamzummim,

21 A people great and many, and tall as the Anakim; but the Lord destroyed them before [Israel]; and they dispossessed them and settled in their stead;

22 As He did for the sons of Esau, who dwell in Seir, when He destroyed the Horites from before them, and they dispossessed them, and settled in their stead even to this day.

23 As for the Avvim, who dwelt in villages as far as Gaza, the Caphtorim, who came from Caphtor, destroyed them, and dwelt in their stead.)

COMMENT 2:16-23

VEX THEM NOT (v. 19)—See under v. 9.

AND THE AVVIM, THAT DWELT IN VILLAGES AS FAR AS GAZA, THE CAPHTORIM, THAT CAME FORTH OUT OF CAPHTOR, DESTROYED THEM, AND DWELT IN THEIR STEAD (v. 23)—Concluding the explanatory historical note that began with v. 20 and that is similar to vv. 10-12. The historian is explaining how various original inhabitants were dispossessed by other peoples—or how it happened that certain older tribes were still in evidence as the children of Israel advanced through the east-side countries. The Edomites had taken over the Horites, the Moabites and Ammonites, "children of Lot," from the Rephaim—known locally as the Emim or Zamzummim, respectively; and the Caphtorim from the Avvim.

The Avvim were the early inhabitants of the southwestern extremity of Canaan afterward occupied by the Philistines (John. 13:3, 4). *Hurlbut* states: "South of the Canaanites, on the Maritime Plain, were the Philistines. 'Emigrants' is the meaning of the word, supporting the view that they came from Caphtor, or Crete, which was the capital of an empire embracing the isles and surroundings of the Aegean Sea prior to 2000 B.C. They were related to the Egyptians, and hence were of Hamitic stock [See Gen. 10:13, 14; I Chron. 1:11, 12]. They came to the land before the time of Abraham, drove out and subdued the earlier Avim (Deut. 2:23), or Avites, and had frequent dealings with Abraham and Isaac."* See also Jer. 47:4, Amos 9:7.

QUESTIONS, LESSON TWO (2:1-23)

1. From what geographical point does 2:1 begin?
2. In what year of Israel's history do the events of this lesson take place?
3. How long between Aaron's death on mount Hor and the arrival of Israel at the brook Zered?
4. Briefly, show how the "wandering" period as such is *not* repre-

*Bible Atlas, p. 23.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON TWO

sented in Numbers and Deuteronomy as a single encampment at Kadesh when the two accounts are properly harmonized.

5. How many years between the first and second stay at Kadesh?
6. How do you explain the change in Edom's attitude toward Israel?
7. Why not vex Moab or Ammon?
8. Who dispossessed the following peoples:
 - (a) Horites?
 - (b) Avvim?
 - (c) Rephaim?
9. What significant historical fact is noted as Israel arrives at the brook Zered?

LESSON THREE 2:24—3:29

7. FIRST SUCCESSFUL CONQUESTS (2:24—3:11)

a. OVER SIHON KING OF HESHBON (2:24-37)

24 Rise ye up, take your journey, and pass over the valley of the Arnon: behold, I have given into thy hand Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land; begin to possess it, and contend with him in battle. 25 This day will I begin to put the dread of thee and the fear of thee upon the peoples that are under the whole heaven, who shall hear the report of thee, and shall tremble, and be in anguish because of thee.

26 And I sent messengers out of the wilderness of Kedemoth unto Sihon king of Heshbon with words of peace, saying, 27 Let me pass through thy land: I will go along by the highway, I will turn neither unto the right hand nor to the left. 28 Thou shalt sell me food for money, that I may eat: and give me water for money, that I may drink: only let me pass through on my feet; 29 as the children of Esau that dwell in Seir, and the Moabites that dwell in Ar, did unto me; until I shall pass over the Jordan into the land which Jehovah our God giveth us. 30 But Sihon king of Heshbon would not let us pass by him; for Jehovah thy God hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, that he might deliver him into thy hand, as at this day. 31 And Jehovah said unto me, Behold, I have begun to deliver up Sihon and his land before thee: begin to possess, that thou mayest inherit his land. 32 Then Sihon came out against us, he and all his people, unto battle at Jahaz. 33 And Jehovah our God delivered him up before us; and we smote him, and his sons, and all his people. 34 And we took all his cities at that time, and utterly destroyed every inhabited city, with the women and the little ones; we left none remaining: 35 only the cattle we took for a prey unto ourselves, with the spoil of the cities which we had taken. 36 From Aroer, which is on the edge of the valley of the Arnon, and *from* the city that is in the valley, even unto Gilead, there was not a city too high for us; Jehovah our God delivered up all before us: 37 only to the land of the children of Ammon thou camest not near; all the side of the river Jabbok, and the cities of the hill-country, and wheresoever Jehovah our God forbade us.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 2:24-37

47. Are we to conclude from the record here that God is in control of the thoughts and decisions of evil men?

48. What specific actions of the Israelites cast fear into the hearts of their enemies?
49. Why send messenger to Sihon if Moses already knew he would not harken unto him?
50. In what sense was Sihon responsible for the hardening of his heart? In what sense was God responsible?
51. When Sihon was defeated, how much of the territory on the east of the Jordan was conquered?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 2:24-37

24 Rise up, take your journey, and pass over the valley of the Arnon; behold, I have given into your hand Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land; begin to possess it, and contend with him in battle.

25 This day will I begin to put the dread and fear of you upon the peoples that are under the whole heavens, who shall hear the report of you, and shall tremble and be in anguish because of you.

26 So I sent messengers from the wilderness of Kedemoth to Sihon king of Heshbon with words of peace, saying,

27 Let me pass through your land; I will go only by the road, turning aside neither to the right nor to the left.

28 You shall sell me food to eat, and sell me water to drink; only let me walk through,

29 As the sons of Esau who dwell in Seir and the Moabites who dwell in Ar did for me, until I go over the Jordan into the land which the Lord our God gives us.

30 But Sihon king of Heshbon would not let us pass by him; for the Lord your God hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, that He might give him into your hand, as at this day.

31 And the Lord said to me [Moses], Behold, I have begun to give Sihon and his land over to you; begin to take possession, that you may succeed him and occupy his land.

32 Then Sihon came out against us, he and all his people, to fight at Jahaz.

33 And the Lord our God gave him over to us; and we defeated him and his sons and all his people.

34 At the same time we took all his cities, and utterly destroyed every city, men, women, and children; we left none to remain.

35 Only the cattle we took as booty for ourselves, and the spoil of the cities which we had captured.

36 From Aroer, which is on the edge of the Arnon valley, and from the city that is in the valley, as far as Gilead, there was no city too high and strong for us; the Lord our God delivered all to us.

37 Only you did not go near the land of the Ammonites, that is, to any bank of the river Jabbok and the cities of the hill country, and wherever the Lord our God had forbidden us.

COMMENT 2:24-37

PASS OVER THE VALLEY OF THE ARNON (v. 24)—proceeding now up the east side of the Dead Sea. If we have located Ar (v. 18)* correctly on the edge of the Arnon, the command to cross the river and the order to pass by the Ammonites (v. 19) are to be considered as one and the same—or at least issued at the same time.

SIHON THE AMORITE, KING OF HESHBON (v. 24)—The Amorites were spread out over a wide area of Canaan (See 1:44 cf. Gen. 14:13, 15:16, 21; 48:22, etc.) They *generally* dwelt in the hill country (Num. 13:29, Josh. 10:5). Sihon and Og, "the two kings of the Amorites" Israel defeated, ruled an extensive area from the Arnon river to mount Hermon (Deut. 3:8). Israel was hearing the words of this very discourse on the property formerly ruled by Sihon (Deut. 4:44-49). His land extended from "the Arnon to the Jabbok" rivers, but his attempt to oppose Israel's passage through his kingdom ended in complete defeat. See Numbers 21:21-31.

FOR JEHOVAH THY GOD HARDENED HIS SPIRIT, AND MADE HIS HEART OBSTINATE, THAT HE MIGHT DELIVER HIM INTO THY HAND (v. 30)—an incident that reminds us of the hardening of Pharaoh's heart. We do not have a case here or in Exodus of God taking a good man and causing him to be lost. Rather, we have a case in both instances of God using an already godless and sinful king and manipulating him to his glory and the advantage of his people. The following comment by *James R. McMorrow* applies equally well to Pharaoh or Og. "The Bible plainly states that God hardened Pharaoh's heart: 'The Lord said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh: for I have hardened his heart' (Exo. 10:1); 'But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go' (Exo. 10:20). Also read Exo. 10:27; 11:10 . . .

*Some locate Ar on the southern bank of the Arnon river—others as far as twenty-five miles south of it. We *do* know that it was on the northeastern border of Moab, separating it from Ammon (vv. 18, 19).

Did God harden Pharaoh's heart, and, thus, 'cause him to be lost' . . . ? No, not at all. Pharaoh had already killed thousands of innocent babies. He had already opposed the people of God year in and year out. Pharaoh was already a sinner of the deepest dye. No person or power could do anything to this man to cause him to be lost, for he was already in that condition . . .

God knew what kind of man Pharaoh was and that this wicked old king would never come to repentance. God's decision was: 'I am going to make him stubborn to accomplish several things.' God, in this act, showed Israel that he was greater than the oppressor. Again, God used Pharaoh as an example to show what would happen to those who would not obey . . .

It is plain to see that God was honored by hardening Pharaoh's heart and bringing about his destruction. If God could not get honor in the ruler's life by repentance, He will get honor by destruction of his body."*

We believe when God hardened the spirit of Sihon, and "made his heart obstinate" his purposes were similar to those he had when he hardened Pharaoh's heart. "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, For this very purpose did I raise thee up, that I might show in thee my power, and that my name might be published abroad in all the earth. So then he hath mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth . . . Or hath not the potter a right over the clay, from the same lump to make one part a vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" (Rom. 9:17,18,21). It is significant to note how God thus showed his power over a wicked king, both as Israel was getting *out* of his land of bondage, and as he was getting *into* his land of promise.

This was their first armed battle, and so important both to the *encouragement* of a people so very unused to war as they were, and for the *discouragement* of the neighboring tribes round about (Note v. 25). By the time the spies were sent to Jericho, Rahab could very truly say, "I know that Jehovah hath given you the land, and that the fear of you is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt away before you" (Josh. 2:9).

AND I SENT MESSENGERS OUT OF THE WILDERNESS OF KEDEMOTH (v. 26)—"a town on the eastern border of Moab, and the pasture grounds around it were called "the wilderness (*midbar*) Kedemoth" Josiah Porter.

*From the Voice of Evangelism, March 3, 1951

THOU SHALT SELL ME FOOD . . . WATER . . . AS THE CHILDREN OF ESAU THAT DWELL IN SEIR, AND THE MOABITES THAT DWELL IN AR, DID UNTO ME (vv. 28,29)—We have seen the great change in the attitude of the Edomites (v. 6) from the first refusal (Num. 20:21). The Moabites are here said to have sold Israel food and water, but it appears from 23:3-6 that it was not a willing service, and that nation, along with Ammon, was severely cursed for their lack of hospitality. Later, they showed outright antagonism toward Israel. See the account in Num. 31:10-20, and the evil schemes of Balaam and Balak in Num. 22-25.

JAHAZ (v. 32)—Num. 21:23 tells us Sihon "went out against Israel into the wilderness, and came to Jahaz; and he fought against Israel"—thus the city must have been some distance from the more civilized areas. Its location is uncertain, but we know it was north of the Arnon river (Num. 21:13).

ONLY TO THE LAND OF THE CHILDREN OF AMMON THOU CAMEST NOT NEAR; ALL THE SIDE OF THE RIVER JABBOK, AND THE CITIES OF THE HILL COUNTRY, AND WHERESOEVER JEHOVAH OUR GOD FORBADE US (v. 37)—Better, "But you did not encroach upon the land of the Ammonites, all along the wadi Jabbok and the towns of the hill country, just as the Lord our God had commanded"—*The Torah*. "God gave them their commission; and those only were to be cut off, the cup of whose iniquity was full. Though the Moabites and Ammonites were thus spread, they requited good with evil, for they [later] fought against the Israelites, and cast them out of their possessions, Judg. xi. 4,5; II Chron. xx. 1, & c., and committed the most shocking cruelties; see Amos 1:13. Hence God enacted a law, that none of these people should enter into the congregation of the Lord even to their tenth generation: see chapter xxiii. 3-6"—*Clarke*. But see also our notes under the passage. The curse itself was specifically for their mistreatment of Israel as they came out of the wilderness.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER TWO

Moses continues to relate how they compassed Mount Seir, 1. And the commands they received not to meddle with the descendants of Esau, 2-8; nor to distress the Moabites, 9. Of the Emims, 10, 11; the Horims, 12. Their passage of the brook Zered, 13. The time they spent between Kadesh-barnea and Zered, 14; during which all the men of war that came out of Egypt were consumed, 15, 16. The command not to dis-

dress the Ammonites, 17-19. Of the Zamzummims, 20, the Anakims, 21, the Horims, 22, the Avims and Caphiorims, all destroyed by the Ammonites, 23. They are commanded to cross the river Arnon, and are promised the land of Sihon, king of the Amorites, 24, 25. Of the message sent to Sihon, to request a passage through his territories, 26-29. His refusal, 30. The consequent war, 31, 32. His total overthrow, 33; and extermination of his people, 34. The spoils that were taken, 35. And his land possessed from Aroer to Arnon by the Israelites, 36; who took care, according to the command of God, not to invade any part of the territories of the Ammonites, 37.

b. CONQUEST OF OG, KING OF BASHAN (3:1-11)

Then we turned, and went up the way to Bashan; and Og the king of Bashan came out against us, he and all his people, unto battle at Edrei. 2 and Jehovah said unto me, Fear him not; for I have delivered him, and all his people, and his land, into thy hand; and thou shalt do unto him as thou didst unto Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heshbon. 3 So Jehovah our God delivered into our hand Og also, the king of Bashan, and all his people: and we smote him until none was left to him remaining. 4 And we took all his cities at that time; there was not a city which we took not from them; threescore cities, all the region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan. 5 All these were cities fortified with high walls, gates, and bars; besides the unwallled towns a great many. 6 And we utterly destroyed them, as we did unto Sihon king of Heshbon, utterly destroying every inhabited city, with the women and the little ones. 7 But all the cattle, and the spoil of the cities, we took for a prey unto ourselves. 8 And we took the land at that time out of the hand of the two kings of the Amorites that were beyond the Jordan, from the valley of the Arnon unto mount Hermon; 9 (which Hermon the Sidonians call Sirion, and the Amorites call it Senir;) 10 all the cities of the plain, and all Gilead, and all Bashan, unto Salecah and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan. 11 (For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of the Rephaim; behold, his bedstead was a bedstead of iron; is it not in Rabbah of the children of Ammon? nine cubits was the length thereof, and four cubits the breadth of it, after the cubit of a man.)

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 3:1-11

52. It is very important that each of the places mentioned be located by the student on the map. Locate: Edrei; Heshbon; Bashan.
53. Was Og a giant? How large?

54. Be specific about the conquest of Og, his people, his cities, villages, women, children, and cattle.
55. Mark out on the map the details of the area conquered.
56. Give at least two possible measurements of Og's bedstead.

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 3:1-11

Then we turned, and went up the road to Bashan; and Og the king of Bashan came out against us, he and all his people, to battle at Edrei.

2 And the Lord said to me, Do not fear him; for I have given him and all his people and his land into your hand; and you shall do to him as you did to Sihon king of the Amorites, who lived at Heshbon.

3 So the Lord our God gave into our hands Og also, the king of Bashan, and all his people; and we smote him until not one was left to him.

4 And we took all his cities at that time; there was not a city which we did not take from them, sixty cities, the whole region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan.

5 All these cities were fortified with high and haughty walls, gates, and bars; besides a great many unwalled villages.

6 And we utterly destroyed them, as we did to Sihon king of Heshbon, utterly destroying every city, men, women, and children.

7 But all the cattle, and the spoil of the cities, we took for booty for ourselves.

8 So we took the land at that time out of the hand of the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, from the valley of the Arnon to Mount Hermon.

9 (The Sidonians call Hermon, Sirion, and the Amorites call it Senir),

10 All the cities of the plain and all Gilead and all Bashan, as far as Salecah and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan.

11 or only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of the [gigantic] Rephaim; behold, his bedstead was of iron; is it not in Rabbah of the Ammonites? Nine cubits was its length, and four cubits its breadth, using the cubit of a man [the forearm to the end of the middle finger].

COMMENT 3:1-11

THEN WE TURNED, AND WENT UP THE WAY TO BASHAN (v. 1)—See also Num. 21:33-35. Israel proceeds northward. Bashan is basically located

in the area of the Yarmuk (Warmuk or Hieromax) river drainage, particularly its northern part. These were highlands, used especially for pasture, and soon to be occupied by the half tribe of Manasseh. This was as far north as Israel went on the east side.

OG THE KING OF BASHAN (v. 1)—One of "the two kings of the Amorites" (v. 8). His kingdom extended beyond Bashan proper, northward to the slopes of mount Hermon (v. 8b, Josh. 12:4,5). (On his stature, see below). Israel battled these people at Edrei, located in the area of Hauran near Bashan's southern border on the upper reaches of the Yarmuk.

THREESCORE CITIES, ALL THE REGION OF THE ARGOB, THE KINGDOM OF OG IN BASHAN (v. 4)—cf. v. 13. The precise limits of Argob have not been determined. "We may take it that Argob lay in the land of Bashan; beyond this, on available data, we cannot certainly go . . . The soil [of Bashan] is very fertile, composed of lava detritus. In almost every district might have been found the threescore cities."—I.S.B.E.

UNWALLED TOWNS—Probably better "unwalled villages" (R.S.V. Amplified O.T., Berkeley, etc.)—in contrast to the well fortified cities just described. "Besides many an open hamlet" (Moffatt); "besides country towns exceeding many" (Rotherham).

HERMON . . . SIRON, SENIR (v. 9)—All names for the mountain whose melting snows form a chief source of the Jordan river. SION (v. 48) is another name. This mountain reaches a height of nine thousand two hundred feet, and extends sixteen to twenty miles north and south. "Herman" is supposed to signify "sacred mountain," "Sirion" "breast-plate" (probably from its gleaming appearance), "Senir"* "coat of mail" (apparently for the same reason as the former), and "Sion" "lifted up," probably from its height.

FOR ONLY OG KING OF BASHAN REMAINED OF THE REMNANT OF THE REPHAIM (v. 11)—The giant tribe that formerly occupied this territory (See 2:10,11 and *notes*). This king was so large that his "custom made" bedstead** was nine by four cubits "after the cubit of a man"—

*I Chron. 5:23 and Song of Sol. 4:8 seem to lend weight to the idea that Senir was also the name of a *specific peak* on mount Hermon. The latter is sometimes used with reference to the entire anti-Lebanon range.

**Some translators have sarcophagus. But this seems so unlikely in view of the context: Israel did not have great "funeral services" (let alone elaborate coffins) for the heathen kings it defeated; "eres, bedstead, literally curving, is a bed upon which one reclines for rest, Amos iii. 12; vi. 4; Ps. vi. 6"—Lange.

that is, from the elbow to the end of the middle finger. If the cubit is here figured on a basis of eighteen inches, his bed was $13\frac{1}{2}$ x 6 ft. But this is an arbitrary figure, and Og's bed size is still uncertain to modern readers. The so-called Royal Cubit was approximately 20.6 inches, and seems to be the more ancient measurement. But most think, with *Lange*, "thirteen and a half feet long and six feet broad, if not smaller since it is the common Hebrew cubit from the elbow downwards which is here meant."

Concerning this victory *Mackintosh* well writes, "The remembrance of the Lord's dealing with us in the past should strengthen our confidence in going on. The One who had given His people such a victory over the Amorites, who had destroyed such a formidable foe as Og, king of Bashan, and given into their hands all the land of the giants, what could He not do for them? They could hardly expect to encounter in all the land of Canaan any enemy more powerful than Og, whose bedstead was of such enormous dimensions as to call for the special notice of Moses; but what was he in the presence of his almighty creator? Dwarfs and giants are all alike to Him. The grand point is to keep God Himself ever before our eyes; then difficulties vanish. If He covers the eyes, we can see nothing else; and this is the true secret of peace, and the real power of progress. 'Thine eyes have seen all that the Lord your God hath done.' And *as* He has done, *so* He will do. He *hath* delivered, and he *doth* deliver, and He *will* deliver. Past, present, and future are all marked by divine deliverance."*

8. EXTENT AND DIVISION OF CONQUERED EAST-SIDE LANDS (3:12-17)

12 And this land we took in possession at that time: from Aroer, which is by the valley of the Arnon, and half the hill-country of Gilead, and the cities thereof, gave I unto the Reubenites and to the Gadites: 13 and the rest of Gilead, and all Bashan, the kingdom of Og, gave I unto the half-tribe of Manasseh; all the region of Argob, even all Bashan. (The same is called the land of Rephaim. 14 Jair the son of Manasseh took all the region of Argob, unto the border of the Geshurites and the Macathites, and called them, even Bashan, after his own name, Havvoth-jair, unto this day.) 15 And I gave Gilead unto Machir. 16 And unto the Reubenites and unto the Gadites I gave from Gilead even unto the valley of the Arnon, the middle of the valley, and the border thereof, even unto the river Jabbok, which is the border of the children of

*Notes on Deuteronomy. pp. 151, 152

Ammon; 17 the Arabah also, and the Jordan and the border *thereof*, from Chinnereth even unto the sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, under the slopes of Pisgah eastward.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 3:12-17

57. Please refer to Numbers 22 through 33 for additional events in this period.
58. Upon what condition were the two-and-half tribes granted their inheritance before the other tribes? Cf. verses 18-20 and Numbers 32:16-27.
59. Please refer to a map of the twelve tribes and memorize the location of the tribes.

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 3:12-17

12 When we took possession of this land, I gave to the Reubenites and the Gadites the territory from Aroer, which is on the edge of the valley of the Arnon, and half the hill country of Gilead and its cities;

13 The rest of Gilead, and all Bashan, the kingdom of Og, that is, all the region of Argob, with all Bashan, I gave to the half-tribe of Manasseh. It is called the land of Rephaim [of giant stature].

14 Jair son of Manasseh took all the region of Argob, that is, Bashan, as far as the border of the Geshurites and the Ma-acathites, and called the villages after his own name, Havvoth-jair, so called to this day.

15 And I gave Gilead to Mechir [son of Manasseh].

16 And to the Reubenites and Gadites I gave from Gilead even to the valley of the Arnon, with the middle of the valley as the boundary of it, as far over as the river Jabbok, the boundary of the Ammonites.

17 The Arabah also, with the Jordan as its boundary, from Chinnereth as far as the sea of the Arabah, the Salt [Dead] Sea, under the cliffs [of the headlands] of Pisgah on the east.

COMMENT 3:12-17

The student should be locating the various geographical names of this chapter, and establishing the proper event with the proper place. So here we have Aroer, the Arnon river, Gilead, Bashan (Argob, see above), the Jabbok river, the Arabah, Chinnereth (either the sea of that name [i.e. the sea of Galilee] Num. 34:11, Josh. 13:27, or the town near the sea, Josh. 19:35), the Salt (Dead) Sea, mount Pisgah (a shoulder

of mount Nebo)—all mentioned in describing the boundaries of the east-side tribes: Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh.* The basic boundaries of these tribes should be committed to memory—it will help you time and again in your Bible study.

Moses omits much of Israel's recent history here—but it was all doubtless fresh in the minds of his hearers. In Numbers 22:1, after Sihon and Og were smitten, we are told, "And the children of Israel journeyed, and encamped in the plains of Moab beyond the Jordan at "Jericho" (See also 33:47-49)—a statement that ties right in with Deut. 1:1, 32:49, 34:1, 5 & 8 in locating Israel on the plains of Moab. The account of Balaam (the Mesopotamian seer) as he tried to carry out the wishes of Balak, king of Moab—a country in league with Midian against Israel—is in Numbers 22-24. His curses were turned into blessings.

Fearing the result of open war, the allied nations now undertook to corrupt Israel by their friendship and by seduction. Numbers 25:1 reads, "And Israel abode in Shittim [very near or the same as their present location]; and the people began to play the harlot with the daughters of Moab," and many Israelites "bowed down to their gods" (v. 2). Many people perished by the plague that fell on the nation as a penalty (Chap. 25). After the numbering of the people (Chap. 26), the daughters of Zelophehad (descendants of Manasseh) are granted their inheritance (27:1-11); then follows God's command to Moses to ascend mount Abarim (Pisgah) (27:12-14), Joshua's appointment as leader of Israel (27:15-23), laws for various offerings (Ch. 28), offerings for the seventh month (Ch. 29), the law of vows (Ch. 30), the slaughter of the Midianites (Ch. 31) and the settling of Reuben, Gad and Manasseh on the east side (Ch. 32), Chapter 33 gives an itinerary of Israel's encampments to their present one "... in the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho . . . from Beth-jeshimoth even unto Abel-shittim" (vv. 48,49). The exhortations and instructions of Moses from 33:50 to the end of Numbers are, like those in Deuteronomy, given with a view to their settlement in Canaan.

We are making no attempt in this volume at closely harmonizing, chronologically, the events of Numbers (after Chapter 22) with those of Deuteronomy—only to say that they occurred at approximately the same time and in the same general area—the plains of Moab, not far from the mouth of the Jordan.

*And this half-tribe also had an area of the west side, north of Ephraim, extending from the plain of Sharon to the Jordan—the inheritance of the daughters of Zelophehad. Num. 27:1-11, Josh. 17

JAIR THE SON OF MANASSETH TOOK ALL THE REGION OF THE ARGOB (v. 14)—Naming them HAVVOTH-JAIR, that is, the towns of Jair. He was a descendant of Manasseh, being the son of Segub (I Chron. 2:21-22).

