



KINGDOM PERFORMANCE

Forty Daily Devotions
from Deuteronomy
(Based on the NKJV)

Introduction

Deuteronomy is a transliteration from the Greek words that mean “second law”. Just before Moses was to pass on to Heaven and Israel was to pass over the Jordan River into the Promised Land, God repeated His message once more to His people through His prophet. Deuteronomy is actually made up of three long sermons that Moses preached to the people so that they would be reminded of God’s expectations of how He desired for them to live in obedience and blessing in their new homeland. As we read through this book, we need to be reminded that those who heard these messages were the descendants of those who had originally left Egypt with Moses. Deuteronomy is very much about performance and how God desires for His people to live in harmony with His Word and in obedience to His Will. I pray that you will find strength to do that as you read through this book and these devotions.

Daily Reading Schedule

Day	Scripture Reading	Date
1	Deuteronomy 1:1-21	02/22/23
2	Deuteronomy 1:22-46	02/23/23
3	Deuteronomy 2:1-23	02/24/23
4	Deuteronomy 2:24-3:11	02/25/23
5	Deuteronomy 3:12-4:4	02/26/23
6	Deuteronomy 4:5-24	02/27/23
7	Deuteronomy 4:25-49	02/28/23
8	Deuteronomy 5:1-21	03/01/23
9	Deuteronomy 5:22-6:9	03/02/23
10	Deuteronomy 6:10-7:6	03/03/23
11	Deuteronomy 7:7-26	03/04/23
12	Deuteronomy 8:1-20	03/05/23
13	Deuteronomy 9:1-29	03/06/23
14	Deuteronomy 10:1-22	03/07/23
15	Deuteronomy 11:1-23	03/08/23
16	Deuteronomy 11:24-12:12	03/09/23
17	Deuteronomy 12:13-32	03/10/23
18	Deuteronomy 13:1-18	03/11/23
19	Deuteronomy 14:1-29	03/12/23
20	Deuteronomy 15:1-23	03/13/23

Day	Scripture Reading	Date
21	Deuteronomy 16:1-22	03/14/23
22	Deuteronomy 17:1-20	03/15/23
23	Deuteronomy 18:1-22	03/16/23
24	Deuteronomy 19:1-21	03/17/23
25	Deuteronomy 20:1-20	03/18/23
26	Deuteronomy 21:1-23	03/19/23
27	Deuteronomy 22:1-30	03/20/23
28	Deuteronomy 23:1-25	03/21/23
29	Deuteronomy 24:1-22	03/22/23
30	Deuteronomy 25:1-26:11	03/23/23
31	Deuteronomy 26:12-27:23	03/24/23
32	Deuteronomy 27:24-28:26	03/25/23
33	Deuteronomy 28:27-57	03/26/23
34	Deuteronomy 28:58-29:18	03/27/23
35	Deuteronomy 29:19-30:19	03/28/23
36	Deuteronomy 30:20-31:19	03/29/23
37	Deuteronomy 31:20-32:19	03/30/23
38	Deuteronomy 32:20-52	03/31/23
39	Deuteronomy 33:1-23	04/01/23
40	Deuteronomy 33:24-34:12	04/02/23

Day 1: Deuteronomy 1:1-21

““Look, the LORD your God has set the land before you; go up and possess it, as the LORD God of your fathers has spoken to you; do not fear or be discouraged.”” (Deuteronomy 1:21)

“Do Not Fear or Be Discouraged”

Deuteronomy contains the last series of messages that Moses preached to the people of Israel before they crossed the Jordan River to possess the Promised Land. To some of his listeners, these earlier messages explain why they could *not* enter the land. To others, the descendants of the first group, these messages explained the importance of obedience to God as they prepared to enter the land. Verse 3 indicates that Moses began these teachings “in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month.” One can only imagine the earnestness with which Moses must have spoken to these people and how strong his desire to empower and encourage them must have been. Because Moses addressed these messages “to all Israel” (1:1) it is clear that he intended for all of them to accomplish that which he and their fathers had not done – enter and possess the Promised Land! His desire was that they “go up and possess it, as the LORD God of your fathers has spoken to you; do not fear or be discouraged” (v. 21). The source of their courage was to be the Word of God. That is why Moses “began to explain” (v. 5) the Laws of God to them. The word translated “explain” there is a word that means “to make something plain.”

Prayer Emphasis: Kingdom Performance (how we respond to God and His commands) is based on what we clearly and plainly know from the Word of God. Be faithful to **read daily** from Deuteronomy and humbly **allow** God to speak to your heart so that you may live without fear and discouragement.

Day 2: Deuteronomy 1:22-46

““Where can we go up? Our brethren have discouraged our hearts, saying, ‘The people are greater and taller than we; the cities are great and fortified up to heaven; moreover we have seen the sons of the Anakim there.’”” (Deuteronomy 1:28)

A Solemn Reminder

When we remember that these addresses are primarily being made to the descendants of those who came out of Egypt with Moses, we must note how, while addressing events that happened in the past, Moses keeps referring to the people as “you.” It is interesting how the preacher kept referring to them as if it was their own actions that had caused the great delay in the finalization of God’s plan for His people. One can only imagine that the messages were made so clear and personal in order that this present generation might remember and avoid the sins of the past. One of those major sins was the lack of faith in God’s promises that led them to send the spies over to review the land. Upon their return, the spies affirmed that the land was everything that God had promised, but still the people “rebelled against the command of the LORD” (v. 26). Note again the use of the personal pronoun “you” in verses 26 and 27. Clearly, Moses wanted this generation to know that their fathers had not obeyed God because they had become “discouraged” by the report of the spies (v. 28). The word that is translated “discouraged” there is often translated “melted” in other translations and in other places in the Bible.