9. WARNING AGAINST SETTLING DOWN PREMATURELY (3:18-20)

18 And I commanded you at that time, saying, Jehovah your God hath given you this land to possess it: ye shall pass over armed before your brethren the children of Israel, all the men of valor. 19 But your wives, and your little ones, and your cattle, (I know that ye have much cattle,) shall abide in your cities which I have given you, 20 until Jehovah give rest unto your brethren, as unto you, and they also possess the land which Jehovah your God giveth them beyond the Jordan: then shall ye return every man unto his possession, which I have given you.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 3:18-20

60. How sad to possess so little when we could conquer so much. Did the 2½ tribes fulfill their part of the agreement? Cf. Joshua 4:12, 13. What about the 9½ tribes? Cf. Joshua 13:1.
61. Besides the lack of faith, what one thing contributed most to the failure to conquer?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 3:18-20

18 And I commanded you at that time, saying, The Lord your God has given you this land to possess it; you [Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh] shall go over [the Jordan] armed before your brethren the other Israelites, all that are able for war.

19 But your wives, and your little ones, and your cattle (I know that you have many cattle) shall remain in your cities which I have given you,

20 Until the Lord has given rest to your brethren, as to you, and until they also possess the land which the Lord your God has given them beyond Jordan; then shall you return every man to his possession, which I have given you.

COMMENT 3:18-20

This is the command to the east-side tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh. See also Num. 32:16-27. They were to go over the Jordan

and assist their brethren in exterminating the Canaanite tribes before returning to their families on the east. "But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against Jehovah; and be sure your sin will find you out" (Num. 32:23). These men complied with the order (Josh. 4:12, 13) but Israel did not fully expel the native people before these men returned. When Joshua was "old and well stricken in years," there still "remaineth yet very much land to be possessed" (Josh. 13:1).

10. MOSES DENIED ENTRANCE INTO CANAAN (3:21-29)

21 And I commanded Joshua at that time, saying, Thine eyes have seen all that Jehovah your God hath done unto these two kings: so shall Jehovah do unto all the kingdoms whither thou goest over. 22 Ye shall not fear them; for Jehovah your God, he it is that fighteth for you.

23 And I besought Jehovah at that time, saying, 24 O Lord Jehovah, thou hast begun to show thy servant thy greatness, and thy strong hand: for what god is there in heaven or in earth, that can do according to thy works, and according to thy mighty acts? 25 Let me go over, I pray thee, and see the good land that is beyond the Jordan, that goodly mountain, and Lebanon. 26 But Jehovah was wroth with me for your sakes, and hearkened not unto me: and Jehovah said unto me, Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto me of this matter. 27 Get thee up unto the top of Pisgah, and lift up thine eyes westward, and northward, and southward, and eastward, and behold with thine eyes: for thou shalt not go over this Jordan. 28 But charge Joshua, and encourage him, and strengthen him; for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the land which thou shalt see. 29 So we abode in the valley over against Beth-peor.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 3:21-29

62. Read Numbers 27:15-23 for a better understanding of Moses words to Joshua.
63. Since God has specifically told Moses he could not go into the promised land, why did Moses make the request he did in these verses?
64. Is Moses saying in verse 26 that it was not his fault that Jehovah was angry with him?
65. Our Lord requires unselfishness on the part of His leaders. Note the implications of verse 28.

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 3:21-29

21 And I commanded Joshua at that time, saying, Your own eyes have seen all that the Lord your God has done to these two kings [Sihon and Og]; so shall the Lord do to all the kingdoms into which you are going over [the Jordan].

22 You shall not fear them, for the Lord your God shall fight for you.

23 And I besought the Lord at that time, saying,

24 O Lord God, You have only begun to show Your servant Your greatness and Your mighty hand; for what god is there in Heaven or on earth, that can do according to Your works, and according to Your might?

25 I pray You, [will you not just] let me go over and see the good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain country [with Hermon], and Lebanon?

26 But the Lord was angry with me on your account, and would not listen to me; and the Lord said to me, That is enough; say no more to Me about it.

27 Get up to the top of Pisgah, and lift up your eyes westward, and northward, and southward, and eastward, and behold it with your eyes; for you shall not go over this Jordan.

28 But charge Joshua, and encourage and strengthen him; for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to possess the land which you shall see.

29 So we remained in the valley opposite Beth-peor.

COMMENT 3:21-29

Vv. 21 and 22 refer to Moses' commission to Joshua, discussed more fully in Ch. 31:7,8, 14-23 and Num. 27:15-23.

JEHOVAH . . . FIGHTETH FOR YOU (v. 22)—See ch. 1:29:33; 42 and notes.

LET ME GO OVER (v. 25)—See also 1:37 and notes on the refusal of Moses' request.

THAT GOODLY MOUNTAIN (v. 25)—The marginal reading, *hill country* is preferred by modern translators.

GET THEE UP UNTO THE TOP OF PISGAH (v. 27)—See 32:49 where this same mountain is also called Nebo and "this mountain of Abarim" (cf. Num. 27:12). Num. 33:47 & 48 speaks of Israel encamping "in the

mountains of Abarim, before Nebo." The term Abarim seems to refer to the whole range of mountains east of the Dead Sea and the Jordan. Nebo was a smaller range within this one, or more specifically, jutting out to the west from it. 34:1 tells us Moses went up "from the plains of Moab unto mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against [i.e. east of] Jericho."

On this entire passage, the moral lesson drawn by Mackintosh is excellent. "Now, it is most edifying to hear all this confession from the lips of Moses himself. It teaches us a fine lesson, if only we are willing to learn it. Some of us find it very hard indeed to confess that we have done or said anything wrong—very hard to own before our brethren that we have entirely missed the Lord's mind in any particular case. We are careful of our reputation; we are touchy and tenacious. And yet, with strange inconsistency, we admit, or seem to admit, in general terms, that we are poor, feeble, erring creatures; and that, if left to ourselves, there is nothing too bad for us to say or do. But it is one thing to make a most humiliating general [confession,] and another thing altogether to own that, in some given case, we have made a gross mistake. The latter is a confession which very few have grace to make."*

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER THREE

The war with Og, king of Bashan, 1, 2. He is defeated, 3. Sixty fortified cities with many unwall'd towns taken, 4, 5. The utter destruction of the people, 6. The spoils, 7; and extent of the land taken, 8-10. Account of Og's iron bedstead, 11. The land given to the Reubenites, Gadites, and half tribe of Manasseh, 12, 13. Jair takes the country of Argob, 14. Gilead is given unto Machir, 15. And the rest of the land possessed by the Reubenites and Gadites, 16, 17. The directions given to those tribes, 18-20. The counsel given to Joshua, 21, 22. Moses's prayer to God for permission to go into the promised land, 23-25; and God's refusal, 26. He is commanded to go up to Mount Pisgah to see it, 27; and to encourage Joshua, 28. They continue in the valley opposite to Beth-peor, 29.

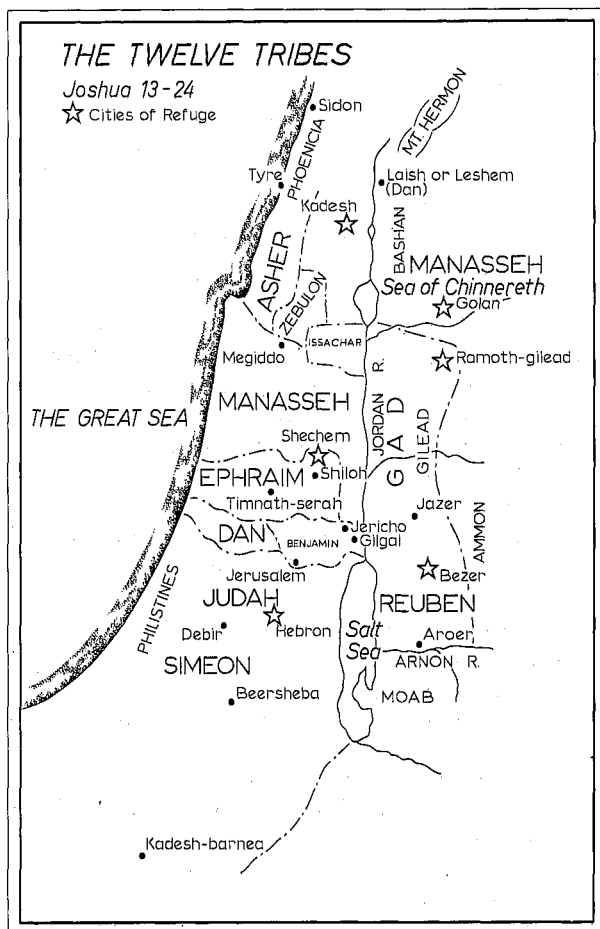
QUESTIONS, LESSON THREE (2:24—3:29)

1. Who were "the two kings of the Amorites" and over what kingdoms did they rule? (Complete before proceeding)
2. Why did God harden Sihon's spirit?

*Notes on Deuteronomy, Vol. I, p. 156.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON THREE

3. Who or what was Argob?
4. Why do you suppose the divine historian takes space in the Sacred Volume to mention the size of Og's bedstead?
5. Give the *basic* locations of the three east-side tribes.
6. What special assistance were these tribes to render the rest of Israel?
7. What admirable quality is revealed in Moses in this lesson?



LESSON FOUR 4:1-43

B. SIGNIFICANCE OF PAST EVENTS (4:1-40)

1. BLESSINGS PROMISED FOR THOSE WHO HEED GOD'S ALL-SUFFICIENT LAW (4:1-8)

a. PROSPERITY (4:1-4)

And now, O Israel, hearken unto the statutes and unto the ordinances, which I teach you, to do them; that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which Jehovah, the God of your fathers, giveth you. 2 Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish from it, that ye may keep the commandments of Jehovah your God which I command you. 3 Your eyes have seen what Jehovah did because of Baal-peor; for all the men that follow Baal-peor, Jehovah thy God hath destroyed them from the midst of thee. 4 But ye that did cleave unto Jehovah your God are alive every one of you this day.

b. RESPECT OF THE NATIONS (4:5-8)

5 Behold, I have taught you statutes and ordinances, even as Jehovah my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the midst of the land whither ye go in to possess it. 6 Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, that shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. 7 For what great nation is there, that hath a god so nigh unto them, as Jehovah our God is whensoever we call upon him? 8 And what great nation is there, that hath statutes and ordinances so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 4:1-8

66. What relationship was there between the statutes of Jehovah and the possession of the land?
67. Name two possible reasons (excuses) for adding to the word of God.
68. Who was "Baal-peor"? What happened to him?
69. How did Moses accomplish the monumental task of teaching the whole nation of Israel?
70. What was the cause or reason for the respect from other nations? Name three nations thus affected.
71. What one quality of Jehovah especially appealed to the other nations?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 4:1-8

Now listen and give heed, O Israel, to the statutes and ordinances which I teach you, and do them, that you may live, and go in and possess the land which the Lord, the God of your fathers, gives you.

2 You shall not add to the word which I command you, neither shall you diminish it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you.

3 Your eyes still see what the Lord did because of Baal-peor; for all the men who followed the Baal of Peor the Lord your God has destroyed from among you; [Num. 25:1-9.]

4 But you who clung fast to the Lord your God are alive, every one of you, this day.

5 Behold, I have taught you statutes and ordinances as the Lord my God commanded me, that you should do them in the land which you are entering to possess.

6 So keep them and do them; for that is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.

7 For what great nation is there who has a god so near to them as the Lord our God is to us in all things for which we call upon Him?

8 And what large and important nation has statutes and ordinances so upright and just as all this law which I set before you today?

COMMENT 4:1-8

Prosperity and the respect of the nations round about—what else could a nation desire for its faithfulness? It was all promised—and during those relatively few years in Israel's history when they *did* turn wholeheartedly to God, these blessings immediately followed. But how much more often was Israel rather in near poverty, and the laughing-stock of the nations—all because of his disobedience and faithlessness!

How our own nation needs to heed this lesson. Recently, many reports have come back to our country of the low esteem with which our country is held by other nations. A Russian leader, upon visiting Hollywood, said his atheistic country had higher morals than ours. American tourists and servicemen abroad are known, far too often, for their licentiousness and immorality rather than their devotion to the Christ of God. Can America any longer be called, even by stretching the imagination, a "Christian" nation? Obviously not. And yet, this is our

hypocritical claim. There is only one possible end of such a nation—the curse of God and degradation in the eyes of other nations. May we, too, remember that Israel became “a hiss and a byword” of the nations round about. And why? Because God’s law and works were *forgotten*!

HEARKEN . . . DO THEM: THAT YE MAY LIVE (v. 1)—A necessity for God’s smile upon our lives, whether under the Old Testament or New. We must first give diligence to *know* and *understand* God’s law; but after that we have a *moral* and *spiritual* responsibility of OBEDIENCE. Again and again is this responsibility enjoined in Deuteronomy. Moses’ words were more than those of a mere informative lecture—he was preaching a sermon!

YE SHALL NOT ADD UNTO THE WORD . . . NEITHER DIMINISH (v. 2)—Cf. 12:32. This has been God’s law in all ages: Prov. 30:5,6, Rev. 22:18,19. His law is perfect and complete: Ps. 19:7, 119:160, II Tim. 3:16,17; Jas. 1:25, supplying, through Christ, “all things that pertain to life and godliness” (II Pet. 1:3). To add to it is to mar its perfection—and to usurp the place of God, the giver of light and truth.

YOUR EYES HAVE SEEN WHAT JEHOVAH DID BECAUSE OF BAAL-PEOR (v. 3)—See Num. 25:1-13. The memory of that recent event, with the plague that followed killing twenty-four thousand Israelites, must surely have been fresh in their minds.

Baal, the sun god, was worshipped in the Canaanite countries “under two aspects, beneficent and destructive. On the one hand he gave light and warmth to his worshippers; on the other hand the fierce heats of summer destroyed the vegetation he had himself brought into being. Hence human victims were sacrificed to him in order to appease his anger in time of plague or other trouble, the victim being usually the firstborn of the sacrificer and being burnt alive” (I.S.B.E.).

The names of Baal took on different forms in different localities, as also did his worship. Each locality had its own Baal or divine “Lord” who often took his name from the city or place to which he belonged. So here we have Baal-Peor, the god of the Moabite mountains, who took his name from mount Peor (Num. 23:28). His worship, as often in the case of idolatry, was accompanied by sensual rites. As recorded in Numbers, Moab and Midian were in league against Israel at this time. The Midianitish women, through the counsel of Balaam, the backslidden prophet, had induced many men of Israel to sin. Thus Moses says, “Have ye saved all the [Midianitish] women alive? Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against Jehovah

in the matter of Peor, and so the plague was among the congregation of Jehovah^b (Num. 31:15,16).

KEEP THEREFORE AND DO THEM; FOR THIS IS YOUR WISDOM AND YOUR UNDERSTANDING IN THE SIGHT OF THE PEOPLES (v. 6)—Even nations that would themselves reject the law Israel espoused, would nevertheless respect the people who faithfully kept it. They would say, SURELY THIS GREAT NATION IS A WISE AND UNDERSTANDING PEOPLE (v: 6)—*if* they kept the law of God and served him with all their heart (6:5).

2. THE TEMPTATION TO FORGET GOD'S UNIQUE REVELATION (4:9-31)

a. GOD APPEARED AT HOREB BY WORD, NOT BY PHYSICAL FORM (4:9-14)

9 Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes saw, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life; but make them known unto thy children and thy children's children; 10 the day that thou stoodest before Jehovah thy God in Horeb, when Jehovah said unto me, Assemble me the people, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children. 11 And ye came near and stood under the mountain; and the mountain burned with fire unto the heart of heaven, with darkness, cloud, and thick darkness. 12 And Jehovah spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of words, but ye saw no form; only *ye heard* a voice. 13 And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even the ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone. 14 And Jehovah commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and ordinances, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over to possess it.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 4:9-14

72. How would one fulfill the injunction to "keep thy soul diligently"?
73. Is there a difference between "the soul" and "the heart"? Discuss.
74. What is meant in the expression "they may learn to *fear* me"?
75. Why was it necessary to use the physical manifestations of darkness, cloud, fire, earthquake.
76. How shall we understand references to God's "face" and "back" in Numbers 33:17-23, i.e., in light of the fact that God has not form?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 4:9-14

9 Only take heed, and guard your life diligently, lest you forget the things which your eyes have seen and lest they depart from your [mind and] heart all the days of your life; teach them to your children, and your children's children;

10 Especially how on the day that you stood before the Lord your God in Horeb, the Lord said to me, Gather the people together to Me, and I will make them hear My words, that they may learn (reverently) to fear Me all the days they live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children.

11 And you came near and stood at the foot of the mountain; and the mountain burned with fire to the heart of Heaven, with darkness, cloud, and thick gloom.

12 And the Lord spoke to you out of the midst of the fire; you heard the voice of the words, but saw no form; there was only a voice.

13 And He declared to you His covenant, which He commanded you to perform, the ten commandments; and He wrote them on two tables of stone.

14 And the Lord commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and precepts, that you might do them in the land which you are going over to possess.

COMMENT 4:9-14

TAKE HEED TO THYSELF, AND KEEP THY SOUL DILIGENTLY (v. 9)—
Note the personal responsibility! "Take heed to thyself . . ." (I Tim. 4:16, Cf. Acts 20:28).

LEST THOU FORGET THE THINGS WHICH THINE EYES SAW (v. 9)—
Another exhortation that is also given time and again as we proceed in this book. How easy to forget the blessings and chastisements of God, simply by not being *reminded* of them, or not making them known to the present generation.

These people had *seen* and *experienced* many miraculous and wonderful blessings from God. Their clothes and shoes did not wear out; their food was provided by God each day; the ones who had been young when they left Egypt had seen his powerful hand as they crossed the Red Sea, and again as they were encamped at mount Sinai (v. 10). The plagues God brought upon them for their disobedience should also have been vividly remembered. But how very quickly it was all forgotten! See II Pet. 1:9, 13 3:1.

BUT MAKE THEM KNOWN UNTO THY CHILDREN (v. 9)—See 6:4-9, 11:18-21

AND THE MOUNTAIN [SINAI] BURNED WITH FIRE UNTO THE HEART OF HEAVEN (v. 11)—See 5:5, Ex. 19:18, 20:18, Heb. 12:18.

YE HEARD THE VOICE OF WORDS, BUT YE SAW NO FORM (v. 12, see also v. 15)—No one has ever seen God, who is spirit: Jn. 1:18, 6:46, I Tim. 6:16, Heb. 11:27, I Jn. 4:12,13. The above scriptures are plain and outspoken on this point, and we take such expressions as God's "face" and "back" with reference to the events on Sinai (Ex. 33:17-23) to be anthropomorphic or figurative—especially when the Holy Spirit *here* expressly states with reference to it that "ye saw no form."

b. WARNING AGAINST MAKING PHYSICAL REPRESENTATIONS OF GOD OR GODS (4:15-24)

15 Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of form on the day that Jehovah spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire; 16 lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image in the form of any figure, the likeness of male or female, 17 the likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged bird that flieth in the heavens, 18 the likeness of any thing that creepeth on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the water under the earth; 19 and lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun and the moon and the stars, even all the host of heaven, thou be drawn away and worship them, and serve them, which Jehovah thy God hath allotted unto all the peoples under the whole heaven. 20 But Jehovah hath taken you, and brought you forth out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be unto him a people of inheritance, as at this day. 21 Furthermore Jehovah was angry with me for your sakes, and sware that I should not go over the Jordan, and that I should not go in unto that good land, which Jehovah thy God giveth thee for an inheritance: 22 but I must die in this land, I must not go over the Jordan; but ye shall go over, and possess that good land. 23 Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of Jehovah your God, which he made with you, and make you a graven image in the form of any thing which Jehovah thy God hath forbidden thee. 24 For Jehovah thy God is a devouring fire, a jealous God.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 4:15-24

77. After hearing Jehovah God and participating in His power and provision, how could these people possibly make a likeness of man or woman and worship it?
78. Why was Moses so elaborate in his prohibitions against idolatry?
79. What is involved in the expression "iron furnace"? Does this mean the Israelites worked in iron furnaces in Egypt?
80. Once again: Does Moses blame Israel for his sin? Cf. Verse 21.
81. What promised punishment was given for those who forget the covenant of God? Cf. verse 24.

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 4:15-24

15 Therefore take good heed to yourselves; since you saw no form of Him on the day the Lord spoke to you on Horeb out of the midst of the fire,

16 Beware lest you become corrupt by making for yourself [to worship] a graven image in the form of any figure, the likeness of male or female,

17 The likeness of any beast that is on the earth, or of any winged fowl that flies in the air,

18 The likeness of anything that creeps on the ground, or of any fish that is in the waters beneath the earth.

19 And beware lest you lift up your eyes to the heavens, and when you see the sun, moon, and stars, even all the host of the heavens, you be drawn away and worship them and serve them, things which the Lord your God has allotted to all nations under the whole heavens.

20 But the Lord has taken you, and brought you forth out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be to Him a people of his own possession, as this day.

21 Furthermore the Lord was angry with me because of you, and He swore that I should not go over the Jordan, and that I should not enter the good land, which the Lord your God gives you for an inheritance.

22 But I must die in this land, I must not cross the Jordan; but you shall go over and possess that good land.

23 Take heed to yourselves, lest you forget the covenant of the Lord your God, which He made with you, and make you a graven image in the form of anything, which the Lord your God has forbidden you.

24 For the Lord your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.

COMMENT 4:15-24

YE SAW NO MANNER OF FORM (v. 15)—See under v. 12.

LEST YE CORRUPT YOURSELVES, AND MAKE YOU A GRAVEN IMAGE IN THE FORM OF ANY FIGURE (v. 16)—They saw no form of any kind—no physical representation of God whatever—thus were given no “excuse” for making any type of image.

Note the list of living things and other objects Israel is forbidden to worship (vv. 16-19):

(1) “the likeness of male or female” (v. 16)—idols were often of both sexes; e.g. in Egypt, Osiris and Isis; in Canaan, Baal and Astarte.

(2) “the likeness of any beast” (v. 17)—How could Israel forget the golden calf at Sinai? And the calves of Jeroboam are a later example.

(3) “the likeness of any winged bird” (v. 17)—Horus, the hawk, was worshipped in ancient Egypt. The ibis and the crane were also deified.

(4) “. . . the likeness of anything that creepeth on the ground” (v. 18)—the crocodile, frog, and beetle were worshipped in Egypt. The serpent was frequently worshipped in ancient times—“the most universally revered of all creatures” (I.S.B.E.). Israel’s brazen serpent was erected at God’s command to stay the plague (Num. 21:8). But when it later became an object of worship, Hezekiah destroyed it (II K. 18:1-8).

(5) “the likeness of any fish” (v. 18)—In Egypt, all the fish of the Nile river were deified. And the Philistine’s god Dagon was represented in figures that were half man, half fish.

(6) “sun . . . moon . . . stars” (v. 19)—Objects of worship in many ancient nations: “in the earliest Egyptian texts the sun appears as divine and the moon as “the bull among the stars” (I.S.B.E.). Ra was the sun-god, and in other forms worshipped as Khepera and Atmu. Then there was Nut, the god of the heavens, and her husband Geb; Shu, the god of space, etc. Similar gods existed among the Babylonians, while Baal was the sun-god of Canaan and surrounding nations. The name “Sunday” comes to us from the Teutons, who held the first day of the week as sacred to the sun. The ancient Greeks believed that the sun god Apollo drove the sun chariot through the sky . . . So we could continue through the cultures of the Incas of Peru, Persia, northern India, Scandanavia, the Mayas, peoples of Central and South America, and the American Indian. For obvious reasons, the sun seems especially to have been worshipped by agricultural peoples.

The worship of the moon is prominently illustrated in Ur of the

Chaldees, where the Ziggurat, the huge temple-tower erected for its worship, has been unearthed by archaeologists.

BROUGHT YOU FORTH OUT OF THE IRON FURNACE, OF EGYPT (v. 20)
—See also I K. 8:51, Jer. 11:4. "From this mention of the word *iron furnace* there can be little doubt that the Israelites were employed in Egypt in the most laborious works of *metallurgy*. Digging, smelting, and forging of *iron* in so hot a climate must have been oppressive work indeed" (Clarke). Others would make this "iron furnace figurative. 'The 'iron furnace' is used metaphorically for affliction, chastisement (Deut. 4:20; Ezek. 22:18-22)"—I.S.B.E. We do, indeed have brass and iron used figuratively of barrenness in 28:23, 24, and a "yoke of iron" is used in 28:48 to picture slavery or bondage. But even if we have here a figurative expression, it must have been a figure with which Israel was familiar. The argument that iron was not a well-known metal at this time is not valid. In 3:11 we saw that Og's bedstead was cast of iron, and Josh. 17:16, 18 the Canaanites are not only said to have had chariots of iron, but to have had them in great numbers.

I MUST NOT GO OVER THE JORDAN (v. 22)—See under 1:37.

c. PUNISHMENT FOR IDOLATRY: BANISHMENT FROM THE LAND (4:25-28)

25 When thou shalt beget children, and children's children, and ye shall have been long in the land, and shall corrupt yourselves, and make a graven image in the form of any thing, and shall do that which is evil in the sight of Jehovah thy God, to provoke him to anger; 26 I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go over the Jordan to possess it; ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed. 27 And Jehovah will scatter you among the peoples, and ye shall be left few in number among the nations, whither Jehovah shall lead you away. 28 And there ye shall serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat nor smell.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 4:25-28

82. Please notice the use of the words "corrupt yourselves," as related to the wholeness of man. To depart from God is to involve oneself in the deterioration of the whole self.
83. Are we to conclude that physical prosperity is a by-product of obedience to God? Discuss.

84. Isn't there irony in vs. 28? i.e. in the object of the service of God's people.

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 4:25-28

25 When children shall be born to you, and children's children, and you have grown old in the land, if you corrupt yourselves by making a graven image in the form of anything, and do evil in the sight of the Lord your God, provoking Him to anger.

26 I call Heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that you shall soon utterly perish from off the land which you are going over the Jordan to possess; you will not live long upon it, but will be utterly destroyed.

27 And the Lord will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations to which the Lord will drive you.

28 There you will serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell.

COMMENT 4:25-28

JEHOVAH WILL SCATTER YOU AMONG THE PEOPLES (v. 27)—Cf. 28:64, 29:25-28. See also our comments and more complete discussion under 28:7 ff.

YE SHALL SERVE GODS, THE WORK OF MEN'S HANDS, WOOD AND STONE (v. 28)—In contrast to the one, true, invisible, *living* God, who is spirit (Jn. 4:24). Moses had just emphasized the living nature of the invisible God, v. 12 (where see references), v. 15.

d. REPENTANCE WILL REVEAL GOD'S GRACE (4:29-31)

29 But from thence ye shall seek Jehovah thy God, and thou shalt find him, when thou searchest after him with all thy heart and with all thy soul. 30 When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, in the latter days thou shalt return to Jehovah thy God, and hearken unto his voice: 31 for Jehovah thy God is a merciful God; he will not fail thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he swore unto them.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 4:29-31

85. Are verses 25-28 a prophesy of banishment from Palestine? Are verses 29-31 a promise of return? When fulfilled?
86. Just what is meant in vs. 29 in the expression "finding God"?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 4:29-31

29 But if from there you will seek [inquire of and require as necessity] the Lord your God, you will find Him, if you [truly] seek Him with all your heart (and mind) and soul and life.

30 When you are in tribulation, and all these things come upon you in the latter days, if you turn to the Lord your God, and are obedient to His voice,

31 For the Lord your God is a merciful God, he will not fail you, or destroy you, or forget the covenant of your fathers which He swore to them.

COMMENT 4:29-31

WITH ALL THY HEART AND WITH ALL THY SOUL (v. 29)—Such has always and ever will be necessary before the Lord is pleased. God demands the *entire being*—every fibre—and is never satisfied with anything less. Note that this is an *Old Testament concept* as well as New, See 6:4, 5; 10:12, 13; Cf. Luke 10:27, Rom. 12:1.

3. THE GLORY AND GREATNESS OF ISRAEL'S GOD (4:32-40)

32 For ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon the earth, and from the one end of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been *any such thing* as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it? 33 Did ever a people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live? 34 Or hath God assayed to go and take him a nation from the midst of another nation, by trials, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by an outstretched arm, and by great terrors, according to all that Jehovah your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes? 35 Unto thee it was showed, that thou mightest know that Jehovah he is God; there is none else beside him. 36 Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice, that he might instruct thee: and upon earth he made thee to see his great fire; and thou heardest his words out of the midst of the fire. 37 And because he loved thy fathers, therefore he chose their seed after them, and brought thee out with his presence, with his great power, out of Egypt; 38 to drive out nations from before thee greater and mightier than thou, to bring thee in, to give thee their land for an inheritance, as at this day. 39 Know therefore this day, and lay it to thy heart, that

Jehovah he is God in heaven above and upon the earth beneath; there is none else. 40 And thou shalt keep his statutes, and his commandments, which I command thee this day, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days in the land, which Jehovah thy God giveth thee, for ever.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 4:32-40

87. Why "ask now for the days that are past"?
88. What was peculiarly unique about God's dealings with Israel? Name three.
89. What several purposes were accomplished in delivering Israel from Egypt?
90. The giving of the law on mount Sinai is very graphically described here, please note verse 36.
91. Please review your own past life and review three incidents that encourage you to trust God for the future.
92. What benefits occur to the faithful? Read verse 40 for an answer.

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 4:32-40

32 For ask now of the days that are past, which were before you, since the day that God created man upon the earth, and from the one end of the heavens to the other, whether any such a great thing as this has ever occurred or been heard of anywhere?

33 Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as you heard, and live?

34 Or has God ever tried to go and take for Himself a nation from the midst of another nation, by trials, by signs, by wonders, by war, by a mighty hand, by an outstretched arm, and by great terrors, as the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes?

35 To you it was shown, that you might realize and have personal knowledge that the Lord is God; there is no other besides Him.

36 Out of Heaven He made you hear His voice, that He might correct, discipline and admonish you; and on earth He made you see His great fire, and you heard His words out of the midst of the fire.

37 And because He loved your fathers, He chose their descendants after them, and brought you out with His own presence, by His mighty power from Egypt,

38 Driving out nations from before you, greater and mightier than yourselves, to bring you in, to give you their land for an inheritance, as this day;

39 Know, recognize and understand therefore this day, and turn your [mind and] heart to it, that the Lord is God in the heavens above, and upon the earth beneath; there is no other.

40 Therefore you shall keep His statutes and His commandments, which I command you this day, that it may go well with you and your children after you, and that you may prolong your days in the land which the Lord your God gives you for ever.

COMMENT 4:32-40

God's glory and greatness are revealed here in several ways:

- a. His dealings with Israel are unique (vv. 32-34, 36)
- b. He is the *only* true and living God (vv. 35, 39)
- c. He has loved and chosen Israel (v. 37)
- d. He has preserved them (v. 38)
- e. He offers a blessed future (v. 40)

All of these truths argued for Israel's faithfulness! No other nation had such advantages and blessings as *they*. With every blessing and advantage God gives us, a divine responsibility is in our hands to use such to his glory. It was so then, it is so now.

ASK NOW OF THE DAYS THAT ARE PAST (v. 32)—Cf. 32:7. Look back into your own history, yea, go back even to the creation of man, and *see* how he has dealt with his own people. It will do you good. It will edify your soul. You will see that God's own people have always been the object of special privileges, mercies, and blessings.

Such meditation and reflection is also profitable for every Christian. "Ask now of the days that are past"—look back into the pages of scripture, and then down through history, and even into your *own* past, and see if it is not true that you have not been blessed abundantly by the hand of God.

DID EVER A PEOPLE HEAR THE VOICE OF GOD SPEAKING . . . AND LIVE? (v. 33)—"It seems to have been a general belief that if God *appeared* to men, it was for the purpose of destroying them; and indeed most of the extraordinary manifestations of God were in the way of *judgment*; but here it was different; God did appear in a sovereign and extra-ordinary manner; but it was for the deliverance and support of the people. 1. They heard his voice speaking with them in a distinct, articulate manner. 2. They saw the fire, the symbol of his presence, the appearances of which demonstrated it to be supernatural. 3. Notwithstanding God appeared so terrible, yet no person was destroyed, for he came, not to *destroy*, but to *save*." (Clarke)

UNTO THEE IT WAS SHOWED, THAT THOU MIGHTEST KNOW THAT JEHOVAH HE IS GOD: THERE IS NONE ELSE (v. 35)—Note also v. 39. This conclusion *should* have been obvious from all the many wonderful and mighty works God had performed in their presence, from the time of their deliverance from Egypt to the present hour. Both the Egyptians and Israel should have seen the uniqueness and power of the one true God when Israel was delivered from bondage (Ex. 8:10, 9:14). And when one thinks of the constant and continual display of miracles from God Israel viewed in the wilderness, we stand amazed that they would no sooner cross the Jordan than be engrossed in the basest idolatry. But has it changed much today? How often and how quickly have those who have received the greatest blessings gone back to the pit from which they were digged and the rock from whence they were hewn!

THAT THOU MAYEST PROLONG THY DAYS IN THE LAND (v. 40)—That is, that they as a nation would not be conquered or exterminated by a foreign power. See 5:33. Moses has primary reference here to a long *national* life, rather than a long *individual* life. But, (as in 4:1, 5:16; Ex. 20:12; Eph. 6:3) the concept of a long individual life may also be implied. The whole idea of the above verses is that if Israel would be *obedient*, there would be peace, prosperity, and health for God's people. This thought is expressed often in Deuteronomy (8:1, 16:20, etc.)

APPENDIX: APPOINTMENT OF EASTERN CITIES OF REFUGE (4:41-43)

41 Then Moses set apart three cities beyond the Jordan toward the sunrising; 42 that the manslayer might flee thither, that slayeth his neighbor unawares, and hated him not in time past; and that fleeing unto one of these cities he might live: 43 *namely*, Bezer in the wilderness, in the plain country, for the Reubenites; and Ramoth in Gilead, for the Gadites; and Golan in Bashan, for the Manassites.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 4:41-43

93. Read Numbers 35:9-15 and Deuteronomy 19:1-13 and Joshua 20:1-6 to help in understanding these verses.
94. In what sense are these verses an appendix?
95. State briefly the reason for the cities of refuge.
96. Do we have a city of refuge for protection against spiritual death?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 4:41-43

41 Then Moses set apart three cities [of refuge] beyond the Jordan to the east,

42 That the manslayer might flee there, who slay his neighbor unintentionally, and had not previously been at enmity with him, that fleeing to one of the cities he might save his life:

43 Bezer in the wilderness on the tableland for the Reubenites, and Ramoth in Gilead for the Gadites, and Golan in Bashan for the Manassites.

COMMENT 4:41-43

We have called this section an appendix because of its obvious parenthetical nature. Moses gives instruction concerning all six of the cities of refuge in Chapter 19, and from what is said *there* it appears that that passage comes before this one chronologically. The phrase "Then Moses set apart . . ." etc. would then simply be understood to mean *at the time Israel was still on the plains of Moab* and before their leader's death, the east side refuge-cities were set aside.

As the above verses stand, however, it certainly appears that the phrase "Then Moses set apart . . ." etc. is where it is for an obvious reason—to specify that at *this* time (between the first and second discourses) these cities were set apart by Moses.

Many suppose that not only these verses, but vv. 44-49 are the work of a later editor. Clarke states: "I SUPPOSE the last nine verses of this chapter to have been added by either Joshua or Ezra." (See the special studies at the conclusion of this volume on the subject of "editing.") There is nothing to *necessitate*, however, the assumption that some other than Moses wrote these lines. The fact that he speaks of himself does not pose as a barrier, for he does this throughout the book (v. 44, 5:1, 27:1, 11, etc.) unless, of course, we consider all such statements "editorial additions."

The reason for the appointment of these cities is given in 19:1-13 and Num. 35:9-15. There were three on each side of the Jordan. They were not designed for the permanent exile of murderer, but as a refuge till he could stand before the congregation for judgment. After the death of the high priest, the man who slayed another "unwittingly" could return to his own city (Ex. 21:13, Josh. 20:1-6).

The west-side cities are named in Josh. 20:7: Kedesh in Galilee of Naphtail, Shechem in Ephraim, and Kiriath-Arba (Hebron) in Judah.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER FOUR

Exhortations to obedience, 1. Nothing to be added to or taken from the testimonies of God, 2. The people are exhorted to recollect how God had destroyed the ungodly among them, 3; and preserved those who were faithful, 4. The excellence of the Divine law, 5, 6. No nation in the world could boast of any such statutes, judgments, &c., 7, 8. They are exhorted to obedience by the wonderful manifestations of God in their behalf, 9-13. Moses exhorts them to beware of idolatry, and to make no likeness of any thing in heaven or earth as an object of adoration, 14-20. He informs them that he must die in that land as God had refused to let him go into the promised land, being angry with him on their account, 21, 22. Repeats his exhortation to obedience, 23, 24. Predicts the judgments of God against them, should they turn to idolatry, 25-28. Promises of God's mercy to the penitent, 29-31. The grand and unparalleled privileges of the Israelites, 32-40. Moses severs three cities on the east side of Jordan for cities of refuge, 41, 42. Their names, 43. When and where Moses gave these statutes and judgments to Israel, 44-49.

QUESTIONS, LESSON FOUR (4:1-43)

1. In the forepart of this lesson (vv. 1-8) two great blessings are promised if Israel is obedient. Do you remember them?
2. What was the Baal-peor incident, and how was it punished?
3. What did Israel *not* see when they heard the voice of God at Sinai?
4. In this lesson Israel was forbidden to worship all sorts of things in the heavens or upon the earth. Which of the various forms of idolatry mentioned, do you think offered the strongest temptation? Why?
5. God's graciousness toward Israel was assured if they would repent. Repent to *what extent* (v. 29)?
6. In vv. 32-40 we discussed how the glory and greatness of God was revealed to Israel. Five ways were mentioned. Can you recall at least three?
7. What effect should the miracles have had upon Israel (v. 34, 35)?
8. What baseless fear did Israel have when they heard the voice of God?
9. Explain the true purpose of the cities of refuge.

LESSON FIVE 4:44—6:3

II. THE SECOND DISCOURSE

The Law of God (4:44—26:19)

INTRODUCTION (4:44-49)

POSITION OF ISRAEL; SUMMARY OF CONQUESTS

44 And this is the law which Moses set before the children of Israel: 45 these are the testimonies, and the statutes, and the ordinances, which Moses spake unto the children of Israel, when they came forth out of Egypt, 46 beyond the Jordan, in the valley over against Beth-peor, in the land of Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heshbon whom Moses and the children of Israel smote, when they came forth out of Egypt. 47 And they took his land in possession, and the land of Og king of Bashan, the two kings of the Amorites, who were beyond the Jordan toward the sunrising; 48 from Aroer, which is on the edge of the valley of the Arnon, even unto mount Sion (the same is Hermon), 49 and all the Arabah beyond the Jordan eastward, even unto the sea of the Arabah, under the slopes of Pisgah.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 4:44-49

97. What is the purpose of these verses?
98. Please notice that verses 44, 45 introduce and 46 to 49 review. What is introduced? What is reviewed?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 4:44-49

44 This is the law which Moses set before the Israelites;

45 These are the testimonies, and the laws and the precepts, which Moses spoke to the Israelites when they came out of Egypt,

46 Beyond the Jordan in the valley opposite Beth-peor, in the land of Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heshbon, whom Moses and the Israelites smote when they came out of Egypt.

47 And they took possession of his land and the land of Og king of Bashan, the two kings of the Amorites, who lived beyond the Jordan to the east;

48 From Aroer, which is on the edge of the valley of the Arnon, as far as Mount Sirion (that is, Hermon),

49 And all the Arabah (lowlands) beyond the Jordan eastward, as far as the Sea of Arabah [The Dead Sea], under the slopes and springs of Pisgah.

COMMENT 4:44-49

IN THE VALLEY OVER AGAINST BETH-PEOR (v. 46)—See 1:1, 5; 3:29. Literally, the name signifies "house of Peor"—i.e. Baal-Peor. The name is in memory of the Moabite god, in whose lascivious worship Israel was earlier involved. See notes under 3:12-17.

ALL THE ARABAH (v. 49)—See 1:1, notes. Here the section of that area is specified as "beyond Jordan eastward . . ."

SEA OF ARABAH (v. 49)—That is, the Dead or Salt Sea.

UNDER THE SLOPES OF PISGAH (v. 49)—Or Nebo, Cf. 34:1. See notes under 3:17, 27.

Israel's conquests over Og and Sihon, given here in summary form, are described more fully in 2:26-3:22. You should review that section if you are not already familiar with it.

A. THE NATURE, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE COVENANT MADE AT SINAI (5:1—11:32)

1. THE TEN WORDS REVIEWED (5:1—6:3)

a. THE COMMANDMENTS GIVEN (5:1-21)

And Moses called unto all Israel, and said unto them, Hear O Israel, the statutes and the ordinances which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them, and observe to do them. 2 Jehovah our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. 3 Jehovah made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day. 4 Jehovah spake with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire, 5 (I stood between Jehovah and you at that time, to show you the word of Jehovah: for ye were afraid because of the fire, and went not up into the mount:) saying,

6 I am Jehovah thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

7 Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

8 Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, *nor* any likeness of *any thing* that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: 9 thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them; for I Jehovah thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and

upon the third and upon the fourth generation of them that hate me; 10 and showing lovingkindness unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.

11 Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah thy God in vain: for Jehovah will not hold him guiltless that take this name in vain.

12 Observe the sabbath day, to keep it holy, as Jehovah thy God commanded thee. 13 Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; 14 but the seventh day is a sabbath unto Jehovah thy God: *in it* thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou. 15 And thou shalt remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and Jehovah thy God brought thee out thence by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm: therefore Jehovah thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day.

16 Honor thy father and thy mother, as Jehovah thy God commanded thee; that thy days may be long, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee.

17 Thou shalt not kill.

18 Neither shalt thou commit adultery.

19 Neither shalt thou steal.

20 Neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbor.

21 Neither shalt thou covet thy neighbor's wife; neither shalt thou desire thy neighbor's house, his field, or his man-servant, or his maid-servant, his ox, or his ass, or any thing that is thy neighbor's.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 5:1-21

99. Please read Exodus the twentieth chapter to give an adequate background for this text.
100. What distinction is there in "statutes, ordinances, and commandments"?
101. Who is involved in the pronoun "us" in verse 27?
102. Jehovah did give the ten commandments to the fathers of the very persons to whom Moses spoke. How are we to understand verse 3?
103. Read the account in Exodus to provide an understanding of just how we are to understand the expression "spake with you face to face . . . out of the midst of the fire."
104. What one great lesson did God want to teach Israel by their sojourn in "the house of bondage"?

105. Examine carefully every word of the first commandment as an example: "Thou"—who is involved here? Is this just a commandment for the nation of Israel? "shalt have" does this mean they had formerly worshiped more than one God? etc.
106. Is there some difference between an "image" and a "likeness"? Just what is a *graven* image?
107. Is the second commandment a prohibition against all sculpture? Discuss.
108. How is iniquity associated with idol worship?
109. Is verse nine natural or supernatural in the promise of punishment?
110. Someone said, "I do not even know when I am cursing; it has become such a part of my vocabulary that I use it unconsciously." Is this a violation of the third commandment?
111. Why did God command Israel to keep the Sabbath day?
112. Does the Christian have any reason for keeping the Sabbath day? Discuss.
113. How could longevity possibly be linked with honoring parents?
114. Does God forbid killing under any and all conditions?
115. Are all forms of stealing condemned?
116. What is a briefer form of stating commandment number nine?
117. It would be interesting to list these same ten commandments in a positive form; instead of "Thou shalt not" try "Thou shalt."
118. Does the tenth commandment forbid lustful thoughts concerning thy neighbor's wife?
119. Which commandment would be the easiest to observe?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 5:1-21

And Moses called all Israel, and said to them, Hear, O Israel, the statutes and ordinances which I speak in your hearing this day, that you may learn them, and take heed and do them.

2 The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb.

3 The Lord made this covenant not with our fathers, with us, who are all of us here alive this day.

4 The Lord spoke with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire.

5 I stood between the Lord and you at that time, to show you the word of the Lord; for you were afraid because of the fire, and went not up into the mount. He said,

6 I am the Lord your God, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

7 You shall have no other gods before Me or besides me.

8 You shall not make for yourself [to worship] a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in the heavens above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth;

9 You shall not bow down yourself to them or serve them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me,

10 And showing mercy and steadfast love to thousands and to a thousand generations of those who love Me and keep My commandments.

11 You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in falsehood or without purpose.

12 Observe the sabbath day to keep it holy, as the Lord your God commanded you.

13 Six days you shall labor and do all your work;

14 But the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son, or your daughter, or your manservant, or your maidservant, or your ox, or your donkey, or any of your livestock, or the stranger or sojourner who is within your gates, that your manservant and your maidservant may rest as well as you.

15 And (earnestly) remember that you were a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord your God commanded you to observe and take heed to the sabbath day.

16 Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God commanded you, that your days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with you in the land which the Lord your God gives you.

17 You shall not murder.

18 Neither shall you commit adultery.

19 Neither shall you act slyly or steal.

20 Neither shall you witness falsely against your neighbor.

21 Neither shall you covet your neighbor's wife, nor desire your neighbor's house, his field, his manservant, or his maidservant, his ox or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's.

COMMENT 5:1-21

This section cannot properly be appreciated without reviewing the first giving of these commandments at Sinai, as recorded in Exodus 20.

Much of what we could say by way of comment (on the ten commandments, particularly) belongs more correctly, perhaps, in a study of Exodus. However, these words have particular significance *in view of Israel's present condition and location*, (See the Introduction, II.), and it is with this in mind that the remarks below are offered.

JEHOVAH . . . MADE A COVENANT WITH US IN HOREB (v. 2)—The reference is primarily to the ten commandments, 4:12, 13. Along with these were "statutes and ordinances" (2:14, 5:1)—a more inclusive term (See Ex. 21:1). In what way was it "with us"? The previous generation of numbered Israelites had died (2:14). The covenant nevertheless applied to *all Israel*. Israel was assembled at Sinai, Israel was assembled on the plains of Moab.

JEHOVAH MADE NOT THIS COVENANT WITH OUR FATHERS (v. 3)—What fathers? Obviously, the law *had* been given to their literal fathers, for most of those now hearing Moses' words were the sons and daughters of those who had died in the wilderness. "Fathers" sometimes refers to "forefathers" in the scripture, and it could have such significance here. Moffatt and Meek translate "not with our forefathers . . ." The law given at Sinai had *not* been given to their progenitors—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.* "Fathers" *can* refer back several generations and often does in Deuteronomy. See 1:8, 4:37, 9:5, 10:22, 29:13, 30:20 (where note that the Abrahamic covenant *was* made with their "fathers"—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. That covenant was made with their forefathers; this one was not). See also such passages as Josh. 24:15 and Jn. 8:39. Moses then is saying, God made this covenant with *you* (Israel)—and not with your forefathers. You were its first recipients. See Neh. 9:13-15, and notes below.

Another explanation, however, is preferred by many. That is, to understand v. 3 to be simply saying, "Jehovah *not only* made this covenant with your own fathers, but with *us*, even *us*—we who are all here alive this very day." The covenant was, indeed, *made* with their literal fathers and mothers. "But," Moses is saying "not just with *them*. It was also made with every one of you!" The covenant was with

*This is obvious in scripture—in spite of the insistence of some that such commandments as keeping the sabbath were given long before the exodus. ". . . the sabbath was kept by Adam in his innocense in holy Eden; by Adam, fallen yet repentant, when he was driven from his happy estate. It was kept by all the patriarchs, from Abel to righteous Noah, to Abraham, to Jacob. When the chosen people were in bondage in Egypt, many, in the midst of prevailing idolatry, lost their knowledge of God's law . . ." (*The Great Controversy*, by Ellen G. White, p. 51 Pacific Press, 1944 edition.)

Israel as a nation, not just its original recipients. "He [Moses] means, Jehovah made a covenant not with our fathers only, or specially, but with us also" (McGarvey). (Clarke's rendering is almost identical.) Instructions or commandments to their fathers were instructions or commandments to *them*. So in v. 15 he could say to the *present* generation, "thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt" etc. And 6:20-24 ". . . We were Pharaoh's bondmen" etc.

JEHOVAH SPAKE WITH YOU FACE TO FACE IN THE MOUNT (v. 4)—A figurative expression for God's miraculous manifestations to Israel at Sinai (Ex. 19:9-11, 16-19; 20:18-21. Cf. Deut. 4:33, 36). No other nation had such a privilege.

NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME (v. 7)—Margin, *besides* me. *Not* no other gods ahead of me, for that infers that Jehovah God tolerates others, just so he is first. "Ye shall not make *other* gods with me; gods of silver, or gods of gold, ye shall not make unto you" (Ex. 20:23). It might be well to note here that the New Testament forbids making a god or object of worship of *anything earthly*: Philip. 3:18, 19; Col. 3:5, I Tim. 6:10, 17; I Cor. 6:12-14.

VISITING THE INIQUITY OF THE FATHERS UPON THE CHILDREN, AND UPON THE THIRD AND UPON THE FOURTH GENERATION OF THEM THAT HATE ME (v. 9)—Cf. Ex. 34:6, 7. This passage is not speaking of *final* or *eternal* guilt. It is speaking of the effect of one's sin through several generations. It was a civil law in Israel that "The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin" (24:16). Will God have a less equitable sense of justice in the final day? Our Righteous Father judges as we *should* judge—individually. This is abundantly taught in such passages as Ezek. the 18th chapter, and in the New Testament, in Matt. 16:27, II Cor. 5:10, Eph. 6:7-9, Col. 3:22-25, I Pet. 1:17, Rom. 14:10-12.

How, then do we explain the righteousness of God in such cases as his commanding Israel to execute Achan's entire family (Josh. 7:22-26), including "his sons and his daughters"? We do not know, in that case, but that his family was an accomplice in his crime. The "loot" was hidden in the family tent—rather hard to conceal!

God, however, *did* sometimes punish entire groups with death. Korah, Dathan, and Abiram were destroyed with "their wives, and their sons, and their little ones" (Num. 16:25-35). And we have just read how Israel was commanded to destroy the native tribes "with the women

and the little ones" (2:34). These latter verses, I believe, form a parallel to the passage now under consideration. Many who were destroyed in Korah's rebellion and in the extermination of the Canaanite tribes were probably *innocent* themselves—but suffered *pyhsical death* because of their parent's sin. The Canaanite tribes were being banished for their *own* evil, as well as "making way" for Israel (Gen. 15:16, and under 9:4).

We conclude that through the ages and even to the present day, children and other innocent parties may suffer physical death as a result of their parent's or other's sins. This may be the will of God. But final and eternal judgment is on a strictly individual basis, and no one will be in hell eternally who has not gone there *on their own volition*. See further under 24:16.

THOU SHALT NOT TAKE THE NAME OF JEHOVAH THY GOD IN VAIN (v. 11)—Not here a prohibition of swearing by or to Jehovah's name *per se*, but of using his honorable name with lightness, levity, or without keeping an oath made to him. See 6:13, 10:20. But Jesus taught "Swear not at all . . ." (Matt. 5:33-37), and James taught, "But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by the heaven, nor by the earth, nor by any other oath: but let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay; that ye fall not under judgment" (Jas. 5:12).

The Hebrew word for "vain" (*SHAV*) is rendered by Baumgartner's Lexicon here as meaning "name a name without reason, vainly; misuse a name," and by Gesenius' Lexicon as "specifically *falsehood, a lie*," translating here: 'utter not the name of Jehovah upon a falsehood,' do not swear falsely, compare Psalms 24:4, Isa. 1:13.