Prayer Emphasis: Kingdom Performance is a very personal matter that every Christian must face in his own life and personal ministry. **Learn** from the mistakes of others and **grow** in your personal relationship with God by being obedient to His commands and trusting Him to do all that He promises.

Day 3: Deuteronomy 2:1-23

“For the LORD your God has blessed you...these forty years the LORD your God has been with you; you have lacked nothing.” (Deuteronomy 2:7)

Remembering the Desert Years

While the books of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers appear to have been written with the priests and Levites as their intended audience, Deuteronomy is written more in laymen’s terms and is an explanation of the Law given to a people that were either unborn or very young at the time that the Law came down from God on Mount Sinai. In the early stages of Moses’ preparatory messages to those who would soon cross the river to conquer the land, he rehearsed some of the past experiences of their fathers with them, reminding them of the high cost of the lack of faith and disobedience exhibited by those who left Egypt with him. He spoke to them about the journey through the land of Edom (vs. 1-7) and then about their journey through Moab (vs. 8-15). The actual amount of time that Moses reviewed in the first 15 verses of Deuteronomy was 38 years! There was much for this new generation to learn from the mistakes of the preceding generation and Moses wanted them to see how the disobedience of the Exodus generation had turned an 11-day trip into 40 years of wandering!

Prayer Emphasis: Our own **Kingdom Performance** should be strengthened by the knowledge that God honors His promises to His people! His refusal to allow the people of Israel to disinherit the descendants of Esau and Lot from their lands should remind us of God’s faithfulness. It should also serve as a reminder that God does not want us to settle for anything less than what He has planned for us!

Day 4: Deuteronomy 2:24-3:11

“And the LORD said to me, “Do not fear him, for I have delivered him and all his people and his land into your hand; you shall do to him as you did to Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heshbon.””
(Deuteronomy 3:2)

Victories Over Giants

Today’s Scripture finds Moses reminding the people of the victory God gave them over King Sihon and the Amorites (2:24-37) as well as the victory that God gave them over Og, King of Bashan (3:1-22). In both of these situations, the Israelites had not been aggressive toward the inhabitants of these lands. Just as they had done with the earlier nations, they desired to simply pass peacefully through the land of the Amorites and offered to pay for the food and water that they consumed during their passage. King Sihon hardened his heart against them and a battle followed. Obviously, King Og heard of the utter destruction of King Sihon and his people, and attacked Israel as they continued on with their journey. Og and his people were the last of the “giants” in the land. These were the same kind of people that caused the spies to question Israel’s ability to defeat the people of Canaan and inherit the Promised Land (Numbers 13). In providing these two great victories, God accomplished two very important things. First, He provided an area of land for the tribes who would remain on that side of the Jordan River to inhabit. Second, He taught His people that they could defeat any enemy as long as they followed His commands.

Prayer Emphasis: Notice in our focus verse that God again reminded His people to live without fear. Our **Kingdom Performance** cannot be based on anything but God and His mighty power. **Believe** that, because He is with us, we can move forward in faith rather than fear!

Day 5: Deuteronomy 3:12-4:4

“*You must not fear them, for the LORD your God Himself fights for you.*”” (Deuteronomy 3:22)

“God...Fights for You!”

After reminding the people of the way that the land on the east side of Jordan was divided among the two and one-half tribes that would eventually settle there (vs. 12-17), Moses then reminded them of the fact that they had all conquered that land together as a whole nation and that they must do the same with the land that was on the west side of the river. The men from the tribes that would settle in the east were to accompany their brothers in the conquest of the Promised Land and then return to their families (vs. 18-20). Moses then shared with all the people the words that he had spoken to Joshua when he first informed him of his future duties as the next leader of God’s people (vs. 18-20). Note the word “fear” is mentioned again. It is obvious that “fear” has always been a tool of the enemy to discourage God’s people from accomplishing all that God has commanded them to do. Moses created a historical record of the conversation that he had with God concerning his own passage over Jordan and into the Promised Land. I have often wondered if God interrupted Moses with His, “Enough of that! Speak no more to me on this matter” (v. 26) because He knew how persuasive this great leader could be when he prayed. Moses was then allowed a glimpse of the Promised Land from Mount Pisgah before God ordered him to go and “encourage” and “strengthen” Joshua (v. 28).

Prayer Emphasis: Kingdom Performance often demands that we consider the needs of others before our own. A key to success in leadership is the willingness to selflessly accomplish the things that “encourage and strengthen” others – even when we do not get all that we want from God. **Encourage** a fellow believer today!