This commandment, of course, has broad and far-reaching implications relative to our use of the name of God. Adam Clarke's comment, made many years ago of conditions in Britain, is still very much in order: "Is it necessary to say to any truly spiritual mind, that all such interjections as *God! my God! good Heavens! & c., & c.*, are formal positive breaches of this law? How many pass for *Christians* are highly criminal here!"

OBSERVE THE SABBATH DAY, TO KEEP IT HOLY (v. 12)—a law that had the most severe punishment if broken, Ex. 16:29, 30; 31:14-17, 35:2, 3; Num. 15:32-36. Present day sabbath-day advocates must, of necessity, keep the sabbath *as the Bible directs*, or not keep it at all. Anything less is inconsistent. See below.

AND THOU SHALT REMEMBER THAT THOU WAST A SERVANT IN THE LAND OF EGYPT, AND JEHOVAH . . . BROUGHT THEE OUT . . . THEREFORE JEHOVAH THY GOD COMMANDED THEE TO KEEP THE SABBATH DAY (v. 15)—One of many scriptures which shows this law was only given to *Israel*. See also v. 2 and notes. The sabbath was *in commemoration of their deliverance from Egypt*. Thus, its observance by the Patriarchs (v. 2) was *impossible*—for the historical event it commemorated had not yet come to pass! Nor would its observance have any significance to *any other* nation! The sabbath was a *national* law of Israel “made known” at Sinai as an institution (Neh. 9:13, 14) and *never* observed before Exodus 16 in the wilderness of Sin. Cf. also 4:12, 13. To Israel, and Israel alone was this law given—Ex. 31:13, Ezek. 20:10-12. The word “sabbath” is not mentioned before the 16th chapter of Exodus, and it is obvious from the above phrase that no people were commanded to keep it who were not Israelites! How could the sabbath commemorate deliverance from Egypt before such a deliverance was a fact?

In Genesis 2:3, Moses, writing from somewhere in the wilderness or perhaps on these very plains of Moab, can say that “God blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it; because that in it he rested from all his work which God had created and made.” *When* was it hallowed? Some (Alexander Campbell was among them) think it was hallowed *then*—that is, at creation. But in the light of *this* verse, as well as v. 2 and what is said in Exodus, such a position becomes untenable. Genesis 2:3, we believe, is a literary prolepsis. The statement made by Moses in Genesis was written after it had become historical fact at Sinai. It was now a fact—a very recent and prominent one in Israel’s history. And Moses tells us the seventh day was chosen because God rested on that day or epoch when the world was being formed. (See C. C. Crawford’s first volume on Genesis, pp. 362-370 in this very series). The Jewish people needed to know why God chose to memorialize the seventh day of the week rather than one of the other six days. And it was to be observed as a *memorial* of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage. Crawford puts it “We have in Genesis *the reason why the particular day of the week was chosen!* We have in Deuteronomy *what the day was chosen for*, that is, what it was divinely intended to memorialize.” In regard to the phrase, “And thou shalt remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and Jehovah brought you out . . . Therefore Jehovah thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day” (v. 15). McGarvey states, “The motive presented for

keeping the sabbath, that Jehovah had delivered them from servitude in Egypt, was an appeal to their sense of gratitude. It was not given as the reason why God had sanctified the seventh day, but as a reason why *Israel should observe it*: 'therefore Jehovah thy God *commanded thee* to keep the sabbath day.' The reason why God had *hallowed* the seventh day, because in creation he had rested on the seventh day, had been given in Exodus [Ex. 20:11] and so far as it furnished a reason for keeping the sabbath, it was a reason applicable to all men. Moses, without repeating that, gives Israel a special reason why they should keep it, whether others did or not; and the reason is, gratitude to God for giving them rest from the servitude in Egypt. It was easy for every one who heard him, and who had ever heard or read the original commandment [as given at Sinai], to see that at this point he was not quoting the commandment, but adding a motive for its observance."*

And, as we have just seen, Israel was, in fact, the only *nation* divinely instructed to keep the sabbath. If others (strangers or foreigners) *joined* Israel, they, too, would be under Israel's law—the law of God. See 31:12, 13, but especially Num. 9:14, 15:14-16, 29, Lev. 24:22. This would, of course, include the keeping of the sabbath. But other nations, as such, were never given the sabbath. *They could not commemorate a miraculous deliverance from Egypt*, as Israel could.

No other nation had been dealt with as Israel had; no one been given the laws he had been given. See 4:7, 8; 32-39, II Sam. 7:23, I Chron. 17:21.

"He sheweth his word unto Jacob,
His statutes and his ordinances unto Israel.
He hath not dealt so with any nation:
And as for his ordinances, they have not known them.
Praise ye Jehovah.

—Psalms 147:19, 20

"So I caused them to go forth out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness . . . Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am Jehovah that sanctifieth them" (Ezek. 20:10, 12).

HONOR THY FATHER AND THY MOTHER (v. 16)—Cf. Eph. 6:2. "Honor" (Hebrew, *kabad*) literally signifies *heavy* or *weighty*—i.e., their parents were not to be regarded *lightly*, *carelessly*, or with indifference. Rather, proper respect, reverence, thoughtfulness, and obed-

*Authorship of Deuteronomy, pp. 80, 81.

ience should be rendered them. This law carried with it the severest punishment if broken—21:18-21; 27:16, Ex. 21:15, 17; Lev. 20:9. Let us, as Christians, not forget that the Son of God was in subjection to his earthly parents as a child, Luke 2:51.

Today, more perhaps than any other time in all the history of the western world, parents are not honored. Rather, there is disrespect, back-talk, scowls, sneers and contradiction. But what is being done about it by the *parents themselves*? By their *own* lives and conduct, they frequently encourage rebellion and disrespect! When there is no regular teaching in the home, (both by *word* and by *example*) and when parents so flaunt the law of Christ *themselves*, how can they expect respect, reverence, and obedience from their children? As the homes go, so goes the nation. Disrespect of parents becomes, in the minds of a youngster, the spawning ground for disrespect in *all* walks of life—of school teachers, law enforcement officers, Christian leaders, and, worst of all, of Christ and his word.

Before leaving the ten commandments, we must ask the question, what is a *Christian's* relationship to this covenant? In what way or manner are these laws binding on the child of God today? What is his responsibility to them? Is he bound to some, and not bound to others?

The answer is simply this: We are no longer bound *in covenant relationship* to ANY of the Mosaic law—including the ten commandments. This law was given to Israel *alone* (v. 3, 15) and the covenant was between God and that nation only. This answer may come as a shock to many, but it is plainly taught in the New Covenant scriptures.

Jesus taught that he came to fulfill the law and the prophets, and that "Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished" (Matt. 5:17-19). "I came not to destroy, but to fulfill." What does that mean to you? Christ was the very *essence* of the Mosaic dispensation, keeping the law perfectly—the only one who ever did. He lived and died under that economy. How, then, could he say he came to "destroy" it? He came to bring it to its *culmination*, to *completion*, and hence to its termination! "I did not come to abolish but to complete . . ." (Berkeley). Thus, Jesus taught that *while he was yet alive* the law (including the ten commandments) should be *kept*. Note Luke 10:25-28, where loving God (Deut. 6:5) and your neighbor (Lev. 19:18) are both cited as a part of "the law." (In fact, "On these two commandments the whole law hangeth, and the prophets" [Matt. 22:40]—

i.e., love for God and one's neighbor was at the *center* and *core* of *all* the writings in the law and prophets.)

Again, in another instance, a certain ruler asked him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus' answer was a reference to the ten commandments as well as an exhortation to sell all he had, distribute it to the poor, and follow Christ (Luke 18:18-22).

Jesus' teachings (whether promulgated by himself or his inspired apostles) were being spread while he lived. But his new covenant could not be officially binding on all mankind until after his death, "For where a testament is, there must of necessity be the death of him that made it. For a testament is of force where there hath been death: for it doth never avail while he that made it liveth" (Heb. 9:16, 17). The new covenant is not some kind of hodge-podge combination of Old Testament and New. Not at all. To think of it as such is only to confuse and befuddle the mind. Rather, it is a BRAND NEW covenant, and it is only *binding* as a testament between us and its testator. It has certain stipulations and demands to qualify for its promised rewards—*these* must be met. "... he [Christ] is the mediator of a NEW covenant" (Heb. 9:15). Trying to mix or combine our covenant responsibilities is like putting a piece of undressed cloth [not shrunk] upon an old garment, or putting new wine in old wineskins. So taught Jesus, himself, Matt. 9:16, 17. Yet this is the very position (and an *awkward* position it is!) that those who propose to keep the decalogue today find themselves. The law, of course, must be kept *as given by God*, or not kept at all. Let us suppose, then, that we were to keep the sabbath, the seventh day, as specified in the law of Moses. ("... the law is good, if a man use it lawfully," I Tim. 1:8). Here are a few things that we would have to keep in mind:

1. Not to boil or bake (Ex. 16:23)
2. No fires to be built (Ex. 35:3) (A rather difficult command to keep in cold or Arctic climates! But *not* impossible for Israel to keep.)
3. Two male lambs, a year old, to be offered (Num. 28:9)
4. A meal-offering and drink-offering to be given (Num. 28:9, 10)
5. Not to pick up sticks. Those doing so to be stoned to death (Num. 15:32-36)
6. "... the seventh day there shall be to you a holy day, a sabbath of solemn rest unto Jehovah: whosoever doeth ANY work therein shall be put to death" (Ex. 35:2). "... in it thou shalt not

do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates" (Ex. 20:10).

7. Must be kept according to Jewish time (sunset Friday to sunset Saturday). How would our brethren in Fairbanks, Alaska keep this law in mid-summer? The sun doesn't go down! *Israel*, to whom this law was exclusively given, would not be faced with such a problem.

8. Death penalty for profaning the sabbath (Ex. 31:14). (I have yet to witness a blackslidden or careless sabbath-keeper executed or punished in the manner specified. Yet the very law that teaches sabbath observance also teaches that those who defile it must be put to death). Is it the duty of Christians to put to death those who "desecrate" the seventh day? If yes, who will be the public executioner? Shall it be by stoning, as commanded in the law? If no, what do we do with the law just cited (Ex. 35:2)?

9. The weekly sabbath is not the only sabbath to be kept, but also the sabbath of the seventh year, and the year of Jubilee (Lev. 25:1-22). If Christians are required to keep the weekly sabbath as *Israel* did, why are they not also required to keep *these* "sabbaths"? By what authority do we keep the law in one instance and relegate it to obscurity in another?

No, the sabbath, and all old-covenant laws are *done away* in Christ. Read carefully II Cor. 3:1-18, Col. 2:13-17, Gal. 3:7-14, 23-27; 5:1-4. Christ was the perfect essence, the very embodiment of the law itself, and his death signified the death of the law.

When Christ was alive, he could say to one, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," or to another, "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." But when he died, his new covenant was sealed—ratified by his own blood. Now, if we are to be the beneficiaries of his "last will and testament," we must comply with its stipulations.

Some one will now ask, but are we not bound to keep such commands as "Thou shalt not kill," etc. The answer is still no—not as a covenant. I do not kill, not because the Old Testament forbids it, but because *Christ* forbids, not only killing, but its source, hate. We have in the New Covenant a higher standard all the way through:

Mosaic Law

1. No other gods before me

New Covenant

"... there is no God but one" (I Cor. 8:4) "... to us there is one God, the Father, of whom all things, and we unto him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 8:6)

Mosaic Law

New Covenant

2. No graven image

"My little children, guard yourselves from idols" (I Jn. 5:21)
 "Neither be ye idolators" (I Cor. 10:7) "flee from idolatry" (I Cor. 10:14) See also Rom. 1:21-23, Col. 3:5

3. Not take the name of Jehovah thy God in vain

"Swear not at all" (Matt. 5:34)
 "Let your speech be Yea, yea; Nay, nay: and whatsoever is more than these is of the evil one" (Matt. 5:37) "... every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment" (Matt. 12:36)

4. Observe the sabbath day

"There remaineth therefore a sabbath rest [heaven] for the people of God (Heb. 4:9) (Sunday, "the Lord's day" of Rev. 1:10 is not commanded to be a day of rest, but is a day of worship: Acts 20:7, I Cor. 16:1, 2.)

5. Honor thy father and mother

"Honor thy father and mother" (Eph. 6:2) "let them learn first to show piety towards their own family, and to requite their parents" (I Tim. 5:4)

6. Thou shalt not kill

"... every one who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; and whosoever shall say Thou fool, shall be in danger of the hell of fire" (Matt. 5:22) "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him" (I Jn. 3:15)

Mosaic Law

New Covenant

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7. Not commit adultery | "... every one that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matt. 5:28) "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are <i>these</i> : fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness . . ." (Gal. 5:19) "... <i>men</i> that count it pleasure to revel in the daytime, spots and blemishes . . . having eyes full of adultery" (II Pet. 2:13, 14) |
| 8. Not steal | "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have whereof to give to him that hath need" (Eph. 4:28) |
| 9. Not bear false witness against thy neighbor | "Wherefore, putting away falsehood, speak ye truth each one with his neighbor" (Eph. 4:25). "... lie not one to another . . ." (Col. 3:9) |
| 10. Not covet | "Put to death . . . covetousness, which is idolatry" (Col. 3:5). "But godliness with contentment is great gain . . . having food and covering we shall be therewith content" (I Tim. 6:8) |

We could, of course, extend the New Testament list considerably; but the above references are sufficient to illustrate the point: By observing the *new* covenant, (whose standards are always higher) the old law is no longer *observed as a covenant*.

Why then study the Old Testament? I Cor. 10:11, Rom. 15:4, and II Tim. 3:16 have the answer. Inasmuch as the Mosaic law supplied God's *will* to God's *people* of a past age, there is much there for learning, instruction, comfort, and example, for us. And one can continually ask himself, "Are my standards *as high* as these standards

God's people had under the OLD covenant? (A good test on this one is found in Deut. 6:4 and Lev. 19:18). Further, *much* in the old (both by way of *type* and *prophecy*) foretells the new. "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of the feast day or a new moon or a sabbath day: which are a shadow of the things to come; but the body is Christ's" (Col. 2:16, 17). See also Heb. 8.

b. ISRAEL'S REACTION: FEAR AND DEVOTION (5:22-27)

22 These words Jehovah spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice: and he added no more. And he wrote them upon two tables of stone, and gave them unto me. 23 And it came to pass, when ye heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire, that ye came near unto me, even all the heads of your tribes, and your elders: 24 and ye said, Behold, Jehovah our God hath showed us his glory and his greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire: we have seen this day that God doth speak with man, and he liveth, 25 Now therefore why should we die? for this great fire will consume us: if we hear the voice of Jehovah our God any more, then we shall die. 26 For who is there of all flesh, that hath heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived? 27 Go thou near, and hear all that Jehovah our God shall say: and speak thou unto us all that Jehovah our God shall speak unto thee: and we will hear it, and do it.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 5:22-27

120. Who wrote the words on the two tablets of stone?
121. Did God speak the ten commandments to the people before they were written?
122. Why did God use fire, smoke, earthquake, darkness in manifesting Himself to Israel? Is there an example in this for us today?
123. Why speak of dying, as in verses 25, 26?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 5:22-27

22 These words the Lord spoke to all your assembly at the mountain out of the midst of the fire, the cloud, and the thick darkness, with a loud voice; and He spoke not again—added no more. He wrote them on two tables of stone, and gave them to me [Moses].

23 And when you heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire, you came near me, all the heads of your tribes, and your elders;

24 And you said, Behold, the Lord our God has shown us His glory and His greatness, and we have heard His voice out of the midst of the fire; we have this day seen that God speaks with man and man still lives.

25 Now therefore why should we die? For this great fire will consume us; if we hear the voice of the Lord our God any more, we shall die.

26 For who is there of all flesh, who has heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of fire, as we have, and lived?

27 Go near [Moses], and hear all that the Lord our God will say and speak to us all that the Lord our God will speak to you; and we will hear and do it.

COMMENT 5:22-27

THESE WORDS JEHOVAH SPAKE UNTO ALL YOUR ASSEMBLY (v. 22)—It appears God *spoke* the words of the Decalogue to the congregation before they were engraven on the tables of stone. Hence their fear (v. 23, 29).

AND HE WROTE THEM UPON TWO TABLES OF STONE, AND GAVE THEM UNTO ME (v. 22)—God is said to have written the ten commandments in both instances (4:13, 10:1-4). See also Ex. 31:18, 32:15, 16 (first set). Compare Ex. 34:1 (second set—hewed out by Moses). But so is Moses: Ex. 24:4, 34:27, 28. Our conclusion is, that what God instructed Moses to write, he *did* write—He wrote precisely and exactly what he was *told* to. Thus the first tablets were said to have been written "by the finger of God" even though Moses did the writing. Regarding the statements of God writing and Moses writing, Francisco states, "How is this to be interpreted? Do the statements contradict one another? Not if it is seen that when Moses wrote, it was just as if God was writing it with his own finger. Moses wrote the Decalogue word for word as God dictated it. It has been delivered by Moses just as it came from God."

Others would explain the passages concerning the writing and engraving thus: *God* wrote the ten commandments, *Moses* wrote the words in "the book of the covenant" (Ex. 24:7) and other laws and ordinances. But Ex. 34:28 specifically tells us *Moses* wrote the ten

commandments upon the tables of stone—unless the “he” refers to God in that passage. Rotherham translates that scripture “and He [God] wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten words.” The Newberry Study Bible also refers the “he” to Jehovah, citing Deut. 10:4. If the latter translations are accurate, it would erase the difficulty. But whether God wrote *with* or *without* human instrumentality, his writings nevertheless represent his *will*.

NOW THEREFORE WHY SHOULD WE DIE (v. 25)—Such an overwhelming demonstration (fire, quaking of the mountain, God's own voice speaking) they supposed to mean death. There was apparently a widely held view in Israel that any such revelation of God's glory and might meant death to the observers.

c. GOD'S RESPONSE: DELIGHTED APPROVAL (5:28-31)

28 And Jehovah heard the voice of your words, when ye spake unto me; and Jehovah said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee; they have well said all that they have spoken. 29 Oh that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever! 30 Go say to them, Return ye to your tents. 31 But as for thee, stand thou here by me, and I will speak unto thee all the commandment, and the statutes, and the ordinances, which thou shalt teach them, that they may do them in the land which I give them to possess it.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 5:28-31

124. Mark verse 28: God hears us when we speak to one another.
125. Note the wonderful concern and compassion of our wonderful heavenly Father as indicated in verse 29. In what sense does fear prompt obedience?
126. Read Exodus chapters 21-23 for the commandments, statutes and ordinances God spoke to Moses.

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 5:28-31

28 And the Lord heard your words, when you spoke to me; and the Lord said to me, I have heard the words of this people, which they have spoken to you; they have well said all that they have spoken.

29 O that they had such a [mind and] heart in them always, (reverently) to fear Me, and keep all My commandments, that it might go well with them, and with their children for ever!

30 Go and say to them, Return to your tents.

31 But you [Moses], stand here by Me, and I will tell you all the commandments and the statutes and the precepts which you shall teach them, that they may do them in the land which I give them to possess.

COMMENT 5:28-31

OH THAT THERE WERE SUCH A HEART IN THEM, THAT THEY WOULD FEAR ME, AND KEEP ALL MY COMMANDMENTS ALWAYS, THAT IT MIGHT BE WELL WITH THEM, AND THEIR CHILDREN FOREVER (v. 29)—Have you ever heard a more beautiful outburst from the heart of God? Every command God gives is for OUR OWN GOOD—"for our good always" (6:24). And even if he proves and tries us, it is "to do thee good in thy latter end" (8:16). See Ps. 34:12-16, Jas. 3:10-13.

d. PURPOSES OF OBSERVING THE LAW: (5:32—6:3)

Notice these purposes as you read the verses below:

- (1) to live
- (2) to live well
- (3) to live long
- (4) to multiply

32 Ye shall observe to do therefore as Jehovah your God hath commanded you: ye shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. 33 Ye shall walk in all the way which Jehovah your God hath commanded you, that ye may live, and that it may be well with you, and that ye may prolong your days in the land which ye shall possess.

Now this is the commandment, the statutes, and the ordinances, which Jehovah your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over to possess it; 2 that thou mightest fear Jehovah thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged. 3 Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as Jehovah, the God of thy fathers, hath promised unto thee, in a land flowing with milk and honey.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 5:32—6:3

127. The command of verse 32 presupposes several things: (1) A personal knowledge of the law, (2) A personal desire to obey the

law, (3) Those who would teach the law. Were these factors always present? If not who was to blame?

128. Physical life and material prosperity are here associated with obedience to the law. Is this true today? Discuss.
129. Someone said, "Democracy is the by-product of Christianity." Discuss the prosperity and danger of America as compared with Israel.

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 5:32—6:3

32 Therefore you people shall be watchful to do as the Lord your God has commanded you; you shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.

33. You shall walk in all the way which the Lord your God has commanded you, that you may live, and that it may go well with you, and that you may live long in the land which you shall possess.

CHAPTER 6

Now this is the instruction, the laws, and the precepts, which the Lord your God commanded me to teach you, that you might do them in the land to which you go to possess it;

2. That you may (reverently) fear the Lord your God, you and your son and your son's son, and keep all His statutes and His commandments, which I command you, all the days of your life; and that your days may be prolonged.

3 Hear therefore, O Israel, and be watchful to do them; that it may be well with you, and that you may increase exceedingly as the Lord God of your fathers has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey.

COMMENT 5:32—6-3

THAT YE MAY LIVE, etc. (v. 33)—Note the similarity to v. 16 and Eph. 6:3. One cannot but be impressed time and again in this book that God promises happiness and joy to his children *if they will be obedient*. Afflictions and difficulties they might have on this earth (as Job did) but the promise contained here would still be theirs if they would not turn away from their God.

Material prosperity formed a large part of Israel's promised blessing. "The Israel of God" today, his church (Gal. 6:16) is also a "land flowing with milk and honey"—the great *spiritual* and *eternal* blessings of Christ! Every true member of the church inherits far *more* than the

blessings enumerated here. The *least* one in Christ's kingdom has more for which to be grateful than the *greatest* of those living under the Mosaic covenant (Matt. 11:11).

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER FIVE

God's covenant with the people in Horeb, 1-4. Moses the mediator of it, 5. A repetition of the ten commandments, 6-21; which God wrote on two tables of stone, 22. The people are filled with dread at the terrible majesty of God, 23-26; and beseech Moses to be their mediator, 27. The Lord admits of their request, 28; and deploras their ungodliness, 29. They are exhorted to obedience, that they may be preserved in the possession of the promised land, 30-33.

QUESTIONS, LESSON FIVE (4:44—6:3)

1. Discuss "Jehovah made not this covenant with our fathers (5:3). What conclusions can you draw?"
2. How did God "visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children" (v. 9)? Were children guilty because parents sinned?
3. What, exactly, is the prohibition of the 3rd commandment, "Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah thy God in vain"?
4. Show from scripture that the sabbath was a *national* law, given only to Israel.
5. Show how no present-day religious group keeps the sabbath *as it was given to Israel*.
6. Where and how many times is the *sabbath* mentioned in the book of Genesis? Record the instances where Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob observed the sabbath.
7. If Jesus kept the sabbath, why shouldn't we?
8. How many of the ten commandments are now binding? Explain.
9. If the old covenant is done away in Christ, why study it?
10. What blessings are promised for Israel's obedience?

LESSON SIX 6:4-25

2. LOVE TO BE THE MOTIVE FOR OBSERVANCE— THE "SHEMA" (6:4-9)

4 Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah: 5 and thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. 6 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thy heart; 7 and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. 8 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be for frontlets between thine eyes. 9 And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thy house, and upon thy gates.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 6:4-9

130. These verses are so very important to the orthodox Jew. Why? How important are they to us?
131. Our love for God is inseparately associated with the word of God. Discuss and demonstrate the connection.
132. What distinction is there between the words, "heart", "soul" and "might"?
133. The manner of teaching our children is so very important. Use two or three synonyms for the word "diligently."
134. Why is the subject of the will and word of God so seldom on the lips of most of us?
135. Here are four occasions for discussing the scriptures: (1) In your house instead of TV, (2) Riding in the car instead of the radio, (3) In bed instead of the magazine, (4) At breakfast instead of the newspaper.
136. What was in "the sign upon thy hand" and in "frontlets between thine eyes"?
137. How shall we use these "visual-aids" for our observance of God's law? What about the use of scripture mottos and plaques? Or is this the meaning?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 6:4-9

4 Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord—the only Lord.

5 And you shall love the Lord your God with all your (mind and) heart, and with your entire being, and with all your might.

6 And these words, which I am commanding you this day, shall be [first] in your *own* mind *and* heart; [then]

7 You shall whet *and* sharpen them, so as to make them penetrate, *and* teach *and* impress them diligently upon the minds (and hearts) of your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down and when you rise up.

8. And you shall bind them as a sign upon your hand, and they shall be as frontlets (forehead bands) between your eyes.

9. And you shall write them upon the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

COMMENT 6:4-9

Surely this passage will show that God's word was to *dominate* and *pervade* their lives. *If we truly love him*, this will be the case *today* as well as then. It also shows how, even in the Old Testament, God desired that his laws be kept out of a heart of love for him. Surely he cannot expect less in the New Covenant! These verses, recited by the Jews as a confession or reiteration of their faith, are called the *Shema*—the Hebrew word for the first word, *hear*, as it occurs here in the imperative. This is the first passage of scripture taught to Jewish children, and is recited by the orthodox every morning and evening.

It is to be a deep, moving, all-consuming, whole-souled love for God that prompts Israel to keep his commandments and communicate them to their children.

HEAR, O ISRAEL: JEHOVAH OUR GOD IS ONE JEHOVAH (v. 4)—This is also the exact rendering of Young's Literal Translation, and the only case we are aware of where the American Standard Version gives *three* alternative translations as follows: "Jehovah our God, Jehovah is one" or "Jehovah is our God, Jehovah is one" or "Jehovah is our God, Jehovah alone". We could multiply translations beyond this, but most are similar to *one* of those above! Whichever one is correct, the idea of ONE GOD (monotheism) is obviously in this phrase. There is, was, always will be only *one true God*. See 4:35,39; Eph. 4:6, I Tim. 2:5, I Cor. 8:4.

If there is just one God over heaven and earth, WHAT THEN? If he is the creator of the world, the maker and sustainer of all, what then? If "there is none else besides", and the whole universe sings out his glory, what should we do? WE SHOULD LOVE HIM WITH ALL THY HEART, AND WITH ALL THY SOUL, AND WITH ALL THY MIGHT (v. 5)—See also 30:5,6; 4:29, 10:12. If this was part and parcel of the Mosaic law, how much

more should love prompt our service under *Christ*? And in Lev. 19:18 Israel was told "... thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself". Both of these passages were referred to by Christ himself in Matt. 22:34-40. Note the preeminence he gives them. Verse 5 (above) he calls "the great and first commandment," (Mark: "There is none other commandment greater than these") and the Leviticus passage is "a second like *unto* it". "On these two commandments the whole law hangeth, and the prophets"—i.e., loving God supremely and your neighbor as yourself was the proper basis for the keeping of all Old Testament commands. They were given from a God of love—they were to be observed from the *same motive*! If these two laws were observed as they *should* have been, Jesus could say, "This do, and thou shalt live" (Luke 10:28). But if these two BASIC laws were neglected, the observance of others would become a hollow form! Friend, if that was true under the law (and it was!), it is *overwhelmingly* true under the covenant of Christ. Jesus and his apostles taught that our love for him and others must be the basis of all our acts as Christians: Jn. 14:15,23; I Cor. 13 (all), 10:24, 16:14; Col. 3:14, I Pet. 1:22, I Jn. 2:10,11; 4:8,16; 5:2, etc.

3. TEACHING THE LAW (6:7-9; 20-25)

20 When thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What mean the testimonies, and the statutes, and the ordinances, which Jehovah our God^h hath commanded you? 21 then thou shalt say unto thy son, We were Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt: and Jehovah brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand; 22 and Jehovah showed signs and wonders, great and sore, upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his house, before our eyes; 23 and he brought us out from thence, that he might bring us in, to give us the land which he sware unto our fathers. 24 And Jehovah commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear Jehovah our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as at this day. 25 And it shall be righteousness unto us, if we observe to do all this commandment before Jehovah our God, as he hath commanded us.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 6:20-25

138. Read Psalms 119:97; 148 and examine your love for His law.
139. Why emphasize the deliverance from Egyptian bondage?
140. What relation did the signs and wonders have to the truthfulness of God's word?
141. Please notice the purpose of the law of God as stated in verse 24.
142. How does Satan use the law of God to slay us? Cf. Romans 7:7-9.

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 6:20-25

20 When your son asks you in time to come, What is the meaning of the testimonies and statutes and precepts, which the Lord our God has commanded you?

21 Then you shall say to your son, We were Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt, and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand;

22 And the Lord showed signs and wonders, great and evil, against Egypt, against Pharaoh and all his household, before our eyes;

23 And He brought us out from there, that He might bring us in, to give us the land which He swore to give our fathers.

24 And the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes, to (reverently) fear the Lord our God, for our good always, that He might preserve us alive, as at this day.

25 And it will be accounted as righteousness [conformity to God's will in word, thought, and action] for us, if we are watchful to do all this commandment before the Lord our God, as He has commanded us.

COMMENT 6:20-25

ALL THESE WORDS, WHICH I COMMAND THEE THIS DAY, SHALL BE UPON THY HEART (v. 6) See also 11:18—i.e. shall be the express object of meditation and thought (See Josh. 1:8). David, perhaps more than any other Old Testament character, caught the essence of this command. He could say,

Oh how I love thy law!

It is my meditation all the day.

(Ps. 119:97)

Mine eyes anticipated the night watches,

That I might meditate on thy word.

(Ps. 119:148)

And their children were to grow up tutored and continually exhorted from the pages of God's Book:

AND THOU SHALT TEACH THEM DILIGENTLY UNTO THY CHILDREN, AND SHALT TALK OF THEM WHEN THOU SITTEST IN THY HOUSE, AND WHEN THOU WALKEST BY THE WAY, AND WHEN THOU LIEST DOWN, AND WHEN THOU RISEST UP (v. 7)—That is, be teaching and applying the word of God to your children continually. Let them not for a moment forget their responsibility toward the Lord, his word, and his work. Today,

it is certainly needful that we have "family altars"—a time when the family gathers together specifically for prayer, praise, and study. But these words would take us far beyond *that* phase of teaching. They take us to the *daily life* of the family! How many hundreds of times throughout a child's life does a parent have opportunity to show him how God's word applies to this case or that, why it teaches this, how it condemns that, how God's work is seen in nature, etc., etc.

I feel compelled, here, to insert the pointed and worthy remarks of Adam Clarke on this important subject:

"If a man know the worth of his own soul, he will feel the importance of the salvation of the souls of his family. Those who neglect *family religion* neglect *personal religion*; if more attention were paid to the former, even among those called religious people, we should soon have a better state of civil society. On *family religion* God lays much stress; and no head of a family can neglect it without endangering the final salvation of his own soul." (pp. 747, 748)

"A most injurious and destructive maxim has lately [and still is!] advanced by a few individuals . . . though the authors affect to be thought *Christians* and *rational* ones, too; the sum of the maxim is this: 'Children ought not to be taught religion for fear of having their minds biased to some particular creed, but they should be left to themselves till they are capable of making a *choice*, and *choose* to make one.' This maxim is in flat opposition to the command of God, and those who teach it show how little they are affected by the religion they profess. If they felt it to be good for any thing, they would certainly wish their children to possess it; but they do not teach religion to their children because they feel it to be of no use to themselves . . . But what can be said to those parents who, possessing a better faith, equally neglect the instruction of their children in the things of God! They are highly criminal; and if their children perish through neglect, which is very probable, what a dreadful account must they give in the great day! PARENTS! Hear what the Lord saith unto *you*: Ye must diligently teach your children that there is one Lord, *Jehovah, Elohim*; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: and that they must love him with all their heart, and with all their soul, and with all their might. And as children are heedless, apt to forget, liable to be carried away by sensible things, repeat and re-peat the instruction, and add line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, carefully studying *time, place, and circumstances*, that your labour be not in vain: show it in its amiableness, excite *attention* by exciting interest; show how good,

how useful, how blessed, how ennobling, how glorious it is. *Whet* these things on their hearts till the keenest edge is raised on the strongest desire, till they can say, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth I desire besides thee!" [Ps. 73:25]"—p. 757.

AND THOU SHALT BIND THEM FOR A SIGN UPON THY HAND, AND THEY SHALL BE FOR FRONTLETS BETWEEN THY EYES. AND THOU SHALT WRITE THEM UPON THE DOOR-POSTS OF THY HOUSE, AND UPON THY GATES (vv. 9,10)—That is, every available means must be employed that the law of God might be firmly and indelibly impressed upon the mind. (And note here that *adults*, and not just children are now being addressed). The word of God was to be *continually before them*—both in the *mind's* eye and the *literal* eye. Lange, noting that the expressions of this verse are "precisely in accordance with oriental usage," states: "*to bind them upon thy hand* is to keep them *for a sign* for thy conduct, as over to be regarded, and which must determine the manner of action. The brow, *between the eyes*, represents the chamber of thought, is as the door to the intellectual nature of man . . . The commandments, as frontlets or browbands, become therefore a badge or confession by which one may be known, and embrace the private life . . ."

SIGN UPON THY HAND (v. 8)—The Hebrew word (OTH) is defined by Gesenius as "*a sign . . . [and specifically here] a sign of something past, which serves to keep it in memory, Ex. 13:9,16; Deut. 6:8 . . .*" Baumgartner has "sign: . . . reminding token."

FRONTLETS BETWEEN THINE EYES (v. 8)—The Hebrew word TOTAPHOTH signifies "bands, fillets" (Gesenius); "appendage, phylacteries, mark" (Baumgartner).

It is the belief of this writer that the two above phrases were not necessarily intended to be literal—i.e. God did not mean that the scripture should be printed on the hands or inscribed between the eyes. The idea of the command was that they were to be continually *reminded* of God's law. (Of course, in *carrying out* the command, it might be necessary to write the law in *many places*). In Exodus 13:9, with reference to the Passover feast, God said, "and it shall be for a sign [Heb. *oth*] unto thee upon thy hand, and for a memorial [Heb. *zikkaron*, memorial, reminder, remembrance] between thine eyes, that the law of Jehovah may be in the mouth: for with a strong hand hath Jehovah brought thee out of Egypt." I do not understand this to mean "PASSOVER" or any other such words were to be printed on the hand or between the eyes, anymore than

a parchment containing the law was to be in the mouth. Rather, the feast itself was to *be* a memorial firmly planted in the memory. Continuing in Exodus, with reference to the consecration of the first-born, we are told in 13:16 "And it shall be for a sign [Heb., *oth*] upon thy hand, and for frontlets Heb. [*totapheth*] between thine eyes: for by strength of hand Jehovah brought us forth out of Egypt." Note how the latter passage is strikingly similar to that above, with the same Hebrew words for *sign* and *frontlets*. Thus the *fact itself* of the *word of God* being constantly and continually in the mind, heart, and memory, (and, of course, proceeding also from the mouth) causes it to be as it were, a token in the hand and a symbol on the forehead to all who know us.

In process of time, however, the spirit and purpose of the above law was lost in the letter, and even though the word was not in their mouth, nor the law in their *heart*, they had their phylacteries on their *heads* and on their *hands*. And the Pharisees, who in the days of Christ put on a great show of sanctimonious piety, made their phylacteries very broad "to be seen of men" (Matt. 23:5). The *intent* and *purpose* of this law had been totally bypassed for the letter. *Reminders* (of the kind mentioned here) or otherwise, were in order. But, like the command to have fringes on their garments (Num. 15:37-41, Deut. 22:12, Cf. Matt. 23:5) as reminders, the Jews degenerated into enlarging them "to be seen of men." Such phylacteries as shown below were thus worn—far more elaborate than either the spirit or the letter of this law would endorse.

I.S.B.E. states, "It is evident that the words in Exodus are beyond all question, used *figuratively*; a careful reading of the verses in Deuteronomy in close connection with their contexts [we have the same phrase in 11:18], in which are other figures of speech not to be taken literally, is sufficient proof of their purely figurative intention also. Only the formalism of later ages could distort these figures into the gross and materialistic practice of the phylactery. Just when this practice began cannot accurately be determined. While the Talmud attempts to trace it back to the primitive, even Mosaic times, it probably did not long antedate the birth of Christ. In conservative Jewish circles it has been maintained through the centuries, and at present is faithfully followed by orthodox Judaism."

4. GOD NOT TO BE FORGOTTEN (6:10-15)

10 And it shall be, when Jehovah thy God shall bring thee into the land which he swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee, great and goodly cities, which thou buildest not, 11 and

houses full of all good things, which thou filledst not, and cisterns hewn out, which thou hewedst not, vineyards and olive-trees, which thou plantedst not, and thou shalt eat and be full; 12 then beware lest thou forget Jehovah, who brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. 13 Thou shalt fear Jehovah thy God; and him shalt thou serve, and shalt swear by his name. 14 Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the peoples that are round about you; 15 for Jehovah thy God in the midst of thee is a jealous God; lest the anger of Jehovah thy God be kindled against thee, and he destroy thee from off the face of the earth.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 6:10-15

143. Please notice the progress: Egypt—Deliverance—Miracles—Canaan, east—Conquest—Canaan, west. Always in every state the present tense is used; by faith it has already happened! What lesson is there in this for us? Not "if", but "when"!
144. We are in a land (U. S. A.) of great and good cities which we (our generation) builded not, houses full of good things which we did not fill, etc. The temptation and sin of Israel is ours; what is it?
145. What is meant in verse 13 "thou shalt swear by His name."
146. If God does not seem near to us or "in the midst of us," what has happened?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 6:10-15

10 And when the Lord your God brings you into the land which He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give you, with great and goodly cities, which you did not build,

11 And houses full of all good things, which you did not fill, and cisterns hewn out, which you did not hew, and vineyards and olive trees, which you did not plant and when you eat and are full,

12 Then beware lest you forget the Lord, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

13 You shall (reverently) fear the Lord your God, and serve Him, and swear by His name [and presence]

14 You shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the peoples who are round about you;

15 For the Lord your God in the midst of you is a jealous God; lest the anger of the Lord your God be kindled against you, and He destroy you from off the face of the earth.

COMMENT 6:10-15

See also 8:11-18. Prosperity and abundance would tempt Israel away from their God. What more could they ask for than *great* and *good* cities which they did not build, *houses full of good things*, which they had not filled. Cisterns, laboriously hewn out of rock ["cisterns cut in stone"—Gesenius]—that they simply took over. Beautiful vineyards and olive groves—already flourishing—were soon literally, given to them by God. But they were no more than in the land, than they began to forget and forsake the very God whose hand had given it all!

How often in life have we, figuratively speaking, also inherited cities which we did not build, cisterns we did not hew out, houses full of all good things which we did not build or fill, vineyards and olive groves which we neither planted or cultivated—just harvested! In short, we, as God's children, have inherited a great host of spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ—blessings we did not earn and do not merit in any way! "For by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, that no man should glory" (Eph. 2:8,9). But because of this very fact, "BEWARE LEST THOU FORGET JEHOVAH," for he has brought us also "out of the house of bondage" (v. 12)—the bondage of sin (Rom. 6:14-18, 22,23). May we not forget our redemption or Redeemer!

SHALT SWEAR BY HIS NAME (v. 13)—See under 5:11)

5. GOD NOT TO BE TEMPTED (6:16-19)

16 Ye shall not tempt Jehovah your God, as ye tempted him in Massah. 17 Ye shall diligently keep the commandments of Jehovah your God, and his testimonies, and his statutes, which he hath commanded thee. 18 And thou shalt do that which is right and good in the sight of Jehovah; that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest go in and possess the good land which Jehovah sware unto thy fathers, 19 to thrust out all thine enemies from before thee, as Jehovah hath spoken.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 6:16-19

147. Didn't Gideon tempt God with God's approval? Cf. Judges 6:36-40. Explain.
148. Read Exodus 17:1-7 to understand the word "Massah."
149. There seems to be some distinction between "commandments" and the "testimonies and statutes" is there? Discuss.

150. Is "right and good" always exciting and interesting? Can it be? How? Why not?
151. How did certain men become the enemies of both Jehovah and Israel? Irrevocably so?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 6:16-19

16 You shall not tempt *and* try the Lord your God, as you tempted *and* tried Him in Massah. [Exod. 17:7.]

17 You shall diligently keep the commandments of the Lord your God, and His exhortations, and His statutes, which He commanded you.

18 And you shall do what is right and good in the sight of the Lord, that it may go well with you, and that you may go in and possess the good land which the Lord swore to give to your fathers,

19 To cast out all your enemies from before you, as the Lord has promised.

COMMENT 6:16-19

YE SHALL NOT TEMPT JEHOVAH (v. 16)—The Hebrew word *Nasab* means "to try, to prove or tempt God when they doubt as to his power and aid, Ex. 17:2, 7; Deut. 6:16; Ps. 78:18, 41, 56; Isa. 17:12, 'I will not ask, neither will I tempt Jehovah'"—Gesenius. So in I Cor. 10:9 we have, "Neither let us make trial (*ekpeirazomen*) of the Lord, as some of them made trial, and perished by the serpents." See how Christ used the above phrase in Matt. 4:5-7.

AS YE TEMPTED HIM IN MASSAH (v. 16)—As recorded in Exodus 17:1-7. "Massah" is Hebrew for *temptation, trials* (*Gesenius*) or, *tempting, proving* (Margin, Ex. 17:7). It was so called "because they tempted Jehovah, saying, Is Jehovah among us, or not?"

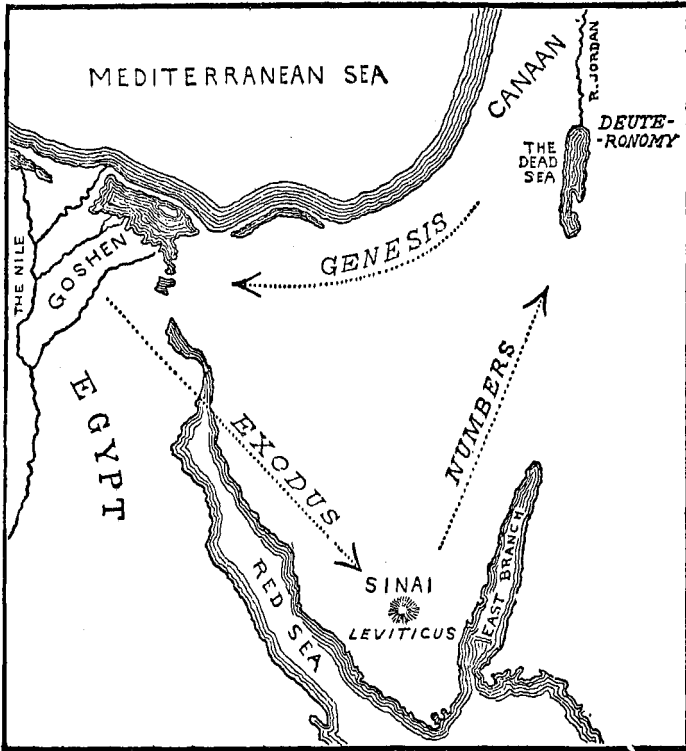
SUMMARY OF CHAPTER SIX

The great design of God in giving his laws is, that the people may fear and obey him, that they may continue in peace and prosperity, and be mightily increased, 1-3. The great commandment of the law, 4, 5, which shall be laid up in their hearts, 6; taught to their children, 7; and affixed as a sign to their hands, heads, doors, and gates, 8, 9. How they are to act when they shall come into the promised land, 10-19. How they shall instruct their children, and relate the history to them of God's wonderful acts, 20-25.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON SIX

QUESTIONS, LESSON SIX (6:4-25)

1. Show what part *love* was to have in keeping the Mosaic law, with reference both to God and our fellow man.
2. What did *Christ* teach on this?
3. Describe how the faithful Hebrew was to make the law pertinent and meaningful to himself and his family.
4. The law was to be "for a sign upon thy hand" and "for frontlets between thine eyes" (v. 8). Explain.
5. What blessings would the Israelites get "free and clear" that they did not now possess?
6. What temptation would accompany this blessings?
7. What happened at Massah?



LESSON SEVEN 7:1-26

6. DEFENDING THE FAITH: NECESSITY OF THE HOLY WAR (7:1-26)

a. THE REASONS FOR THE HOLY WAR (7:1-15)

When Jehovah thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and shall cast out many nations before thee, the Hittite, and the Girgashite, and the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite, seven nations greater and mightier than thou; 2 and when Jehovah thy God shall deliver them up before thee, and thou shalt smite them; then thou shalt utterly destroy them: thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor show mercy unto them; 3 neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. 4 For he will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of Jehovah be kindled against you, and he will destroy thee quickly. 5 But thus shall ye deal with them: ye shall break down their altars, and dash in pieces their pillars, and hew down their Asherim, and burn their graven images with fire.

6 For thou art a holy people unto Jehovah thy God: Jehovah thy God hath chosen thee to be a people for his own possession, above all peoples that are upon the face of the earth. 7 Jehovah did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all peoples: 8 but because Jehovah loveth you, and because he would keep the oath which he sware unto your fathers, hath Jehovah brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. 9 Know therefore that Jehovah thy God, he is God, the faithful God, who keepeth covenant and lovingkindness with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations, 10 and repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them: he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face. 11 Thou shalt therefore keep the commandments, and the statutes, and the ordinances, which I command thee this day, to do them.

12 And it shall come to pass, because ye harken to these ordinances, and keep and do them, that Jehovah thy God will keep with thee the covenant and the lovingkindness which he sware unto thy fathers: 13 and he will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee; he will also bless the fruit of thy body and the fruit of thy ground, thy grain and thy new wine and thine oil, the increase of thy cattle and the young of thy flock,

in the land which he swore unto thy fathers to give thee. 14 Thou shalt be blessed above all peoples: there shall not be male or female barren among you, or among your cattle. 15 And Jehovah will take away from thee all sickness; and none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knowest, will he put upon thee, but will lay them upon all them that hate thee. 16 And thou shalt consume all the peoples that Jehovah thy God shall deliver unto thee; thine eye shall not pity them: neither shalt thou serve their gods; for that will be a snare unto thee.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 7:1-16

152. Please refer to the map for a location of these various nations. memorize their locations.
153. In what sense were these seven nations "greater" than Israel? In what sense "mightier"?
154. Are we to understand the expression ". . . God shall deliver them up before thee," that God directed the military strategy of the enemy in such a manner as to insure their defeat?
155. List three things the Israelites were *not* to do with the enemy and three things they were *to do* with the enemy.
156. What is the meaning of "holy" as used in verse six? Surely this word is not to be equaled with our usual meaning of the term.
157. Please notice the areas of life into which the worship of Jehovah enters: marriage, vows, name two other areas.
158. Why not educate these people out of idolatry? Why all this cruelty and bloodshed?
160. Why did Jehovah love Israel? Read verses 7 and 8.
161. What is meant by the expression "keepeth covenant"?
162. Discuss the meaning of the phrase "to their face" and "to his face" in verse 10.
163. List the promises God made to Israel. (1) Keep with thee the covenant; (2) love thee. Name two or three more. Read verses 12 through 16.
164. Does God control man's health and the growth of grain? Read verse 13.
165. There is a startling statement and promise in verse 15—read it! How much sickness would be eliminated if we loved God with all our hearts? Give a percentage.
166. If God is a just and merciful heavenly Father, and we know He is, what are we to conclude from the command in verse 16 not to show pity?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 7:1-16

When the Lord your God brings you into the land which you are entering to possess, and has plucked away many nations before you, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than yourselves.

2 And when the Lord your God gives them over to you, and you smite them; then you must utterly destroy them; you shall make no covenant with them, or show mercy to them.

3 You shall not make marriages with them; your daughter you shall not give to his son, nor shall you take his daughter for your son.

4 For they will turn away your sons from following Me, that they may serve other gods; so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and He will destroy you quickly.

5 But thus shall you deal with them: you shall break down their altars, and dash in pieces their pillars, and hew down their Asherim, and burn their graven images with fire.

6 For you are a holy *and* set apart people to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you to be a special people to Himself, out of all the peoples on the face of the earth.

7 The Lord did not set His love upon you and choose you, because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the fewest of all people;

8 But because the Lord love you, and because He would keep the oath which He had sworn to your fathers, the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

9 Know, recognize *and* understand therefore that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God, Who keeps covenant and steadfast love *and* mercy with those who love Him and keep His commandments, to a thousand generations;

10 And repays those who hate Him to their face, by destroying them; He will not be slack to him who hates Him, but will requite him to his face.

11 You shall therefore keep and do the instruction, laws, and precepts which I command you this day.

12 And if you hearken to those precepts and keep and do them, the Lord your God will keep with you the covenant and the steadfast love which He swore to your fathers;

13 And He will love you, bless you, and multiply you; He will also bless the fruit of your body and the fruit of your land, your grain, your new wine, and your oil, the increase of your cattle and the young of your flock, in the land which He swore to your fathers to give you.

14 You shall be blessed above all peoples; there shall not be male or female barren among you, or among your cattle,

15 And the Lord will take away from you all sickness, and none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which you knew, will He put upon you, but will lay them upon all who hate you.

16 And you shall consume all the peoples whom the Lord your God will give over to you; your eye shall not pity them; neither shall you serve their gods, for that would be a snare to you.

COMMENT 7:1-16

Note that in these verses we have:

- (1) The danger of corruption for Israel (7:1-5, 12-16)
- (2) The wickedness of the Canaanites (7:5)
- (3) Israel must be a separate and holy people (7:6-11)

SEVEN NATIONS GREATER AND MIGHTIER THAN THOU (v. 1)—“greater in number and stronger than thou” (Rotherham). And they also had greater fortifications and equipment—1:28, etc. The word nation (*goy*) indicates a *people*, a confluence of men. The root idea of this word is given as *body*, *corpus*. Baumgartner has swarm, people . . . nation . . . the whole population of a territory.” Thus the more *formal* sense we now attach to “nation” does not necessarily hold, though it often does. It is sometimes in this book rendered “peoples” and sometimes “nations.” In 4:6-8, for example, we have this Hebrew word occurring four times—twice translated “peoples” and twice “nation.”

SEVEN NATIONS (v. 1)—See Acts 13:16-20.

THOU SHALT UTTERLY DESTROY THEM (v. 2)—Israel was to be the sole occupant of the land. They were not only to utterly destroy the seven “ite” tribes, but also to make no covenants or intermarriages. The temptation, of course, would be for Israel to become lax, soft, and careless about carrying out this command. So the statement, “nor show mercy unto them.” Israel started to fulfill this command in good fashion, but, for the most part, treated it with indifference once the twelve tribes were settled in their respective territories. The seven nations were *destroyed* but not “utterly.”

Note that we have both a negative and positive command in these verses. They were to make no covenant, show no mercy, and make no marriages. But they were to *do* something, too!

1. Smite them, utterly destroy them (v. 2)
2. Break down their altars (v. 5)
3. Dash in pieces their obelisks or pillars (v. 5)
4. Hew down their Asherim (v. 5)
5. Burn their graven images (v. 5)

—all of which meant they were to rip out *idolatry* from the land. They were to be first-class iconoclasts! See Ex. 23:24, 34:12-17.

In verses 3 and 4 intermarriage is forbidden on the basis that the Israelite would be the loser, and turned away to "serve other gods." It was probably argued then (as it so often is now) by the young people: "But we will make Israelites out of these girls! We will never serve *their* gods!" But God knew better. His warning still stands to every young person in "the Israel of God," the church. His exhortation remains: "Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers . . ." See II Cor. 6: 14—7:1.