Day 6: Deuteronomy 4:5-24

“*But I must die in this land, I must not cross over the Jordan; but you shall cross over and possess that good land. Take heed to yourselves, lest you forget the covenant of the LORD your God which He made with you...*” (Deuteronomy 4:22-23)

A Very Personal Testimony

Imagine the humility that it took for Moses to stand before his people and tell them that he could not accompany them into the Promised Land because he had aroused God’s anger by personally sinning against Him. The people needed to see that no man – not even the mighty Moses who had talked with God “face to face” – was above the Law or exempt from the responsibility of obedience! Moses was wise enough to know that God did not need him to lead the people to victory and that no man was indispensable or irreplaceable! However, we see more than humility here! We also see the faith of a man who had watched God work in miraculous ways over the past 40 years. Look back at the two very good questions that Moses asked the people back in verses 7 and 8. This wasn’t just “good preaching.” This was a committed leader teaching his followers to keep their eyes on God and no one else! Moses closed this portion of his message to the people by encouraging them to “Take heed to yourselves lest you forget the covenant of the LORD your God which He made with you” (v. 23). Whether written or verbal, a covenant was a binding agreement. Moses reminded the people that God made certain promises *to* Israel, but He also demanded certain things *from* them.

Prayer Emphasis: Consider the power of a personal testimony and then **share** a testimony with someone that you encounter today. **Reflect** on the two questions that Moses asked Israel about the faithfulness of God (vs. 7-8) and **remind** yourself of how blessed you really are!

Day 7: Deuteronomy 4:25-49

“Then Moses set apart three cities on this side of the Jordan, toward the rising of the sun, that the manslayer might flee there, who kills his neighbor unintentionally, without having hated him in time past, and that by fleeing to one of these cities he might live.” (Deuteronomy 4:41-42)

Do All That You Possibly Can

In verse 40, Moses told the people, “You shall therefore keep His statutes and commandments.” For Moses, these words made for some good preaching, but from what we read in our focus verses, these same words made for good living. When it comes to obedience to God, it is not uncommon for us to find ourselves telling others to do it even when we are not being fully obedient in our own lives. Earlier (Numbers 35:13-15) God told Moses to build, “six cities of refuge” and that they should “appoint three cities on this side of Jordan.” The remaining three cities were to be “in the land of Canaan.” How easy it would have been for Moses, after learning that he would not be allowed to enter Canaan, to just give up and forget about his responsibilities to God. We see today that such was far from the case with Moses! He got busy and fulfilled as much of his divine responsibilities as possible. Although someone else would have to establish the cities of refuge on the other side of the river, He led the people in establishing the ones on the side where he could. From this wonderful example, we learn that idleness is never a good option for the believer. Even though Moses could not obey all of God’s command to build the six cities of refuge, he did all that he possibly could.

Prayer Emphasis: Kingdom Performance sometimes means doing all that we possibly can even when we know that we will not be able to complete God’s work fully. **Look** for opportunities to be as obedient as you can today and go as far as you can go for God! **Refuse** to be idle when there is work to be done for God!

Day 8: Deuteronomy 5:1-21

““I am the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before Me.”” (Deuteronomy 5:6-7)

The First Commandment

Before giving His people the Ten Commandments, God reminded them of who He was and what He had done for them. He had “brought (them) up out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.” As we read these messages preached by Moses and recorded in Deuteronomy, we will see Moses refer to Egypt as a place of bondage and slavery at least five more times after this statement (6:12, 7:8, 8:14, 13:5, and 10). As such, we are to understand that the people to whom God first gave these commandments were already a redeemed people. The law was not given to provide a pathway to redemption but to obedience. The key to success in our **Kingdom Performance** is found in our understanding that we have already been redeemed from bondage and that our lives are to be based on a relationship that we already have with God. Obedience to God’s commandments is a lifestyle that allows us to express our love for God and to enhance our fellowship with Him. The purpose of the Law and the commandments was never to help men achieve salvation, but rather to help men in their service to God.

Prayer Emphasis: Kingdom Performance demands that we have “no other gods” before the One that has loved us and sent His Son to redeem us from the bondage of sin. **Consider** what it means to truly put God first in your life. **Refuse** to become distracted by the gods of this world. **Realize** that failure to obey this command is idolatry – something from which we are commanded to flee (1 Corinthians 10:14).

Day 9: Deuteronomy 5:22-6:9

“You go near and hear all that the LORD our God may say, and tell us all that the LORD our God says to you, and we will hear and do it.” (Deuteronomy 5:27)

“We Will Hear and Do It”

God has a zero tolerance for idolatry. He had issued a stern warning to His people when He plainly stated, “When you...have grown old in the land, and act corruptly and make a carved image in the form of anything” you are doing “evil in the sight of the LORD” and you “provoke Him to anger” (4:25). He clearly warned them that idolatry would cost them the possession of their land and that they would ultimately be “scattered among the peoples” of the earth and “left few in number among the nations” (4:27). In the first 21 verses in Deuteronomy 5, God reviewed the commandments with Israel. In verse 22 God reminded them that He “Spoke to all (their) assembly...with a loud voice” and that He had also written “them on two tablets of stone.” Moses added, “So it was, when you heard the voice from the midst of the darkness...that you came near to me, all the heads of your tribes and your elders. And you said, ‘Surely the LORD our God has shown us His glory and His greatness, and we have heard His voice from the midst of the fire. We have seen this day that God speaks with man; yet he lives’” (vs. 23-24). On that day, the people of Israel made a very wise decision. They said, “Tell us all that the LORD our God says to you, and we will hear and do it.”

Prayer Emphasis: Our **Kingdom Performance** must be based on obedience to God’s Word and respect for His warnings. **Believe** that God’s Word was written for you and your family. Take it’s warnings to heart and avoid putting anything before God.

Day 10: Deuteronomy 6:10-7:6

“then beware, lest you forget the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.” (Deuteronomy 6:12)

“Lest You Forget”

Moses was instructed by God to warn Israel about forgetting that He had delivered them from Egypt and brought them to the Promised Land (v. 12). He then gave them some things that would help them to always remember all that He had done for them. First, He instructed them to “fear the LORD” (v. 13a). The word that is translated “fear” here is a word that means to have a reverential respect for God and His Word. It does not imply that we should be afraid of God but it does mean that we should respectfully consider the fact that He is our Creator and we, as His creation, belong to Him. Second, Moses instructed the people to “serve” God (v. 13b). The word translated “serve” here is the word that is translated “till” in Genesis 3:23 where we are told how God sent Adam out “to till the ground” in Eden. To serve God means to do the things that He has assigned to us and to fulfill the responsibilities that He has given us. There were also some things that the people were warned *not* to do. They were warned not to “go after other gods” (v. 14), and they were also warned not to tempt God (v. 16). “Massah” refers to the place where Israel rebelled against Moses and God because they had no water to drink in the Wilderness (Exodus 17:1-7).

Prayer Emphasis: **Remember** that many of God’s people have failed God after a time of great victory or success. King David was at the height of his earthly successes when he committed his greatest acts of unfaithfulness to God. **Ask** God to help you to remember that it is through Him alone that we live, breathe, and have our being.

Day 11: Deuteronomy 7:7-26

“The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; but because the LORD loves you...” (Deuteronomy 7:7-8a)

Ephesians 2:8-9 in Deuteronomy (Part One)

We are all familiar with what Paul said about “boasting” in his letter to the Christians at Ephesus when he reminded them that they had been saved “by grace” and “through faith.” He wanted them to understand that salvation was not based on their own righteousness or good works. His concern for those beloved Christians was that they might become proud and arrogant in their salvation by believing themselves to be better than others. This concern that Paul had for Christians in New Testament times was nothing new. In Deuteronomy, God expressed the same kind of concern for Israel and the Old Testament saints. In our focus verses He reminded them that He “did not set His love” on them or “choose” them because they “were more in number than any other people.” In fact, at the time that God set His love on them they “were the least of all peoples.” God wanted His people to remember that He had brought them out of Egypt and to the edge of the Promised Land simply because He loved them (v. 8). He did not choose them because they were bigger or better than others. He chose them because *they* needed *Him* and not because *He* needed *them*. Three times in three consecutive chapters, Moses cautioned Israel against believing that they had somehow merited God’s favor.

Prayer Emphasis: We must be careful to **remember** that God does not consider *bigger* to necessarily be *better*. He is not as interested in how many people are in the church as He is in how many people in the church are truly worshiping and serving Him. **Thank** God for His wonderful grace and **praise** Him for salvation.

Day 12: Deuteronomy 8:1-20

“then you say in your heart, “My power and the might of my hand have gained me this wealth.” And you shall 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 it is this day.” (Deuteronomy 8:17-18)

Ephesians 2:8-9 in Deuteronomy (Part Two)

After reminding Israel that God had not chosen them because they were bigger or better than other nations, Moses went on to inform them that God did not choose them because they were economically stronger than others. Once again, God warned Israel against forgetting Him (v. 11) by saying, “lest when you have eaten and are full, and have built beautiful houses” (v. 12) “and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and your gold are multiplied” (v. 13), “and when your heart is lifted up” that you “forget the LORD your God” (v. 14). Just so the people would not forget, God had Moses warn them against thinking that their “power and the might of (their) hands had gained (them) this wealth” (v. 17). He went on to say that they should “remember the LORD (their) God, for it (was) He who gave them power to get wealth” (v. 18). Israel was reminded to see God as the source of all of their blessings. Once again, they were being reminded that they needed God infinitely more than God could ever need them.

Prayer Emphasis: **Remind** yourself – on a regular basis – that our **Kingdom Performance** is not based on any resource of our own. **Humble** yourself before God and **confess** your weaknesses to Him. **Thank** Him and **praise** Him for His many provisions, including your home, family, and even your job. **Testify** about God’s goodness with someone you meet today.