ALTARS . . . PILLARS . . . ASHERIM . . . GRAVEN IMAGES (v. 5)—all were to be destroyed. The pillars or obelisks were idolatrous monuments in Canaanitish and other heathen countries. See 16:22, Lev. 26:1. These were of different shapes—some being little more than a slab of rock turned upright, others being carefully squared stone pillars with a larger base and tapering toward a pointed top. It is apparently this latter form (obelisk) that is especially meant here. They were usually shrines to Baal.

The Asherim were probably the wooden symbols or shrines of the goddess Asherah—the goddess of fertility. (Not the same as Ashtoreth, the female counterpart of Baal). See 12:3, 16:21. Her worship was widely spread throughout Canaan and Syria. In Babylon her worship and that of Ashtoreth (Istar) seemed to have merged. "In the West, however, Asherah and Ashtoreth came to be distinguished from one another, Asherah being exclusively the goddess of fertility, whereas Ashtoreth passeth into a moon-goddess . . . The existence of numerous symbols in each of which the goddess was believed to be immanent led to the creation of numerous forms of the goddess herself, which, after the analogy of the Ashtarothe, were described collectively as the Asherim." (I.S.B.E.) See further under 16:21.

FOR YE WERE THE FEWEST OF ALL PEOPLES (v. 7)—In Gen. 46:27 we are told, "all the souls of the house of Jacob, that came into Egypt,

were threescore and ten." And yet, through this handful of people, God began to show his great power. Had a *large* nation accomplished that Israel did, *human* power might be credited. But God's *love* for Israel plus his eternal design in bringing the Messiah into the world, enabled Israel to accomplish great things. Great numbers are often not necessary for God to accomplish his purposes!

THOU SHALT BE BLESSED ABOVE ALL PEOPLES (v. 14)—Contrast v. 7 "ye were the fewest of all peoples." This promise was contingent upon their *obedience*. Note the sweeping, all-inclusive promises that follow, vv. 14-16.

"Such a pre-eminence has its ground not in anything external, as in the numerical importance and greatness of a people, in which case to be *above all* would imply that they were more numerous, if not than all taken together, still than any one of the all. That Israel was as the stars (i. 10; x. 22) was merely the fulfillment of the promise of God to the fathers, a promise according to grace, not implying any merit or pre-eminence on the part of the people."—Lange

NEITHER SHALT THOU SERVE THEIR GODS: FOR THAT WILL BE A SNARE UNTO THEE (v. 16)—The Hebrew word for "snare" (*moqesh*) Baumgartner's Lexicon defines as "*bait, lure (of fowler), bird-trap.*" "The snares were set in a favorable location and grain scattered to attract the attention of feathered creatures. They accepted the bribe of good feeding and walked into the snare, not suspecting danger. For this reason the snare became particularly applicable in describing a tempting bribe offered by men to lead their fellows into trouble . . ." (I.S.B.E.)

b. DIFFICULTIES OF THE HOLY WAR (7:17-26)

17 If thou shalt say in thy heart, These nations are more than I; how can I dispossess them? 18 thou shalt not be afraid of them: thou shalt well remember what Jehovah thy God did unto Pharaoh, and unto all Egypt; 19 the great trials which thine eyes saw, and the signs, and the wonders, and the mighty hand, and the outstretched arm, whereby Jehovah thy God brought thee out: so shall Jehovah thy God do unto all the peoples of whom thou art afraid. 20 Moreover Jehovah thy God will send the hornet among them, until they that are left, and hide themselves, perish from before thee. 21 Thou shalt not be affrighted at them; for Jehovah thy God is in the midst of thee, a great God and a terrible. 22 And Jehovah thy God will cast out those nations before thee by little and little: thou mayest not consume them at once, lest the beast of the field

increase upon thee. 23 But Jehovah thy God will deliver them up before thee, and will discomfit them with a great discomfiture, until they be destroyed. And he will deliver their kinds into thy hand, and thou shalt make their name to perish from under heaven: there shall no man be able to stand before thee, until thou have destroyed them. 25 The graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire; thou shalt not covet the silver or the gold that is on them, nor take it unto thee, lest thou be snared therein; for it is an abomination to Jehovah thy God. 26 And thou shalt not bring an abomination into thy house, and become a devoted thing like unto it: thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it is a devoted thing.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 7:17-26

167. The conquest of Canaan has no lesson for us if we have no "conquest" of self or sin or need to which we can make application. Please make application!
168. Memory has a great power when used right, how?
169. Are we to understand that God used literal "hornets" in aiding Israel? Discuss.
170. In what sense was God to be considered "terrible"?
171. Explain in your own words verse 22.
172. There can be no neutral ground. There can be no moderation with sin. "detest, utterly abhor," why is this true? What is "a snare"?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 7:17-26

17 If you say in your [mind and] heart, These nations are more than I; how can I dispossess them?

18 You shall not be afraid of them, but remember (earnestly) what the Lord your God did to Pharoah, and to all Egypt,

19 The great trials which your eyes saw, the signs, the wonders, the mighty hand, and the outstretched arm by which the Lord your God brought you out; so shall the Lord your God do to all the people of whom you are afraid.

20 Moreover the Lord your God will send the hornet among them, until those who are left and hide themselves from you are destroyed.

21 You shall not dread them; for the Lord your God is among you, a mighty and terrible God.

22 And the Lord your God will clear out those nations before you little by little; you may not consume them quickly, lest the beasts of the field increase among you.

23 But the Lord your God will give them over to you, and will confuse them with a mighty panic until they are destroyed.

24 And He will give their kings into your hand, and you shall make their name perish from under the heavens; there shall no man be able to stand before you, until you have destroyed them.

25 The graven images of their gods you shall burn with fire; you shall not desire the silver or gold that is on them, nor take it for yourself, lest you be ensnared by it; for it is an abomination to the Lord your God

26 Neither shall you bring an abomination (an idol) into your house, lest you become an accursed thing like it; but you shall utterly detest and abhor it, for it is an accursed thing.

COMMENT 7:17-26

Note that we have here:

- (1) The apparent superiority of the foe (vv. 17-21)
- (2) The gradual nature of the conquest (v. 22)
- (3) The rewards and demands of faithfulness (vv. 20,21, 23-26)

The foe was *far* superior in both numbers and physical equipment. But Jehovah, "the Lord of hosts" was with Israel! And he demanded one great basic quality of his people—confidence in his ability—unbounded faith!

IF THOU SHALT SAY IN THY HEART, THESE NATIONS ARE MORE THAN I (v. 17)—The very attitude that had kept them *out* of the promised land before (1:26-33, Num. 13:32—14:4)

HOW CAN I DISPOSSESS THEM? (v. 17)—One cannot read these lines without thinking of the many "impossible" and *apparently* insurmountable difficulties that sometimes face the people of God today. And doubtfully the question is asked, "How can I do it? How can I overcome it? The answer is, YOU can't! "But God is able." This does not mean idly sitting back and supposing that "all will work out." But it *does* mean simply doing *what we can* in the Lord's work, with a child-like faith in our Master, *knowing* that we labor for "him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph. 3:20).

THOU SHALT WELL REMEMBER WHAT JEHOVAH THY GOD DID UNTO PHAROA^H, AND UNTO ALL EGYPT (v. 18)—Nothing is more helpful for the child of God, when anticipating the *future* with its difficulties and "impossibilities," than to reflect upon what God has done for his children in the *past*. *As he has done, so will he do!* See 4:32-39.

JEHOVAH . . . WILL SEND THE HORNET AMONG THEM (v. 20)—The Hebrew word for hornet or wasp (*tsirah*) is used only two other times in the Old Testament. Young's literal translation has "locust." "And I will send the hornet before thee, which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite from before thee" (Ex. 23:28). And God could say through Joshua, about twenty-five years later, "And I sent the hornet before you which drove them out from before you, even the two kings of the Amorites [Sihon and Og? (Deut. 3:7, 4:47)], or two of the Amorite kings mentioned in Josh 10?]; not with thy sword, nor with thy bow" (Josh. 24:12).

I take these verses all literally, believing that God actually *did* employ wasps or hornets to assist Israel in battle. Why couldn't he? I reject, then, such figurative renderings for hornet (*tsirah*) as "leprosy" (Smith-Goodspeed), "a plague" (The Torah), "raiders" (Lamsa), "depression, discouragement" (Baumgartner). Gesenius, while admitting that "hornet" is the rendering which accords with the ancient versions and the Hebrew, states that it "seems hardly capable of being literally understood" and says here it is to be understood metaphorically as "designating *ills and calamities of various kinds*." The common versions (A.V., A.S.V., R.S.V.) as well as Berkely, Rotherham, Moffatt, and The Amplified Old Testament, consistently translate "hornet" however, and the other renderings seems to be more *interpretation* than *translation*. (The non-literal idea is perhaps best explained in the note adapted from Lange in the Amplified O.T. "' . . . the hornet' with the article, meaning collective as a species or kind, is thus evidently to be understood, as 2:25, of the terrors of God which should go before Israel, with which also Josh. 24:12 and Ps. 44:2 fully agree.")

JEHOVAH . . . WILL CAST OUT THOSE NATIONS BEFORE THEE BY LITTLE AND LITTLE—In fact, they were forbidden to cast them all out at once, LEST THE BEASTS OF THE FIELD INCREASE UPON THEE (v. 22)—That is, they were not to be driven out "in one year, lest the land before desolate, and the beasts of the field multiply against thee" (See Ex. 23:29,30). A *number* of years would be needed before the Israelites them-

selves were sufficiently numerous to fill the whole land occupied by the seven nations mentioned in v. 1 and especially the even broader borders outlined in the "promised land"—1:7, 1:24.

THOU SHALT NOT COVET THE SILVER OR THE GOLD THAT IS ON THEM [idols or images]) NOR TAKE IT UNTO THEE, LEST THOU BE SNARED THEREIN (v. 25)—"Some of the ancient idols were plated over with gold, and God saw that the value of the metal and the excellence of the workmanship might be an inducement for the Israelites to *preserve them*; and this might lead, remotely at least, to idolatry. As the idols were accursed, all those who had them, or any thing appertaining to them, were accursed also, ver. 26." (Clarke)

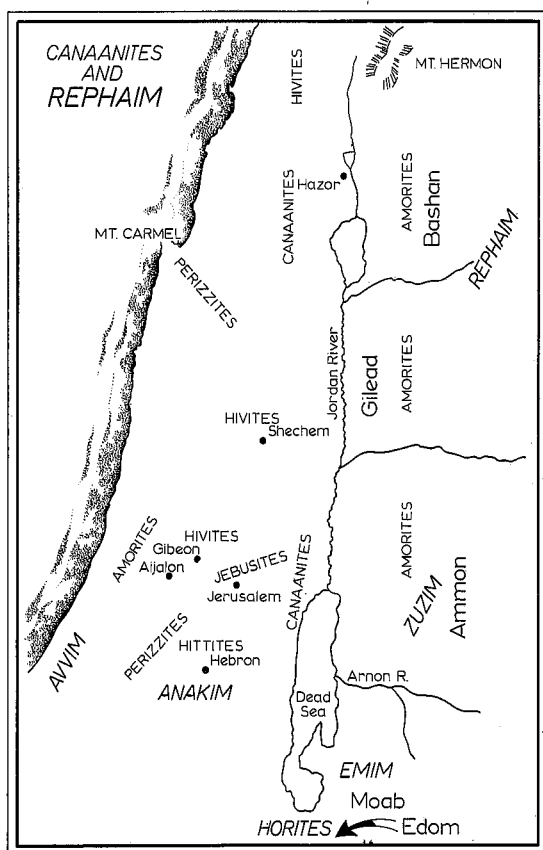
There are moral and spiritual implications here that are "for our learning." The very gold and silver on the idols was to be burned with fire. No *part* of the idol was to be *coveted*, let alone *taken*! There was always the temptation that they would "be snared therein" (Cf. also v. 16). Similarly the Lord would have every Christian destroy and obliterate every vestige of sin in his life. Jesus taught us to pray, "And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil *one*" (Matt. 6:13). Paul taught, "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to *fulfill* the lusts thereof" (Rom. 13:14).

QUESTIONS, LESSON SEVEN (7:1-26)

1. To what extent were the Israelites to show mercy to the surrounding nations?
2. How were these nations "greater and mightier" than Israel?
3. What did the Holy Spirit predict would happen if Israel intermarried with foreigners?
4. What were the "pillars" of the heathen?
5. What were the Asherim?
6. Where did Israel rank with other nations in the population census?
7. Specifically, what religious items of the heathen nations were to be destroyed?
8. List two great difficulties of the Holy War.
9. What was Israel to *remember* as an encouragement in this war?
10. What peculiar means did God use to rout the enemy (according to the standard versions)?
11. Why not cast out the enemies all at once?
12. What part of the heathen images could be kept by an Israelite? Why?

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER SEVEN

With the seven nations that God shall cast out, 1, they shall make no covenant, 2, nor form any matrimonial alliances, 3; lest they should be enticed into idolatry, 4. All monuments of idolatry to be destroyed, 5. The Israelites are to consider themselves a holy people, 6; and that the Lord had made them such, not for their merits, but for his own mercies, 7, 8. They shall therefore love him, and keep his commandments, 9-11. The great privileges of the obedient, 12-24. All idolatry to be avoided, 25, 26.



LESSON EIGHT 8:1—11:32

7. THE THREAT FROM WITHIN (8:1—11:21)

a. THE DANGER OF PROSPERITY (8:1-20)

All the commandment which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live, and multiply, and go in and possess the land which Jehovah sware unto your fathers. 2 And thou shalt remember all the way which Jehovah thy God hath led thee these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble thee, to prove thee, to know what was in thy heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments or not. 3 And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man does not live by bread only, but by every thing that proceedeth out of the mouth of Jehovah doth man live. 4 Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years. 5 And thou shalt consider in thy heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so Jehovah thy God chasteneth thee. 6 And thou shalt keep the commandments of Jehovah thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him. 7 For Jehovah thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing forth in valleys and hills; 8 a land of wheat and barley, and vines and fig-trees and pomegranates; a land of olive-trees and honey; 9 a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig copper. 10 And thou shalt eat and be full, and thou shalt bless Jehovah thy God for the good land which he hath given thee. 11 Beware lest thou forget Jehovah thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his ordinances, and his statutes, which I command thee this day: 12 lest, when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; 13 and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; 14 then thy heart be lifted up, and thou forget Jehovah thy God, who brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; 15 who led thee through the great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents and scorpions, and thirsty ground where was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint; 16 who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not; that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end: 17 and lest thou say in thy heart, My power and the might of my

hand hath gotten me this wealth. 18 But thou shalt remember Jehovah thy God, for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth; that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as at this day. 19 And it shall be, if thou shalt forget Jehovah thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish. 20 As the nations that Jehovah maketh to perish before you, so shall ye perish; because ye would not harken unto the voice of Jehovah your God.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 8:1-20

173. Wasn't the purpose of the wilderness wanderings to punish Israel for faithlessness? Read verse 2 and explain.
174. What is involved in the phrase concerning the manna in verse 3: "which thou knewest not"?
175. Our Lord cited this verse (8:3) to Satan. Israel *did* live by bread (and almost "bread alone" when we consider the conditions when the manna or bread was given) what then is meant by saying, "but by every thing that proceedeth out of the mouth of Jehovah doth man live."?
176. Are we to understand that there was some supernatural preservation of the garments of Israel? Discuss.
177. Over and over again we are told to "fear the Lord" but this is not the fear we know in normal life. Discuss the difference.
178. If Jehovah had not chastened Israel they would not be ready to enter Canaan. Why?
179. Why mention iron and copper?
180. Why is it so easy to forget our God in prosperity?
181. What is involved in the phrase referring to the "lifting up" of the heart? Cf. verse 14.
182. Are God's ultimate purposes always for our good? Discuss. Cf. verse 16.
183. From man's viewpoint: why is it better to be humble-minded?
184. For what accomplishments in life should man take credit?
185. Does God grant to some men special powers of getting wealth? Discuss.
186. Read Psalms 39:4 and apply to this text and our present life.

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 8:1-20

All the commandments which I command you this day you shall be watchful to do, that you may live, and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the Lord swore to give to your fathers.

2 And you shall (earnestly) remember all the way which the Lord your God led you these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you, and to prove you, to know what was in your (mind and) heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.

3 And He humbled you and allowed you to hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know; that he might make you recognize and personally know that man does not live by bread only, but man lives by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord.

4 Your clothing did not become old upon you, nor did your foot swell, these forty years.

5 Know also in your (mind and) heart that, as a man disciplines and instructs his son, so the Lord your God disciplines and instructs you.

6 So you shall keep the commandments of the Lord your God, to walk in His ways and (reverently) fear Him. [Prov. 8:13.]

7 For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing forth in valleys and hills;

8 A land of wheat and barley, and vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey,

9 A land in which you shall eat food without shortage, and lack nothing in it, a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you can dig copper.

10 When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the Lord your God for all the good land which He has given you.

11 Beware that you do not forget the Lord your God, by not keeping His commandments, His precepts, and His statutes, which I command you today,

12 Lest when you have eaten and are full, and have built goodly houses, and live in them,

13 And when your herds and flocks multiply, and your silver and gold is multiplied, and all you have is multiplied;

14 Then your (mind and) heart be lifted up, and you forget the Lord your God Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage,

15 Who led you through the great and terrible wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water, but Who brought you forth water out of the flinty rock;

16 Who fed you in the wilderness with manna which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and test you, to do you good in the end.

17 And beware lest you say in your (mind and) heart, My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.

18 But you shall (earnestly) remember the Lord your God; for it is He Who gives you power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as at this day.

19 And if you forget the Lord your God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that you shall surely perish.

20 Like the nations which the Lord makes perish before you, so shall you perish, because you would not obey the voice of the Lord your God.

COMMENT 8:1-20

This chapter points up two grave dangers Israel would face as a result of their *prosperity*. These dangers, we might add, are faced by every child of God when prosperity and blessings come their way. They are:

- (1) Forgetfulness of past discipline (vv. 1-16)
- (2) Self-deification (vv. 17-20)

OBSERVE TO DO, THAT YE MAY LIVE, AND MULTIPLY (v. 1)—See also 4:1, 40, 5:33 and remarks.

THESE FORTY YEARS IN THE WILDERNESS, THAT HE MIGHT HUMBLE THEE, TO PROVE THEE, TO KNOW WHAT WAS IN THY HEART, WHETHER THOU Wouldest KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS, OR NOT (v. 2)—See also v. 16, where the additional purpose is given: "to do thee good at thy latter end". See also Ex. 15:25, 26; 20:18-20. God's purpose was "to put thee to the proof (etc)" (Rotherham). ". . . so that he might discover your true disposition and learn whether you will observe His orders or not" (Berkeley).

AND FED THEE WITH MANNA, WHICH THOU KNEWEST NOT, NEITHER DID THY FATHERS KNOW (v. 3)—See also v. 16. In what sense is this to be understood? Ex. 16:13-15 provides the inspired answer. They at first neither understood what the manna was or who had provided it. Hence Moses' reply "This is the thing which Jehovah hath commanded" (Ex. 16:16). But the real purpose of the hunger

and the manna was to teach Israel a great lesson of *dependence upon God* for everything, as these verses go on to say. This lesson neither they nor their fathers understood—did not begin to grasp.

THAT HE MIGHT MAKE THEE KNOW THAT MAN DOTHT NOT LIVE BY BREAD ONLY, BUT BY EVERY THING THAT PROCEEDETH OUT OF THE MOUTH OF JEHOVAH DOTHT MAN LIVE (v. 3)—For forty years Israel had wandered in one of the bleakest, driest, most foreboding deserts known to man (Geographers often think of the Sinai Peninsula and the Arabian desert as an *extension* of the Sahara Desert). They were being "schooled"—shown the absolute necessity of heeding and obeying THE WORD OF GOD! (v. 2).

What kept Israel *alive* during this period? How did this great horde of people *survive* all the rigors of desert life? What kept their bodies from being just so many bleached bones drying in the desert sun?

Verse three gives the divine answer. *Every move Israel made* needed the definite direction and commandment of God! With the movement of the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, Israel moved. "At the commandment of Jehovah they encamped, and at the commandment of Jehovah they journeyed: they kept the charge of Jehovah, at the commandment of Jehovah by Moses" (Num. 9:23). And so it was that in *every way* they were dependent on God's direction and help: When to *attack an enemy*, or when to go around him (as in the case of Edom we have just studied). Practically all their food was miraculously supplied *from God*—and at times their water. Because God decreed it, their raiment or shoes did not wear out nor did their feet swell (v. 4, Cf. 29:5). Again and again God *helped* them—again and again he chastised them. And what was the *purpose* of all this? That they might *know*, and know of a certainty, that a man's life is absolutely and *totally* dependent upon the will of God and the *word* of God! Oh how God hoped that his children would come to have a sense of utter and complete *dependence* upon him—and trust him for everything! He hoped they would realize, and think, "If the Lord will, we shall both live, and do this or that" (Jas. 4:15).

It was, of course, a temptation for them to be primarily concerned with their *stomachs* (Num. 11:4-6; 18-20). But they should have learned *more* than this! They should have learned that *all* of God's words, instructions, and dealings with them were designed to be heeded. He gives no unnecessary commands—his dealings are all for a purpose.

In his temptation in the wilderness Jesus refers to this passage and enlarges upon its meaning (Matt. 4:1-4). As Israel had been forty *years* in a desert place, so Christ had been forty *days* in the wilderness. He, too, would be tempted to think of the *physical*—especially after a forty-day fast! Yet his refutation of Satan is, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

Reader, do you realize the far-reaching significance and importance of that statement? In God's eyes (and he *knows* you—he is your creator!) you are not *really* "living" unless you are living under the authority and by the dictates of his holy word!

Israel's food and water were *miraculously* supplied by God. Their stomachs were not really what sustained them. They were *super-naturally* sustained—always! For they "did all eat the same spiritual food; and did all drink of the same spiritual drink: for they drank of a spiritual rock that followed them; and the rock was Christ" (I Cor. 10:3, 4). God, the Spirit, and the Son were involved in the sustenance of the people of God—have always been—ever will be. Surely they could say, much *more* than the Athenians of Paul's day, "he is not far from each one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:27, 28).

To go through life under the delusion that the material, the tangible, the touchable, and the tasteable are all that we should live for, is to soon starve from hunger—*soul* hunger! We were created in the image of God, and with an inborn *capacity* to praise, adore, and serve him—if we will! Can we say with Jeremiah, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them . . ." (Jer. 15:16)? Or with Job, "I have not gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have treasured up the words of his mouth MORE THAN MY NECESSARY FOOD" (Job 23:12)? Bread, of course, is material. It is a term used throughout the Bible, for *food*. So our verse becomes the equivalent of saying, "Material things are entirely insufficient as a life-sustainer." Such as the teaching of Jesus over and over again: Matt. 5:6, 6:31-33, Jn. 6:35, 53, 58, 68. Truly, "It is the Spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing: THE WORDS THAT I HAVE SPOKEN UNTO YOU ARE SPIRIT AND ARE LIFE" (Jn. 6:63).

Surely this passage teaches the absolute inadequacy and insufficiency of the *material* in life. "Man shall NOT live by bread alone." Doctors and Nurses have testified that babies have died because they lacked Tender Loving Care (T.L.C.)—though they had plenty of

physical nourishment. And so is the soul who is not *attached to the love of God!* He is dead while he lives (I Tim. 5:6, Rev. 3:1). On the other hand, "godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come" (I Tim. 4:8). Our minds, then, should not be set upon the uncertain things of this fading world, "but on God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy (I Tim. 6:17).

The Great Physician, who alone can heal the sin-sick soul, has diagnosed our malady and given us his prescription. He demands that we literally *live* by his words—"hang" on them as it were. He who knows us and created us gave these directions. ". . . the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23). What is the conclusion?

Trust in Jehovah with all thy heart
And lean not upon thine own understanding:
In all thy ways acknowledge him,
And he will direct thy paths

(Prov. 3:5, 6)

THY RAIMENT WAXED NOT OLD UPON THEE, NEITHER DID THY FOOT SWELL, THESE FORTY YEARS (v. 4)—29:5 adds "thy shoe is not waxed old upon thy foot." Clarke, as well as others, doubts that an actual *miracle* is involved here. But the inferences he attaches to such a miracle (such as the clothes growing with the children) seem entirely out of order. Lange, along with one of his editors, Dr. A. Gosman, states,

"It was a miraculous blessing, Moses says, without once stopping to reason why it should occur. It does not exclude the use of natural supplies to which Kurtz refers, the rich herds supplying abundantly wool and leather, the numerous garments and sandals which every Israelite must have possessed (Ex. xii. 34, 35) the garments of the Egyptians which were washed ashore (Ex. xiv. 30) and the booty they would have secured from the Amalekites [Ex. 17:13] sq. We need not hold with some Jewish Rabbis, or some Christian expositors, that the clothes and shoes upon the children grew with their growth, or with a reference to Ezek. xvi. 10 sq., that the Angel was present as a tailor in the wilderness . . . [It is idle, of course, to speculate as to the process by which this result was secured, as it would be to ask how Christ multiplied the loaves and the fishes. But while we need not overlook the natural supplies, nor exclude human agency in part, as

that agency was used in collecting and preparing the manna; it is clear that these natural supplies were supplemented by some special and miraculous exercise of the divine power—A.G.]”

AS A MAN CHASTENETH HIS SON, SO JEHOVAH THY GOD CHASTENETH THEE (v. 5)—Cf. Prov. 3:11, 12; Job 5:17, Heb. 12:4-13.

A GOOD LAND, etc. (vv. 7-10)—See also 11:8-15. The description is not exaggerated—and it was only the sins of Israel that caused the land to be other than this.