Day 13: Deuteronomy 9:1-29

“Do not think in your heart, after the LORD your God has cast them out before you, saying, “Because of my righteousness the LORD has brought me in to possess this land...”” (Deuteronomy 9:4)

Ephesians 2:8-9 in Deuteronomy (Part Three)

In chapter 7, we read where God informed Israel that He had not chosen them because of their numerical superiority. They were clearly informed that God did not see them as being bigger or better than any other nation. In chapter 8, we saw where God told them that He had not chosen them because of their economic superiority. There were other nations that had more wealth and property than Israel. Now, in chapter 9, we read where God informed Israel that they were not chosen because of their moral superiority. The truth was that Israel had survived thus far only by the grace of God. They certainly had done nothing to merit the blessings that God had already poured out on them. They certainly did not deserve all that God promised them for their future either. God wanted His people to know that He had done all that He had done for them because of His love and grace. Based on that information, Israel had no room to boast or to consider themselves morally better than others. If you take a careful look at the verses that follow our focus verses, you will see that God laid out a pretty strong case against Israel – denying them any opportunity to consider themselves worthy of His blessings.

Prayer Emphasis: Remember that our **Kingdom Performance** is based on grace and not on merit. **Thank** God for His marvelous grace today. **Share** some good thing that God has done for you with someone you speak with today.

Day 14: Deuteronomy 10:1-22

“And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart...” (Deuteronomy 10:12)

A Call to Commitment

After spending a considerable amount of time reminding Israel that God did not bless them because of who they were, what they had, or what they had done, Moses informed them of what God required of them. At first glance, this may seem like God was demanding something from Israel. However, a careful look at most translations of the Bible will find that the Hebrew word translated “required” here is translated “ask” in 94 places in the Bible while it is translated “require” in only seven places. For all that God had done for Israel, He only “asked” of them some very simple things in return. First, they were asked to “Fear the LORD.” God reserves the right to request that His people treat Him with respect and to honor Him for who He is. Then He asked them “to walk in all His ways.” This simply means that their lives were to be lived according to the divine pattern that He had prescribed for them. They were also asked “to love Him,” and because of that love, they were “to serve the LORD...with all (their) hearts.” He then asked them “to keep the commandments...and statutes” that He had commanded them (v. 13). God desires that His people not only *know* His Word but that they *keep* it as well. As God closed this section, He reminded them that these things He had asked of them were “for (their) good.”

Prayer Emphasis: Remember that every command of God is given for our good. Every command He makes is with our best interest in mind, even if we cannot sense it or understand it. **Praise** Him for His goodness today.

Day 15: Deuteronomy 11:1-23

“Take heed to yourselves, lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them,” (Deuteronomy 11:16)

The Danger of Blessing

The word that is translated “deceived” in the NKJV and many other translations is sometimes translated “enticed” or “seduced.” The actual Hebrew word has two basic meanings. First, it means “to be spacious, open, or wide.” Since the warning is against serving and worshipping other gods, then you might say that God was warning His people about being “open-minded” toward false religions that worshipped any god but Him. The secondary meaning for this word was “to be simple or naïve.” Here we might be reminded that God does not want us to be simple-minded about our belief. According to verse 18, He desires that His people “lay up” (instill) His words in our hearts and souls and to allow them to guide us as we go about every part of our daily living. Verse 19 reminds us that He also desires that we teach His words to our children by “speaking of them when (we) sit in our houses” or “when (we) walk by the way, when (we) lie down, and when (we) rise up.” He even suggested that His people “write them” (His words) “on the doorposts of (their) house and on (their) gate” (v. 20). If you take a careful look at verses 22 and 23, you will see that there is a big “if” in verse 22 and a conditional “then” in verse 23. “If” God’s people were obedient to His commands, “then” He would cause nations much larger and stronger than them to flee from them.

Prayer Emphasis: Refuse to get caught up in the “politically correct” movement that demands that we be “open-minded” toward things that are clearly opposed to God’s teachings. **Read** God’s Word daily and **hide** it in your heart to avoid being “naïve” about what is right or wrong in God’s sight.

Day 16: Deuteronomy 11:24-12:12

“Behold, I set before you today a blessing and a curse:” (Deuteronomy 11:26)

“A Blessing and a Curse”

Verses 26-32 contain the closing words to this important section of Moses’ first sermon. In these verses, God once again reminds Israel that their success or failure would be directly related to their willingness to be obedient to Him. Israel had a clear choice. Either they could obey God and be blessed or they could willfully disobey God and be cursed. The words “I set before you today” clearly indicate that it was up to Israel to determine their own fate. If they wanted to be blessed, then they should walk in obedience (as they were in the days of David and Solomon), but if they chose to be disobedient (as they were in the days of many of the other kings) then they would be cursed. In either case, a choice was required. There was to be no neutral ground. They were going to have to choose to live in obedience or disobedience to God’s commands and receive either His blessings or His judgment. The option to obey or disobey God still looms before His people today. We all must decide, daily, whether or not we are going to honor God and His Word in our daily walk. Just as we would not expect to maintain a right relationship with our earthly parents if we refused to honor and obey them, we cannot expect to live in a right relationship with God if we refuse to honor and obey His truth.

Prayer Emphasis: **Read** God’s Word daily and **commit** yourself to doing your very best to be obedient to what He shows you as you read. **Ask** the Holy Spirit to guide you into an understanding of God’s truths and then diligently **seek** His strength to allow you to live an obedient life before Him.