A LAND WHOSE STONES ARE IRON, AND OUT OF WHOSE HILLS THOU MAYEST DIG COPPER (v. 9)—Iron and copper had long been in use (Gen. 4:22) along with other metals (Num. 31:22, Deut. 3:11, 4:20 and notes, 33:25, etc.), though the “Iron Age” in history was only emerging. The oldest pieces of iron known to exist at this writing are Egyptian sickle blades and a crosscut saw, all of a much earlier date than the book of Deuteronomy. Copper has been one of man’s most useful metals for over 5,000 years. Both of these are still found in the Negev (Negeb) area of present-day Israel, though not in large amounts.

BEWARE LEST THOU FORGET JEHOVAH THY GOD (v. 11)—Prosperity, the enjoying of the good things of life, and particularly material and temporal blessings—so often lead one away from the very God who *gave* them! This danger is expressed again and again in Deuteronomy. See also 6:10-12 and notes, 11:13-15, etc.

THE GREAT AND TERRIBLE WILDERNESS (v. 15)—See 1:19, notes. *wherein were* FIERY SERPENTS AND SCORPIONS AND THIRSTY GROUND WHERE THERE WAS NO WATER (v. 15)—One naturally thinks of Num. 21:4 ff. here, but apparently this is better understood as a more inclusive statement, simply descriptive of the barren and hazardous nature of nearly *all* the land through which they had just traveled.

There were several kinds of poisonous serpents in this area (Cf. Isa. 30:6). The scorpions of this land, usually two or three inches long, have stings, “which, though often exceedingly painful for several hours, are seldom fatal.” (I.S.B.E.)

WHO BROUGHT THEE FORTH WATER OUT OF THE ROCK OF FLINT (v. 15)—At least twice, Ex. 17:6, Num. 20:11.

MANNA WHICH THY FATHERS KNEW NOT (v. 16)—See our discussion of this phrase under v. 3.

THAT HE MIGHT HUMBLE THEE, AND THAT HE MIGHT PROVE THEE, TO DO THEE GOOD AT THY LATTER END (v. 16)—See also vv. 2, 3, 5 and notes. Not God's *purpose* in all this: "to do thee GOOD in thy latter end"! Such is always God's *design* in the disciplining of his children. But their *response* to such discipline may be *backbiting* and *backsliding*. His designs and purposes are always for our *good* (Rom. 8:28) but whether this design is effective or not is contingent upon a proper attitude and response from his children. His chastizements, as well as his commands, are "for our good always" (6:24).

AND LEST THOU SAY IN THY HEART, MY POWER AND THE MIGHT OF MY HAND HATH GOTTEN ME THIS WEALTH (v. 17)—Such has always been the temptation of men—when it is *God* who has blessed them! Man seems to think that if God should bless him, then it must *surely* be because of his own *greatness* and *goodness*! It *must* be something *he* did, and therefore something *he* for which should be commended. But the next verse serves as a rebuke for all who think in such terms.

BUT THOU SHALT REMEMBER JEHOVAH THY GOD, FOR IT IS HE THAT GIVETH THEE POWER TO GET WEALTH (v. 18)—True, no matter what *means* or talents one may be able to employ toward the acquiring of wealth. Where is the room for boasting or pride here? By the principle stated, no sensible *reason* exists for pride—for *all* we are able to do is only possible if the Lord allows (I Cor. 15:10). "For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall both live, and do this or that" (Jas. 4:15). "The blessing of Jehovah, it maketh rich" (Prov. 10:22). The Rich Fool had great plans *himself*, but they were short-lived when God said to him, "Thou foolish one, this night is thy soul required of thee; and the things which thou hast prepared, whose shall they be? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God" (Luke 12:20, 21). Who empowers and enables us to have the good things of life we enjoy—spiritual, material, or whatever? The Bible principle is, "Except JEHOVAH build the house, they labor in vain that build it: Except JEHOVAH keep the city, The watchman waketh but in vain" (Ps. 127:1).

Who gives the power and strength to earn wealth? The power of mind to *think* and *reason* and thus increase earning power? The natural ability of voice, hand, eye, etc. which, when developed, often increase earnings? The health and energy with which to work? The air to breathe, the power to breathe it, the 103,680 heartbeats *a day* to keep

us alive? Paul said of God, "in him we LIVE and MOVE and HAVE OUR BEING" (Acts 17:28), but do we appreciate it?

Some one says, "But I am strong, industrious, healthy, intelligent, and have good business judgment." If so, who *gave* you these basic traits, and who enables you to cultivate them? Who spares your life day by day? Who supplies every breath of air you breathe? Who sustains the body, grants every heartbeat as a gift of his love? O how we need to pray with David,

Jehovah make me to know mine end,
And the measure of my days, what it is;
Let me know how frail I am.

(Ps. 39:4)

b. HOW TO PREVENT THE THREAT (9:1—11:21)

(1) BY A REALISTIC SELF-EVALUATION (9:1—10:11)

(Moses rehearses the story of the two tables of stone and the Israelite's sin at Sinai. This is done so Israel might see their previous course: rebelliousness, stubbornness, and disobedience.)

Hear, O Israel: thou art to pass over the Jordan this day to go in to dispossess nations greater and mightier than thyself, cities great and fortified up to heaven, 2 a people great and tall, the sons of the Anakim, whom thou knowest, and of whom thou hast heard say, Who can stand before the sons of Anak? 3 Know therefore this day, that Jehovah thy God is he who goeth over before thee as a devouring fire; he will destroy them, and he will bring them down before thee: so shalt thou drive them out, and make them to perish quickly, as Jehovah hath spoken unto thee. 4 Speak not thou in thy heart, after that Jehovah thy God hath thrust them out from before thee, saying, For my righteousness Jehovah hath brought me in to possess this land; whereas for the wickedness of these nations Jehovah doth drive them out from before thee. 5 Not for thy righteousness, or for the unrighteousness of thy heart, dost thou go in to possess their land; but for the wickedness of these nations Jehovah thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may establish the word which Jehovah sware unto thy fathers to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

6 Know therefore, that Jehovah thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiffnecked people. 7 Remember, forget thou not, how thou provokedst Jehovah thy God to wrath in the wilderness: from the day that thou wentest forth out

of the land of Egypt, until ye came unto this place, ye have been rebellious against Jehovah. 8 Also in Horeb ye provoked Jehovah to wrath, and Jehovah was angry with you to destroy you. 9 When I was gone up into the mount to receive the tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant which Jehovah made with you, then I abode in the mount forty days and forty nights; I did neither eat bread nor drink water. 10 And Jehovah delivered unto me the two tables of stone written with the finger of God; and on them *was written* according to all the words, which Jehovah spake with you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly. 11 And it came to pass at the end of forty days and forty nights, that Jehovah gave me the two tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant. 12 And Jehovah said unto me, Arise, get thee down quickly from hence; for thy people that thou hast brought forth out of Egypt have corrupted themselves; they are quickly turned aside out of the way which I commanded them; they have made them a molten image. 13 Furthermore Jehovah spake unto me, saying, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people: 14 let me alone, that I may destroy them, and blot out their name from under heaven; and I will make of thee a nation mightier and greater than they. 15 So I turned and came down from the mount, and the mount was burning with fire: and the two tables of the covenant were in my two hands. 16 And I looked, and, behold, ye had sinned against Jehovah your God; ye had made you a molten calf: ye had turned aside quickly out of the way which Jehovah had commanded you. 17 And I took hold of the two tables, and cast them out of my hands, and brake them before your eyes. 18 And I fell down before Jehovah, as at the first, forty days and forty nights; I did neither eat bread nor drink water; because of all your sin which ye sinned, in doing that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, to provoke him to anger. 19 For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure, wherewith Jehovah was wroth against you to destroy you. But Jehovah hearkened unto me that time also. 20 And Jehovah was very angry with Aaron to destroy him: and I prayed for Aaron also at the same time. 21 And I took your sin, the calf which ye had made, and burnt it with fire, and stamped it, grinding it very small, until it was as fine as dust: and I cast the dust thereof into the brook that descended out of the mount.

22 And at Taberah, and at Massah, and at Kibroth-hattaavah, ye provoked Jehovah to wrath. 23 And when Jehovah sent you from Kadesh-barnea, saying, Go up and possess the land which I have given you; then ye rebelled against the commandment of Jehovah your God,

and ye believed him not, nor harkened to his voice. 24 Ye have been rebellious against Jehovah from the day that I knew you.

25 So I fell down before Jehovah the forty days and forty nights that I fell down, because Jehovah had said he would destroy you. 26 And I prayed unto Jehovah, and said, O Lord Jehovah, destroy not thy people and thine inheritance, that thou hast redeemed through the greatness, that thou has brought forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand. 27 Remember thy servants, Abraham, Issac, and Jacob; look not unto the stubbornness of this people, nor to their wickedness, nor to their sin, 28 lest the land whence thou broughtest us out say, Because Jehovah was not able to bring them into the land which he promised unto them, and because he hated them, he hath brought them out to slay them in the wilderness. 29 Yet they are thy people and thine inheritance, which thou broughtest out by thy great power and by thine outstretched arm.

At that time, Jehovah said unto me, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first, and come up unto me into the mount, and make thee an ark of wood. 2 And I will write on the tables the words that were on the first tables which thou brakest, and thou shalt put them in the ark. 3 So I made an ark of acacia wood, and hewed two tables of stone like unto the first, and went up into the mount, having the two tables in my hand. 4 And he wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the ten commandments, which Jehovah spake unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly: and Jehovah gave them unto me. 5 And I turned and came down from the mount, and put the tables in the ark which I had made; and there they are as Jehovah commanded me. 6 (And the children of Israel journeyed from Beeroth Bene-jaakan to Moserah. There Aaron died, and there he was buried; and Eleazar his son ministered in the priest's office in his stead. 7 From thence they journeyed unto Gudgodah; and from Gudgodah to Jotbathah, a land of brooks of water. 8 At that time Jehovah set apart the tribe of Levi, to bear the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, to stand before Jehovah to minister unto him, and to bless his name, unto this day. 9 Wherefore Levi hath no portion nor inheritance with his brethren; Jehovah is his inheritance, according as Jehovah thy God spake unto him.) 10 And I stayed in the mount, as at the first time, forty days and forty nights: and Jehovah hearkened unto me that time also; Jehovah would not destroy thee. 11 And Jehovah said unto me, Arise, take thy journey before the people; and

HOW TO PREVENT THE THREAT 9:1—10:11

they shall go in and possess the land, which I swear unto their fathers to give unto them.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 9:1—10:11

187. What is the grand purpose of chapter nine?
188. What time is involved in the use of the term "day" in verse 1?
189. "Our God is a consuming fire"—this can be understood in at least two ways; how is it used here?
190. Were not the Israelites more righteous than the Canaanites? If so why not say it is because we are more righteous that God is driving out the inhabitants of the land? Cf. verses 4, 5.
191. Show how the punishment of the original inhabitants of the land was actually very merciful.
192. Why call for a remembrance of their sin at Horeb, and in the wilderness?
193. How was Moses able to remain alive without water for forty days?
194. Just what corruption or sin was involved at the worship of the golden calf? Is there a lesson in this for today?
195. Consider God's proposal to Moses in verse 14, did God mean what He said? Discuss.
196. There are two or three periods of forty days, designate them. Why were they necessary? Are there two or three?
197. Was it wrong for Moses to break the two tables of the covenant? What was Moses attitude
198. Jehovah was as angry with Aaron as He was with the people, why?
199. What very commendable quality is found in Moses at this time?
200. What ultimately happened to the golden calf? Why?
201. What sins were committed at the following places? (1) Taberah, (2) Massah, (3) Kibroth-hattaavah, (4) Kadesh-barnea.
202. Name the two arguments used in his prayer for the preservation of Israel.
203. In what sense was Israel Jehovah's "heritage"?
204. Why was it necessary to make an ark? Wasn't the ark made later along with the furniture of the tabernacle?
205. Who wrote the ten commandments on the tables of stone?
206. Why introduce the subject matter of verses 6 through 9?
207. Where did the Levites live? How were they supported? Read I Corinthians 9:13 for present application.

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 9:1—10:11

Hear, O Israel; you are to cross the Jordan today, to go in to dispossess nations greater and mightier than you are, cities great and fortified up to the heavens,

2 A people great and tall, the sons of the Anakim, whom you know, and of whom you have heard it said, Who can stand before the sons of Anak?

3 Know therefore this day, that the Lord your God is He Who goes over before you as a devouring fire; He will destroy them and bring them down before you; so you shall dispossess them and make them perish quickly, as the Lord has promised you.

4 Do not say in your (mind and) heart, after the Lord your God has thrust them out before you, It is because of my righteousness that the Lord has brought me in to possess this land, whereas it is because of the wickedness of these nations that the Lord is dispossessing them before you.

5 Not for your righteousness, or for the uprightness of your [mind and] heart, do you go to possess their land; but because of the wickedness of these nations the Lord your God is driving them out before you, and that He may fulfill the promise which the Lord swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

6 Know therefore, that the Lord your God does not give you this good land to possess because of your righteousness, for you are a hard and stubborn people.

7 (Earnestly) remember, and forget not, how you provoked the Lord your God to wrath in the wilderness; from the day you left the land of Egypt until you came to this place, you have been rebellious against the Lord.

8 Even in Horeb you provoked the Lord to wrath, and the Lord was so angry with you that He would have destroyed you.

9 When I went up the mountain to receive the tables of stone, the tables of the covenant which the Lord made with you, I remained on the mountain forty days and forty nights; I neither ate food nor drank water.

10 And the Lord delivered to me the two tables of stone written with the finger of God; and on them were all the words which the Lord spoke with you on the mountain out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly.

11 And at the end of forty days and forty nights the Lord gave me the two tables of stone, the tables of the covenant.

HOW TO PREVENT THE THREAT 9:1—10:11

12 And the Lord said to me, Arise, go down from here quickly; for your people whom you brought out of Egypt have corrupted themselves; they have quickly turned aside out of the way which I commanded them; they have made themselves a molten image.

13 Furthermore the Lord said to me, I have seen this people, and behold, it is stubborn and hard;

14 Let me alone, that I may destroy them, and blot out their name from under the heavens; and I will make of you a nation mightier and greater than they.

15 So I turned and came down from the mountain, and the mountain was burning with fire; and the two tables of the covenant were in my two hands.

16 And I looked, and behold, you had sinned against the Lord your God; you had made you a molten calf; you had turned aside quickly from the way which the Lord had commanded you.

17 I took the two tables, cast them out of my two hands, and broke them before your eyes.

18 Then I fell down before the Lord, as before, forty days and forty nights; I neither ate food, nor drank water, because of all the sin you had committed in doing wickedly in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger.

19 For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure which the Lord held against you, enough to destroy you. But the Lord listened to me that time also.

20 And the Lord was very angry with Aaron, enough to have destroyed him; and I prayed for Aaron also at the same time.

21 And I took your sin, the calf which you had made, and burned it with fire and crushed it, grinding it very small, until it was as fine as dust; and I cast the dust of it into the brook that came down out of the mountain.

22 At Taberah also, and at Massah, and at Kibroth-hattaavah, you provoked the Lord to wrath.

23 Likewise when the Lord sent you from Kadesh-barnea, saying, Go up and possess the land which I have given you; then you rebelled against the commandment of the Lord your God, and you did not believe Him or trust and rely on Him or obey His voice.

24 You have been rebellious against the Lord from the day that I knew you.

25 So I fell down and lay prostrate before the Lord forty days and nights, for the Lord had said He would destroy you.

26 And I prayed to the Lord, O Lord God, do not destroy Your people and Your heritage, whom You have redeemed through Your greatness, whom You have brought out of Egypt with a mighty hand.

27 Remember [earnestly] your servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; look not at the stubbornness of this people, or at their wickedness, or at their sin,

28 Lest the land from which You brought us out say, Because the Lord was not able to bring them into the land which He promised them, and because He hated them, He has brought them out to slay them in the wilderness.

29 Yet they are Your people and Your inheritance, whom You brought out by Your mighty power and by Your outstretched arm.

At that time the Lord said to me, Hew two tables of stone like the first, and come up to Me on the mountain, and make an ark of wood.

2 And I will write on the tables the words that were on the first tables which you broke, and you shall put them in the ark.

3 So I [Moses] made an ark of acacia wood, and hewed two tables of stone like the first, and went up the mountain* with the two tables of stone in my [one] hand.

4 And the Lord wrote on the tables, as at the first writing, the ten commandments, which the Lord had spoken to you on the mountain out of the midst of the fire on the day of the assembly; and the Lord gave them to me.

5 And I turned and came down from the mountain, and put the tables in the ark which I had made; and there they are, as the Lord commanded me.

6 (The Israelites journeyed from the wells of the sons of Jaakan to Moserah. There Aaron died, and there he was buried, and Eleazar his son ministered in the priest's office in his stead.

7 From there they journeyed to Gudgodah; then to Jotbathah, a land of brooks [dividing the valley].

*One of the many misconceptions of articles and events mentioned in the Bible, which have been innocently perpetuated by artists without adequate knowledge, is that of the size of the two tables of stone on which the ten commandments were written. They were not great combstone-size slabs, but probably small rectangular plates, two of which could easily be carried in one hand. Dr. George L. Robinson brought from the Sinai area a pair of "tablets of stone" believed comparable to those mentioned here, which he put in his coat pocket. Moses says here "I went up the mountain with the two tables of stones in my [one] hand;" and he confirms it in Exod. 34:4.

HOW TO PREVENT THE THREAT 9:1—10:11

8 At that time the Lord set apart the tribe of Levi, to bear the ark of the covenant of the Lord, to stand before the Lord to minister to Him, and to bless in His name, unto this day.

9 Therefore Levi has no part or inheritance with his brethren; the Lord is his inheritance, as the Lord your God promised him.)

10 And I [Moses] stayed on the mountain, as the first time, forty days and nights; and the Lord listened to me at that time also; the Lord would not destroy you.

11 And the Lord said to me, Arise, journey on before the people, that they may go in and possess the land, which I swore to their fathers to give to them.

COMMENT 9:1—10:11

THOU ART TO PASS OVER THE JORDAN THIS DAY (v. 1)—Commenting on the term "this day," Clarke states: "*baiyom, this time*; they had come thirtyeight years before this nearly to the verge of the promised land, but were not permitted at *that day or time* to pass over, because of their rebellion; but *this time* they shall certainly pass over. This was spoken about the *eleventh* month of the fortieth year of their journeying, and it was on the first month of the following year they passed over; and during the interim Moses died." Robert Jamieson states, "*this day—means this time*. The Israelites had reached the confines of the promised land [thirty-eight years before], but were obliged, to their great mortification, to return. But now were they certainly to enter it. No obstacle could prevent their possession . . ."

NATIONS GREATER AND MIGHTIER THAN THYSELF, CITIES GREAT AND FORTIFIED UP TO HEAVEN . . . A PEOPLE GREAT AND TALL, THE SONS OF THE ANAKIM (vv. 1, 2)—See 1:28, 7:1 and notes.

GOD IS HE WHO GOETH BEFORE THEE AS A DEVOURING FIRE (v. 3)—They had been warned against idolatry with the reminder, "For Jehovah thy God is a devouring fire, a jealous God" (4:24). But how good it is to have the power of God going *before* one, overpowering the enemy, as a devastating forest or prairie fire consumes all that is in its path! So was God's *continued* promise to an *obedient* Israel.

SO SHALT THOU DRIVE THEM OUT, AND MAKE THEM TO PERISH QUICKLY (v. 3)—How do we reconcile what is stated here, with the previous promise that God would "cast out those nations before thee by little and little," and not "at once" (7:22)? Looking at the *whole*

process, and in view of the time it would take by any "natural" means for a nation the size of Israel to dispossess the native inhabitants, it was to be "quickly." But looking on it from the standpoint of the Israelites, the process would be "little by little." Furthermore, the emphasis here is on the fact that these inhabitants should not be allowed to *live*: "... you will be able to dispossess them and kill them off quickly" (Berkeley).

SPEAK NOT THOU IN THY HEART . . . FOR MY RIGHTEOUSNESS JEHOVAH HATH BROUGHT ME IN . . . WHEREAS FOR THE WICKEDNESS OF THESE NATIONS JEHOVAH DOTTH DRIVE THEM OUT (v. 4)—There were two great purposes in God's bringing Israel into this land.

1. To punish the Canaanite tribes for their gross wickedness.

2. To bring about his eternal purpose of salvation through Christ, promised to the patriarchs (4:37, 10:15). Note v. 5.

The wickedness of these nations has already been described, and archaeologists have shown that these nations were engrossed in the basest, most degrading kind of idolatry. Their "worship" often included human sacrifice and sensual rites. See 12:31, 18:9-14; Num. 31:15, 16; Lev. 18:24-30, etc. The iniquity of the Amorite was full (Gen. 15:16), and it was time now for God to drive *them* out and bring his chosen seed *in*. Where, then, was room provided for Israel to boast? Clarke's comment is timely: "Thus the *Canaanites* were cut off, and the *Israelites* were grafted in; and the *Israelites*, because of their wickedness were afterwards cut off, and the *Gentiles* grafted in. Let the latter not be high-minded but fear; if God spared not the *natural* branches, take heed lest he spare not thee." [Cf. Rom. 11:17-24]

THOU ART A STIFFNECKED PEOPLE (v. 6)—One of a number of references to Israel's perennial disobedience. In just this chapter we have

- (a) Stiffnecked, v. 6, 13
- (b) rebellious, v. 7, 23, 24
- (c) corrupted themselves, v. 12
- (d) provoked Jehovah to wrath v. 7, 8, 22
- (e) believed not God, v. 23
- (f) "sinned" and "were evil," v. 18
- (g) quickly turned aside, v. 12

These were not exactly complimentary terms—but every one of them true. Moses could rightfully say, "Ye have been rebellious against Jehovah FROM THE DAY THAT I KNEW YOU" (v. 24). Where was

HOW TO PREVENT THE THREAT 9:1—10:11

Israel's room for pride in this? An honest appraisal of their past would have induced humility and contriteness of heart.

I ABODE IN THE MOUNT FORTY DAYS AND FORTY NIGHTS; I DID NEITHER EAT BREAD NOR DRINK WATER (v. 9)—How could Moses have more exactly stated that his was a *total fast* in Sinai? See also v. 18, where the second stay in the mount is similarly described, and Ex 34:28. Jesus' fast in the wilderness was for the same length of time, and it is also specified that "he did eat nothing in those days," Luke 4:1, 2. They were both, of course, miraculously sustained and strengthened, though this does not mean they were without hunger afterward (Matt. 4:2).

WRITTEN WITH THE FINGER OF GOD (v. 10)—See 5:22 and notes.

LET ME ALONE, THAT I MAY DESTROY THEM, AND BLOT OUT THEIR NAME FROM UNDER HEAVEN; AND I WILL MAKE OF THEE A NATION MIGHTIER AND GREATER THAN THEY (v. 14)—See Ex. 32:7-14. Moses' prayer found favor with God, and changed the course of history! See also vv. 18, 25-29; 10:10, 11. As it was, Moses had two sons, Gershom and Eliezer (Ex. 18:3, 4), but no tribe or nation sprang from them.

SO I TURNED AND CAME DOWN FROM THE MOUNT (v. 15)—The student should review these events in Exodus, chapter 31 ff. if he is not already familiar with them.

AND I FELL DOWN BEFORE JEHOVAH, AS AT THE FIRST, FORTY DAYS AND FORTY NIGHTS (v. 18)—See also v. 25, 10:10; Ex. 34:28. "Moses interceded for the people before he came down from the mountain the first time (Ex. xxxii. 11-13). This intercession is only briefly alluded to in this verse. Afterwards he spent another forty days on the mountain in fasting and prayer to obtain a complete restitution of the Covenant (Ex. xxxiv. 28). It is this second forty days, and the intercession of Moses made therein (Cp. Ex. xxxiv. 9), that is more particularly brought forward here and in vv. 25-29." (Cook, in *Barne's Notes*)

AND JEHOVAH WAS VERY ANGRY WITH AARON, TO DESTROY HIM (v. 20)—See Ex. 32:21 ff. Aaron had died several months before Moses' present speech. Cf. Num. 33:38 with Deut. 1:3.

AND I TOOK . . . THE CALF . . . GRINDING IT VERY SMALL (v. 21)—Ex. 32:20 states additionally, "And he took the calf which they

had made, and burnt it with fire, and ground it to powder, and strewed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it." That's what is called, "a taste of your own medicine." But the consequences of that sin were much more serious, and three thousand men were immediately slain by the Levites (Ex. 32:25-29).

AND AT TABERAH ["*Burning*." See Num. 11:1-3] . . . MASSAH ["*tempting*" or "proving". See Ex. 17:1-7, Deut. 6:16 and notes] AND AT KIBROTH-HATTAVAH ["The graves of lust." See Num. 11:4-35] YE PROVOKED JEHOVAH TO WRATH (v. 22). AND WHEN JEHOVAH SENT YOU FROM KADESH-BARNEA (v. 23) ["*The holy place of Barnea*" See Numbers, Chaps. 13, 14]. Murmuring, complaining, and rebellion were evident at all four of these places; and with all truthfulness Moses could say, YE HAVE BEEN REBELLIOUS AGAINST JEHOVAH FROM THE DAY I KNEW YOU (v. 24)—Cf. v. 7—"from the day that thou wentest forth out of the land of Egypt, until ye came unto this place". What an indictment! And yet, what Israelite could deny it?

SO I FELL DOWN BEFORE JEHOVAH THE FORTY DAYS AND FORTY NIGHTS (v. 25)—Continuing now from v. 18. See also 10:10. Moses' effectual prayer when Israel, led by Aaron, had "corrupted themselves" is recorded in Ex. 32:7-14; also v. 30-35. But Moses references *here*, are especially to his pleas with God during his *second* stay in the mount, which was "as the first, forty days and forty nights" (v. 18). This account is in Ex. 34:4 ff.

Moses' acts were similar during both stays, and (as we saw in discussing the engraving on the stones) it is not always easy to know those acts that were true in one stay and not in another. We know 10:1 ff. concerns his second stay.

"The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working," and Moses found favor with God. Note that his prayer for Israel's preservation is based on God's *eternal purpose* for his people. And surely *this* was God's reason for preserving them—their own "righteousness" merited only destruction (v. 4, 5).

God's true leaders are even in prayer for his people; and their motives, like Moses', are altogether disinterested and altruistic. Samuel could say, even to a people bent on doing wrong, "Moreover as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against Jehovah in ceasing to pray for you: but I will instruct you in the good and right way" (I Sam. 12:23).

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER NINE

The people are informed that they shall shortly pass over Jordan, and that God shall go over before them, to expel the ancient inhabitants, 1-3. They are cautioned not to suppose that it is on account of their righteousness that God is to give them that land, 4-6. They are exhorted to remember their various provocations of the Divine Majesty, especially at Horeb, 7-14; and how Moses interceded for them, and destroyed the Golden calf, 15-21. How they murmured at Taberah, 22; and rebelled at Kadesh-barnea, 23; and had been perverse from the beginning, 24. An account of the intercession of Moses in their behalf, 25-29.

AT THAT TIME (10:1)—Moses' second stay in the mount. The Exodus account (Ch. 34) can here be compared.

JEHOVAH SAID . . . I WILL WRITE (v. 2)—See also our previous discussion under 5:22. The plain statements of this chapter about God writing the ten commandments during Moses' second stay in the mount, cannot help but influence our interpretation of Ex. 34:1, 27, 28. In the first instance, "the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven on the tables" (Ex. 32:16). Moses hewed out the second set of tables himself, and if the words here about God writing on the second set are to be understood literally (and we have no difficulty so understanding them), the statement "And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments" (Ex. 34:28) would refer to God, not Moses.

AND I . . . PUT THE TABLES IN THE ARK (v. 5)—". . . the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was a golden pot holding the manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant" (Heb. 9:3, 4).

AND THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL JOURNEYED . . . etc. (vv. 6-9)—A parenthetical statement concerning Aaron and the tribe of Levi. Aaron's death and his succession by Eleazar his son is further detailed in Num. 20:22-29 and (especially as it connects with this passage) Num. 33:31-39. Obviously, the statements of our present verses are not intended to be understood as happening at the same time as the giving of the law, for Aaron had only recently died, in the fifth month of their fortieth year out of Egypt. Why, then, are these statements made? They are apparently suggested by the mentioning of the covenant and the Ark (v. 5), which was borne by the tribe of Levi. And

so prominent was the fact that the tables of stone were within the ark, it was known as "the ark of the covenant," or "the ark of the covenant of Jehovah." The book of Deuteronomy was later carried on the side of the ark (31:2b).

WHEREFORE LEVI HATH NO PORTION NOR INHERITANCE (v. 9)—See also 12:12, 14:27-29, 18:1-8, Num. 18:19-24. The fact that they did *not* have an inheritance placed them at the mercy of the Israelites for *support*. Don't miss the application Paul makes of this, I Cor. 9:13, 14. Members of this tribe were not property owners. Num. 35:1-8, however, provides that forty-eight cities should be given to the Levites, each surrounded by a pasturage ("suburb"). These included the six cities of refuge. They were not "inheritances" as such (the area occupied by the whole forty-eight jointly is estimated to have covered less than sixteen square miles), but provided places for members of this tribe to *live*. This passage is not inconsistent with 18:8, which specifies that the Levite may have "that which cometh of the sale of his patrimony." See notes under that verse, and remarks under 12:12.

The threat from within was to be further prevented . . .

(2) BY AN ABIDING LOVE (10:12—11:1)

12 And now, Israel, what doth Jehovah thy God require of thee, but to fear Jehovah thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve Jehovah thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, 13 to keep the commandments of Jehovah, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good? 14 Behold, unto Jehovah thy God belongeth heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth, with all that is therein. 15 Only Jehovah had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all peoples, as at this day. 16 Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked. 17 For Jehovah your God, he is God of gods, and Lord of lords, the great God, the mighty, and the terrible, who regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward. 18 He doth execute justice for the fatherless and widow, and loveth the sojourner, in giving him food and raiment. 19 Love ye therefore the sojourner; for ye were sojourners in the land of Egypt. 20 Thou shalt fear Jehovah thy God; him shalt thou serve; and to him shalt thou cleave, and by his name shalt thou swear. 21 He is thy praise, and he is thy God, that hath done for thee these great and terrible things, which thine eyes have seen. 22 Thy fathers went down into Egypt with threescore and ten

HOW TO PREVENT THE THREAT 10:12—11:1

persons; and now Jehovah thy God hath made thee as the stars of heaven for multitude.

Therefore thou shalt love Jehovah thy God, and keep his charge, and his statutes, and his ordinances, and his commandments always.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 10:12—11:1

208. Please read carefully this whole section as an expression of the heart of our Lord respecting His children. Does this sound like a tyrant type law giver?
209. Fill in the blanks: "What does the Lord your God require of you, but to fear _____ your God, to walk in all _____, to love _____, to serve _____ your God with all your _____."
210. In what sense are God's commandments for our good?
211. Why mention the thought that God owns all?
212. Isn't verse 16 a strange word? What does it mean?
213. Why mention the fatherless and widow?
214. Please list the verbs that refer to the proper relationship of the Israelite to Jehovah, such as "fear, walk, love," . . . etc. What does the Lord require of thee and me?
215. What is the suggestion in the expression: "He is your praise"?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 10:12—11:1

12 And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you, but (reverently) to fear the Lord your God: [that is,] to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the Lord your God with all your (mind and) heart and with your entire being.

13 To keep the commandments of the Lord, and His statutes, which I command you today for your good?

14 Behold, the heavens and the Heaven of heavens belong to the Lord your God, the earth also, with all that is in it and on it;

15 Yet the Lord had a delight in loving your fathers, and He chose their descendants after them, you above all people, as this day.

16 So circumcise the foreskin of your [mind and] heart; be no longer stubborn and hardened.

17 For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, the terrible God, Who is not partial and takes no bribe.

18 He executes justice for the fatherless and widow, and loves the stranger or temporary resident and gives him food and clothing.

19 Therefore love the stranger and sojourner, for you were strangers and sojourners in the land of Egypt.

20 You shall (reverently) fear the Lord your God; you shall serve Him and cling to Him, and by His name and presence you shall swear.

21 He is your praise; He is your God, Who has done for you these great and terrible things which your eyes have seen.

22 Your fathers went down to Egypt seventy persons; and now the Lord your God has made you as the stars of the heavens for multitude.

Therefore you shall love the Lord your God, and keep His charge, His statutes, His precepts, and His commandments always.

COMMENT 10:12—11:1

WHAT DOTH JEHOVAH . . . REQUIRE OF THEE, etc. (vv. 12, 13)—Surely one of the most moving passages in this book! We are immediately reminded of 6:4, 5, and also that famous scripture in Micah 6:8. One cannot help but see in these passages that God demanded the *heart* of his servants in the *Old Testament*! He was dissatisfied and displeased when service was rendered to him only out of habit, form, and dry conformity. Reader, if that was true then, under the partial light of that distant age, what shall we say of the expectations of God now?

FOR THY GOOD (v. 13)—See also 6:24, 8:16.

UNTO JEHOVAH THY GOD BELONGETH HEAVEN AND THE HEAVEN OF HEAVENS, THE EARTH, WITH ALL THAT IS THEREIN (v. 14)—A graphic way of saying that *all* belongs to *God*. "The earth is Jehovah's, and the fullness thereof" (Ps. 24:1) on one hand, "The heavens are the heavens of Jehovah" (Ps. 115:16) on the other. Concerning the phrase, "heaven and the heaven of heavens," Gesenius remarks, "i.e. all the spaces of heaven, however vast and infinite," citing this passage and I K. 8:27.

CIRCUMCISE . . . THE FORESKIN OF YOUR HEART, AND BE NO MORE STIFFNECKED (v. 16)—See also 30:6. Circumcision was, of course, an identifying mark of all Israelites. But, as Paul later states, "he is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God" (Rom. 2:28, 29).

Before *God* would be pleased, their *hearts* must be circumcised. "Circumcise yourselves to Jehovah," the prophet said, "and take away the foreskin of your heart" (Jer. 4:4). A mere outward alteration simply would not (and *will* not) do with God! The *inner* man, "the hidden man of the heart" must be changed. See Joel 2:12, 13.

[GOD] LOVETH THE SOJOURNER . . . LOVE YE THEREFORE THE SOJOURNER (vv. 18, 19)—If Israel was to be *godlike*, his love, like God's, would extend to *all*. The reference here is, of course to those who joined themselves to Israel and embraced Jehovah and his worship, such as Ruth the Moabitess and Uriah the Hittite. Cf. Lev. 19:33, 34.

BY HIS NAME THOU SHALT SWEAR (v. 20)—See 5:11 and remarks. Also 6-13.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER TEN

Moses is commanded to make a second set of tables, 1, 2. He makes an ark, prepares the two tables, God writes on them the ten commandments, and Moses lays them up in the ark, 3-5. The Israelites journey from Beeroth to Mosera, where Aaron dies, 6; and from thence to Gudgodah and Jotbath, 7. At that time God separated the tribe of Levi for the service of the sanctuary, 8, 9. How long Moses stayed the second time in the mount, 10, 11. What God requires of the Israelites, 12-15. Their heart must be circumcised, 16. God's character and conduct, 17, 18. They are commanded to love the stranger, 19; to fear, love, and serve God, 20, because he had done such great things for them and their fathers, 21, 22.

(3) BY A CONSTANT REFRESHING OF MEMORY (11:2-25)

2 And know ye this day: for I *speak* not with your children that have not known, and that have not seen the chastisement of Jehovah your God, his greatness, his mighty hand, and his outstretched arm, 3 and his signs, and his works, which he did in the midst of Egypt unto Pharaoh the king of Egypt, and unto all his land; 4 and what he did unto the army of Egypt, unto their horses, and to their chariots; how he made the water of the Red Sea to overflow them as they pursued after you, and how Jehovah hath destroyed them unto this day; 5 and what he did unto you in the wilderness, until ye came unto this place; 6 and what he did unto Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, the son of Reuben; how the earth opened its mouth, and

swallowed them up, and their households, and their tents, and every living thing that followed them, in the midst of all Israel: 7 but your eyes have seen all the great work of Jehovah which he did.

8 Therefore shall ye keep all the commandment which I command thee this day, that ye may be strong, and go in and possess the land, whither ye go over to possess it; 9 and that ye may prolong your days in the land, which Jehovah sware unto your fathers to give unto them and to their seed, a land flowing with milk and honey. 10 For the land, whither thou goest in to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs; 11 but the land, whither ye go over to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, *and* drinketh water of the rain of heaven. 12 a land which Jehovah thy God careth for: the eyes of Jehovah thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year.

13 And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love Jehovah your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul, 14 that I will give the rain of your land in its season, the former rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy grain, and thy new wine, and thine oil. 15 And I will give grass in thy fields for thy cattle, and thou shalt eat and be full. 16 Take heed to yourselves, lest your heart be deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them; 17 and the anger of Jehovah be kindled against you, and he shut up the heavens, so that there shall be no rain, and the land shall not yield its fruit; and ye perish quickly from off the good land which Jehovah giveth you.

18 Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul; and ye shall bind them for a sign upon your hand, and they shall be for frontlets between your eyes. 19 And ye shall teach them your children, talking of them, when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. 20 And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thy house, and upon thy gates; 21 that your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which Jehovah sware unto your fathers to give them, as the days of the heavens above the earth. 22 or if ye shall diligently keep all this commandment which I command you, to do it, to love Jehovah your God, to walk in all his ways, and to cleave unto him; 23 then will Jehovah drive out all these nations from before you, and ye shall dispossess nations greater and mightier

than yourselves. 24 Every place whereon the sole of your foot shall tread shall be yours: from the wilderness, and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the hinder sea shall be your border. 25 There shall no man be able to stand before you: Jehovah your God shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that ye shall tread upon, as he hath spoken unto you.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 11:2-25

216. Why was Israel to consider the discipline or chastisement of the Lord?
217. Define in your own words the following qualities of Jehovah: (1) greatness, (2) mighty hand, (3) outstretched arm, (4) signs, (5) deeds, (6) destroyed, (7) great work.
218. What was one of the basic differences and advantages of Canaan as compared to Egypt?
219. Did God promise material prosperity as a result of obedience to His laws? Is this true today? Discuss.
220. Read the comments again on 6:6-9.
221. Please consider verse 21 and answer the question as to whether Palestine still belongs to the Jews?
222. Were the conditions and promises of Jehovah ever met for the conquering of the promised land? When? By whom?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 11:2-25

2 And know this day (for I am not speaking to your children who have not [personally] known and seen it), the instruction and discipline of the Lord your God, His greatness, His mighty hand, and His outstretched arm,

3 His signs and His deeds which He did in Egypt to Pharaoh the king of Egypt and to all his land;

4 And what He did to the army of Egypt, to their horses and chariots; how He made the water of the Red Sea overflow them as they pursued after you, and how the Lord has destroyed them to this day;

5 And what He did to you in the wilderness, until you came to this place;

6 And what He did to Dathan and Abiram sons of Eliab, son of Reuben; how the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up them, their households, their tents, and every living thing that followed them, in the midst of all Israel; [Num. 26:9, 10.]

7 For your eyes have seen all the great work of the Lord which He did.

8 Therefore you shall keep all the commandments which I command you today, that you may be strong, and go in and possess the land which you go across [Jordan] to possess;

9 And that you may live long in the land, which the Lord swore to your fathers to give them and to their descendants, a land flowing with milk and honey.

10 For the land which you go in to possess is not like the land of Egypt, from which you came out, where you sowed your seed and watered it with your foot laboriously, as a garden of vegetables;

11 But the land, which you enter to possess, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinks water of the rain of the heavens;

12 A land for which the Lord your God cares; the eyes of the Lord your God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.

13 And if you will diligently heed My commandments which I command you this day, to love the Lord your God, and to serve Him with all your [mind and] heart and with your entire being,

14 I will give the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the latter rain, that you may gather in your grain, your new wine, and your oil.

15 And I will give grass in your fields for your cattle, that you may eat and be full.

16 Take heed to yourselves, lest your [mind and] heart be deceived and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them,

17 And the Lord's anger be kindled against you, and He shut up the heavens, so that there will be no rain, and the land yield not its fruit, and you perish quickly off the good land which the Lord gives you.

18 Therefore you shall lay up these My words in your [mind and] heart and in your [entire] being, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, and as forehead bands between your eyes.

19 And you shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you rise up.

20 And you shall write them upon the doorposts of your house, and on your gates,

21 That your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers to give them, as long as the heavens are above the earth.

22 For if you diligently keep all this commandment which I command you to do, to love the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways, and to cleave to Him,

23 Then the Lord will drive out all these nations before you, and you shall dispossess nations greater and mightier than yourselves.

24 Every place upon which the sole of your foot shall tread shall be yours; from the wilderness to Lebanon, and from the River, the river Euphrates, to the western [Mediterranean] sea your territory shall be.

25 There shall no man be able to stand before you; the Lord your God shall lay the fear and the dread of you upon all the land that you shall tread, as He has said to you.

COMMENT 11:2-25

In vv. 2-7, note that the mighty works of Jehovah, which the adults had all seen, argued for their obedience. In vv. 8-17, the rich, fertile, and productive nature of the promised land is depicted, while in vv. 18-25 Israel is reminded that God's law, when carefully kept, assured them of victory and conquest of the entire area pledged. All this Israel doubtless knew, mentally. But this is a "sermon," and Moses would indelibly impress, yea, *engrave* certain thoughts upon their minds.

FOR I SPEAK NOT WITH YOUR CHILDREN (v. 2)—The youngsters could not be *reminded* of what the older ones could—the adults *should* have learned life-long lessons from their wilderness experiences (6:2, 3).

DATHAN AND ABIRAM (v. 6)—See Num. 16. One would think such an event as this would put a stop to all thoughts of rebellion, murmuring, or disobedience for a long while. "But on the morrow all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron, saying, Ye have killed the people of Jehovah" (Num. 16:41). This was Israel's history. The most severe chastisement often failed to teach the desired lesson! A plague resulted from this murmuring, killing 14,700. "Now, Israel," Moses is saying, "*think* about this! Do you want such chastisements to be *again* upon your head, or will you receive the *blessings* God has promised with *obedience*? Your eyes have *seen* all these things (v. 7)—have you absorbed the *lesson* God has for you in all this? And have we (I Cor. 10:11, 12)?"

FOR THE LAND . . . IS NOT AS THE LAND OF EGYPT . . . WHERE THOU SOWEDST THY SEED, AND WATEREDST IT WITH THY FOOT . . . etc. (vv. 10-12)—Although various methods of irrigation are today absolutely necessary for agriculture in vast portions of Israel, such was

not true in ancient times for the greater part of the land promised in vv. 24, 25. Furthermore, the former and latter rains (v. 14. Cf. Job 29:23, Jer. 5:24, Joel 2:23, Jas. 5:7) were *assured* only if Israel was *obedient* (v. 17). In contrast, Egypt is absolutely dependent on an extensive irrigation system for her very survival as an agricultural state. (Witness the recent building of the Aswan High Dam in southern Egypt). Rain seldom falls in Egypt. Most of the country has only about one inch a year. Were it not for the Nile, most of the country would simply be a part of the Sahara desert.

On the above phrase, the I.S.B.E. states, "To one familiar with the methods of irrigation today practiced in Palestine, Syria, and Egypt, the passage, 'where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs' (Deut. 11:10), is easily explained. The water is brought in channels to the gardens, where it is distributed along the rows of growing vegetables planted on the sides of the trenches. In stony soil the canal leading to a particular plot is opened and closed with a hoe. Any obstruction in the trench is similarly removed, while in the soft, loamy soil of the coastal plain or in the Nile valley these operations can be done with the foot, a practice still commonly seen."

TAKE HEED TO YOURSELVES (vv. 16, 17)—The thought of these verses being very similar to that of 8:11 ff., i.e. that the very blessings they *received* from God would cause them to become soft and lax with regard to his worship and the observance of his laws. The *same warning* needs to be sounded loud and frequently *today!*

THEREFORE SHALL YE LAY UP THESE MY WORDS IN YOUR HEART AND IN YOUR SOUL; AND YE SHALL BIND THEM FOR A SIGN . . . etc (vv. 18-21)—See 6:6-9 and remarks.

THAT YOUR DAYS MAY BE MULTIPLIED . . . AS THE DAYS OF THE HEAVENS ABOVE THE EARTH (v. 21)—"as long as the heavens are above the earth" (Amplified O.T.), "as long as there is a heaven over the earth" (The Torah). As the phrase stands in the A.S.V., the phrase would indicate no specific *length of time*, but simply an innumerable number of days. The other renderings would extend this promise to the end of the world (II Pet. 3:9).

AND YE SHALL DISPOSSESS NATIONS GREATER AND MIGHTIER THAN YOURSELVES (v. 23) . . . THERE SHALL NO MAN BE ABLE TO STAND BEFORE YOU (v. 25)—Christian, why cannot *we* learn the lesson here that Israel did *not*? A complete trust, obedience and love of Jehovah

(note v. 22) had this great promise along with it. In essence, the promise was: You will be able to do things that now appear totally *impossible*—accomplish things that try even the imagination—vanquish peoples that are “unconquerable,” overcome difficulties that seem insurmountable, conquer insuperable barriers. When Israel took these exhortations to heart, God literally fulfilled his part of this promise (as shown especially in Joshua, and also under the rulership of David and Solomon).

Unless a foe or difficulty is larger than *God*, it is not insurmountable. the theme of the Bible is “God is able.” Yes, it is “him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us” (Eph. 3:20). “If God be for us, who can be against us?” Who can stand up against him who is aligned with and in fellowship with Almighty God? Let us *stand with him*, and we will soon *share of his power!* Let us stop asserting *ourselves*, and assert our confidence in the Omnipotent One.

8. THE BLESSING AND THE CURSE (11:26-32)

26 Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse: 27 the blessing, if ye shall hearken unto the commandments of Jehovah your God, which I command you this day; 28 and the curse, if ye shall not hearken unto the commandments of Jehovah your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known. 29 And it shall come to pass, when Jehovah thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, that thou shalt set the blessing upon mount Gerizim, and the curse upon mount Ebal. 30 Are they not beyond the Jordan, behind the way of the going down of the sun, in the land of the Canaanites that dwell in the Arabah, over against Gilgal, beside the oaks of Moreh? 31 For ye are to pass over the Jordan to go in to possess the land which Jehovah your God giveth you, and yet shall possess it, and dwell therein. 32 And ye shall observe to do all the statutes and the ordinances which I set before you this day.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 11:26-32

223. Just what blessing had Jehovah promised to Israel? What curse?
224. It would seem the whole of God's desire for us can be summarized in one word, “obedience.” Do you agree?
225. What is meant by “set the blessings on Mount Gerizim”?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 11:26-32

26 Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse;

27 The blessing, if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you this day;

28 And the curse, if you will not obey the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn aside from the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods which you have not known.

29 And when the Lord your God has brought you into the land which you go to possess, you shall set the blessings on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal. [Josh. 8:33.]

30 Are they not beyond the Jordan, west of the road where the sun goes down, in the land of the Canaanites, living in the Arabah opposite Gilgal, beside the oaks or terebiths of Moreh?

31 For you are to cross over the Jordan to go in to possess the land which the Lord your God gives you, and you shall possess it, and live in it.

32 And you shall be watchful to do all the statutes and ordinances which I set before you this day.

COMMENT 11:26-32

We will have more to say of God's instructions upon Israel's arrival at Ebal and Gerizim in chapters 27 and 28. These mountains were directly opposite one another in the area allotted to the tribe of Ephraim. Ebal, 3,075 feet high, was on the north, and Gerezim, elevation 2,850, on the south; with the town of Shechem lying in the valley between.

THIS DAY (vv. 26, 32)—It appears that this section chronologically belongs to the same time as chap. 27 ff. because the same event is described. In fact, all the intervening scriptures *may* be a record of Moses' words *on the same day*. However, it is not mandatory that we compress "this day" into so literal a meaning. See 9:1, notes.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER ELEVEN

The people are exhorted to obedience from a consideration of God's goodness to their fathers in Egypt, 1-4, and what he did in the wilderness, 5, and the judgment on Dathan and Abiram, 6, and from the mercies of God in general, 7-9. A comparative description of Egypt and Canaan, 10-12. Promises to obedience, 13-15. Dissuasives from

idolatry, 16, 17. The words of God to be laid up in their hearts, to be for a sign on their hands, foreheads, gates, &c., 18, taught to their children, made the subject of frequent conversation, to the end that their days may be multiplied, 19-21. If obedient, God shall give them possession of the whole land, and not one of their enemies shall be able to withstand them, 22-25. Life and death, a blessing and a curse, are set before them, 26-28. The blessings to be put on Mount Gerizim and the curses on Mount Ebal, 29, 30. The promise that they should pass over Jordan, and observe these statutes in the promised land, 31, 32.

QUESTIONS, LESSON EIGHT (8:1—11:32)

CHAPTER 8

1. What was God's purpose in both providing Israel's food and allowing him to suffer hunger?
2. In what sense did neither this generation nor their fathers "know" the manna? (finish before proceeding.)
3. Complete: "_____ doth not _____ by _____ alone, but by _____ that proceedeth out of the mouth of _____ doth man _____."
4. Explain what particular significance the above verse would have to Israel in the wilderness.
5. In what context did Jesus use this verse?
6. What applications do you see for this passage in life today?
7. Finish: "And thou shalt consider in thy heart, that, as a man _____ his son, so Jehovah thy God _____ thee" (v. 5).
8. Name two metals Israel would be able to obtain in their new land.
9. What is said of Israel's wearing apparel during the wilderness trek?
10. What particular temptations would come Israel's way along with their wealth and plenty?

CHAPTER 9

11. How do you reconcile the statement of v. 3 ("make them [the native tribes] to perish quickly,") with the command to cast out those nations "by little and little" (7:22)?
12. Israel was not to say "For _____ righteousness Jehovah hath brought me in to possess this land" because "for the _____ of these nations Jehovah does drive them out . . ." (v. 4).

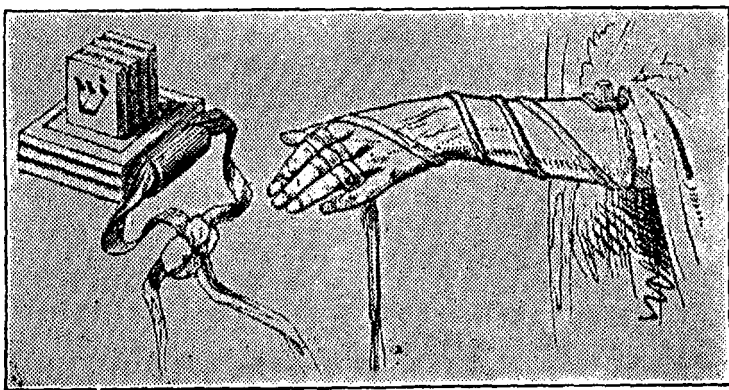
13. What two basic reasons, then, did God have for exterminating the Canaanite tribes?
14. Moses could personally testify that Israel had been rebellious for quite some time. How long?
15. Of whom did God threaten to make a nation when Israel sinned below the mount?
16. How much *total* time did Moses spend in fasting and prayer on the mount?

CHAPTER 10

17. What was kept in the ark?
18. Levi had no inheritance but ... _____.
19. What "exceptions" do the scriptures make to the above rule?
20. Was heart-felt service absolutely necessary to the faithful Israelite? Explain.

CHAPTER 11

21. What advantage did the adult Israelite have that the children did not?
22. What was the chief difference mentioned here between Egypt and Palestine?
23. Who could stand before Israel when they were obedient?
24. What was to be the mountain of blessing? Of the curse?



Phylacteries for Head and Arm.