Day 17: Deuteronomy 12:13-32

“take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, ‘How did these nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise.’” (Deuteronomy 12:30)

“Take Heed to Yourself”

Early in his second sermon, Moses again emphasized the importance of God’s people avoiding all contact and association with false gods and the worship thereof. They were warned against the danger of being “ensnared to follow” the religious ways of the peoples that they were to displace from the land so that they could possess it for the glory of God. They were not to “inquire after their gods” or even ask questions about the false religions that they would encounter among the peoples of Canaan for fear that they might “do likewise.” Curiosity can sometimes be a very dangerous thing. In this case, curiosity about other gods would be an insult to the God who had delivered the Promised Land to His people by His power and grace. In verse 31 God stated that the worship of false gods is something that He “hates.” Apparently, some of the peoples of Canaan even offered their own children as burnt offerings to their false gods. How well did Israel heed God’s warning? Well, Solomon once built a temple to the false god Molech (1 Kings 11:7), and Kings Ahaz and Manasseh offered their own sons to Molech (2 Kings 16:3, 2 Kings 21:6). During King Josiah’s revival he had to destroy a place of worship built to that same idol (2 Kings 23:10).

Prayer Emphasis: Kingdom Performance demands that we focus our attention on serving only the one, true God. **Avoid** idolatry in any way, shape, or form! **Worship** God so intently and faithfully that there is no time for false gods in your life.

Day 18: Deuteronomy 13:1-18

“You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear Him, and keep His commandments and obey His voice; you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him.” (Deuteronomy 13:4)

Easier Said than Done!

The command of our focus verse seems so simple. If Israel would only follow God and fear Him (have godly respect for Him) they would find the strength to “keep His commandments and obey His voice” so that they could “serve Him and hold fast to Him.” All of chapter 13 addresses a very real danger that might hinder God’s people from following those simple instructions. First, in verses 1-4, God warned Israel of a problem. He warned them about false prophets who might deceive them and lead them to worship false gods. Second, God then prescribed a penalty for such false prophets (vs. 5-10). False prophets who attempted to lead Israel to worship false gods were to be put to death! Verse 6 includes some of the closest personal relationships that the people might have, but even those who were closest to the peoples’ hearts were not to be spared if they attempted to lead God’s people into the worship of idols and false gods. Like His Father before Him, Jesus issued a strong warning against those who would lead God’s people astray. He said, “But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea” (Matthew 18:6).

Prayer Emphasis: Limit your close friendships to fellow Christians and you will minimize the danger of being led astray. **Love** all people but **refuse** to allow any friendship or relationship to lead you down a path of personal disobedience to God.

Day 19: Deuteronomy 14:1-29

“You are the children of the LORD your God; you shall not cut yourselves nor shave the front of your head for the dead. For you are a holy people to the LORD your God, and the LORD has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.”
(Deuteronomy 14:1-2)

Some Important Reminders

Today’s focus verses contain some very important reminders for those who heard Moses speak these words then, as well as for those of us who read them today. First, God’s people should never forget who they are! We are “the children of the LORD!” Because of that, we are to separate ourselves from those who practice the things associated with the worship of other gods. Among some of the pagan cultures that surrounded Israel, it was a common practice to cut oneself or shave your head as a part of their pagan burial rites. Second, we “are a holy people to the LORD (our) God.” The best way to explain “holy” is to say that we are to be given “wholly” to God because we are “wholly” His. Third, we are to remember that God has “chosen (us) to be a people for Himself.” We often recognize that Israel was a chosen people and forget that, just as surely as Israel was a chosen people, New Testament saints are also “a chosen generation...His own special people” (1 Peter 2:9). Fourth, we are to remember that we are “a special treasure above all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.” As God’s “special treasure,” we carry the responsibility of living lives that bring honor and glory to His name.

Prayer Emphasis: Thank God for all that He has done for you! **Realize** that our **Kingdom Performance** is based on His grace and not our goodness. Make every effort to **live** up to your name (Christian) today!

Day 20: Deuteronomy 15:1-23

“You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God redeemed you; therefore I command you this thing today.” (Deuteronomy 15:15)

“Remember”

The command to “remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt” was to be the central thought behind some very important behaviors that God was going to prescribe to His people. The honoring of these laws would certainly mark Israel as being the kind of special people that we discussed yesterday. First, they were to honor certain laws regarding the poor (vs. 1-11). They were to “release” or cancel all debts every six years. Because of this, people avoided entering into long-term debt that extended beyond six years. However, if a debt was owed beyond that point, it was to be forgiven. They were also commanded to be generous to the poor. The people were reminded not to “harden your heart nor shut your hand toward your poor brother” (v. 7). The law of release might discourage someone from *lending* to the poor so God suggested that His people consider *giving* to the poor instead! Remembering their own time in bondage was also to be a reminder to Israel to release their own slaves every seventh year (vs. 12-18). The slaves mentioned here were probably those who had to sell themselves into slavery to pay off a debt. As such, the longest that anyone would have to work their way out of debt would be six years. Allowances were made for those slaves who freely chose to remain in the homes of their obviously good masters.

Prayer Emphasis: Proper **Kingdom Performance** demands that we do some refusing and choosing. **Refuse** to forget all that God has done for you and **choose** to show that same kindness to those in need around you!

Day 21: Deuteronomy 16:1-22

“Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Tabernacles; and they shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed.” (Deuteronomy 16:16)

The Three Major Feasts

Our focus verse mentions three of the seven feasts that God appointed for Israel. These three were considered to be the three major feasts. At these three feasts, God said, “All your males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place where He chooses.” While the first Passover was held in Egypt in the individual homes of the Israelites, all of the feasts that followed were kept in the Tabernacle in the Wilderness or in the Temple after Israel settled in the Promised Land. The Feast of the Passover commemorated the night that God brought His people out of bondage to Egypt. The Feast of Unleavened Bread was also a reminder of that fateful night that Israel marched out of Egypt. On that night, there had been no time to allow their dough to rise, so they had to eat it without leaven. This important feast became a reminder of the importance of obeying God’s will immediately. The Feast of the Weeks (also called Pentecost) was associated with the joy of harvest. At the time of harvest, Israel was commanded to do two things. First, they were commanded to rejoice (v. 11). The only “sacrifice” that was demanded at this feast was a sacrifice of praise from the people of God. Second, they were commanded to remember God’s present and past blessings.

Prayer Emphasis: Realize that you are blessed beyond measure! **Count** some of the ways that God has blessed you and **thank** Him for every one of them. **Brag** on God to someone you meet today.

Day 22: Deuteronomy 17:1-20

“...when he sits on the throne of his kingdom...he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book...And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes.” (Deuteronomy 17:18-19)

A Godly King

Verse 14 clearly indicates that God knew the hearts of His people. He knew that the day would come when they would want a king over them “like all the nations” that were around them. As such, He provided Israel with some instructions about the kind of King they were to have. The king should be one “whom the LORD” chose (v. 15). He was to not “multiply horses...wives...(or) silver and gold for himself” (vs. 16-17). The king was to avoid being a man who pursued military power, personal wealth, self-indulgence, or selfish ambition. We do not have to read far into the Bible to see that the first three kings of Israel paid little heed to these commands. Saul died in battle despite his powerful military. David fell into sin because he could not resist the temptation to take Bathsheba for his own. Solomon clearly threw all these commands aside. The Bible states that he had “forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots” (1 Kings 4:26). He had “seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart” (1 Kings 11:3). It also reports that he “surpassed all the kings of the earth in riches” (1 Kings 10:23).

Prayer Emphasis: Note that our focus verses command the king to make himself a copy of God’s Word, keep it at his side, and read from it all the days of his life so that he could learn to fear God and observe His commands and statutes. Since we are made “kings” by God’s saving grace, our **Kingdom Performance** demands no less from us! **Commit** to reading and obeying God’s Word daily!

Day 23: Deuteronomy 18:1-22

“For the LORD your God has chosen him out of all of your tribes to stand to minister in the name of the LORD, him and his sons forever.” (Deuteronomy 18:5)

Instructions About Priests and Prophets

Our focus verse indicates that the priests (Levites) were men “chosen...to stand to minister in the name of the LORD.” As such, they had no physical inheritance in the land (v. 1) because “the LORD (was) their inheritance” (v. 2). Concerning these men who were called to full-time ministry, God gave some very clear instructions. First, God gave some instructions about their provisions. They were to live from a portion of the offerings that the people brought to the Tabernacle or Temple (vs. 3-8). The word translated “due” in verse 3 is a word that is translated “judgment,” “right,” or even “measure” in other places in the Bible. Some translations use the word “share” in this verse. Since these men were to be fully committed to serving the Lord and His people, they would have no time to till land or make their own living. Hence, they were allowed to live off that which was offered to God by the people. Along with His commandments regarding the priest’s provisions, God also gave a very clear prescription for their lifestyle. They were to “serve in the name of the LORD” (v. 7). Then, concerning His prophets, God gave some instructions regarding presumption (v. 20). A prophet’s teaching and preaching was to be based solely on what God had commanded.

Prayer Emphasis: Realize that our own **Kingdom Performance** can only be measured by its faithfulness to the Word of God and how true our lives and ministries are to it. **Commit** time to *learning* the Word and *living* the Word!

Day 24: Deuteronomy 19:1-21

“If a false witness rises against any man to testify against him of wrongdoing, then both men in the controversy shall stand before the LORD, before the priests and the judges who serve in those days. And the judges shall make careful inquiry, and indeed, if the witness is a false witness, who has testified falsely against his brother, then you shall do to him as he thought to have done to his brother...” (Deuteronomy 19:16-19)

The Danger of False Witnesses

An eyewitness is an important part of any judicial system. God’s Law prohibited a person from being condemned on the testimony of only one witness and demanded that legal decisions be decided based on the testimonies “of two or three witnesses” (v. 15). Our focus verses deal with the way that a false witness should be treated. In Bible times, just as it is today, perjury was a very serious offence. God clearly states His opinion of lying in Proverbs 12:22 where He says that “Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD.” The New Testament clearly teaches that lying should have no place in a Christian’s life (Eph. 4:25, Col. 3:9). Moses was told to teach God’s people that a false witness was to receive the same punishment that “he thought to have done to his brother” (v. 19). The purpose of such harsh action was to “put away the evil (of lying) from among you” (v. 19). We must be careful to keep the words of verse 21 in context. Moses was giving instructions for the judges and the judicial system when he said. “life shall be for life, eye for eye”, et cetera. These words were never intended to allow individuals to extract personal vengeance.

Prayer Emphasis: Respect truth. **Refuse** to listen to gossip and slander and **excuse** yourself from such conversations in a humble and polite way. **Consider** the impact that your words may have before you speak and **avoid** saying hurtful things – especially when you are only repeating what you have heard from others.

Day 25: Deuteronomy 20:1-20

“When you go out to battle against your enemies, and see horses and chariots and people more numerous than you, do not be afraid of them; for the LORD your God is with you...” (Deuteronomy 20:1)

Bigger Isn't Always Better

Today's focus verses reveal that Gideon (see Judges 7) was not the first to be told to move forward with an army that was smaller than originally planned. Verse 1 indicates that Israel would face enemies “more numerous” than them, yet God told them to “not be afraid of them” because He would be with them. Before every battle, the priests were to address the people and say, “Do not let your heart faint, do not be afraid, and do not tremble or be terrified...for the LORD God...goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies” (vs. 3-4). Because of this, God gave some specific instructions as to who might be dismissed from battle. God allowed those who had unfinished business at home to go home and finish what they had started (v. 5). He also provided opportunity for men who had no one to harvest their crops to return home to do so (v. 6). Leave was also granted for those who were “betrothed” to be married (v. 7). Then God opened the door for every man who was “fearful and fainthearted” to “return to his house” (v. 8). Verse 13 reminded the people once again that every city that fell before them would do so because “the LORD God delivers it into your hands” and not because their armies were bigger and better than their enemies’.

Prayer Emphasis: Always **remember** that God teaches us that fear can be contagious. **Review** verse eight and see that God sent the “fearful and fainthearted” men home because he did not want their lack of faith to affect the hearts of others. **Be strong** in your faith and **move forward** in God's work with confidence!

Day 26: Deuteronomy 21:1-23

“When you go out to war against your enemies, and the LORD your God delivers them into your hand, and you take them captive, and you see among the captives a beautiful woman, and desire her and would take her for your wife,” (Deuteronomy 21:10-11)

Some Premarital Counseling

God provided some wise counsel to those men who saw “among the captives a beautiful woman” and desired to have her for his wife. Since Deuteronomy 7:3 strictly prohibited the Israelites from marrying Canaanites, these women must have been foreign women who live in the land. If this situation occurred, prior to the marriage, the woman was to be taken into the man's home where she would go through a time of preparation. She was “to shave her head” (v. 12). Verse 12 also indicates that the young man should treat his prospective bride to a manicure! The shaving of one's head was a sign of mourning. When Job heard of the death of his children, he “arose, tore his robe, and shaved his head” (Job 1:20). The shaving of the head was also a symbol of cleansing. When a leper was to be brought to the priest to be pronounced that he was cleansed from his disease, he was to “shave off all his hair” (Leviticus 14:8). The woman was to “put off the clothes of her captivity” and “remain” in the house of her fiancé where she would “mourn her father and her mother a full month”. It was only after that time of waiting and preparation that she could “go in to her and be her husband” and she could be his “wife” (v. 13).

Prayer Emphasis: Carefully **consider** the person that you intend to marry. Christians should marry Christians who are committed to Christ and the church. If you are single, **pray** and **ask** God to lead you to the right person for you. If you are already married, **pray** for your spouse daily.

Day 27: Deuteronomy 22:1-30

“You shall not see your brother’s donkey or his ox fall down along the road, and hide yourself from them; you shall surely help him lift them up again.” (Deuteronomy 22:4)

The Sin of Doing Nothing

I find it very interesting that God condemned the sin of doing nothing! The Bible describes several ways that a Christian can live out the command to “love your neighbor as yourself” (Leviticus 19:18). We see the words “hide yourself” three times in today’s verses. We should always remember that repetition in the Bible indicates emphasis. In these verses, God is emphasizing the fact that we are not to see a need and ignore it. When they saw their neighbor’s sheep that had strayed from the flock, they were not to ignore it but to make sure that it was safely returned. If they did not know whose animal it was, they were to take care of it until someone came to claim it. The same was true about seeing a neighbor in need. If they saw their fellowman’s donkey or ox “fall down along the road,” they were not to “hide themselves” (ignore it) but stop and “help him lift them up again” It is so easy to look the other way when we see people in need or to forget how we would want someone to look out for our best interest if we had lost our own possessions. We tend to avoid getting involved in the problems of others, but God clearly commands us to help people when we can do so.

Prayer Emphasis: Our **Kingdom Performance** must always be based on *conviction* and not *convenience*! **Avoid** the temptation to justify any refusal to help people in a time of real need. **Practice** the Golden Rule and treat others as you would have them treat you (Matthew 7:12).

Day 28: Deuteronomy 23:1-25

“When you make a vow to the LORD your God, you shall not delay to pay it; for the LORD your God will surely require it of you, and it would be sin to you. But if you abstain from vowing, it shall not be sin to you. That which has gone from your lips you shall keep and perform, for you voluntarily vowed to the LORD your God what you have promised with your mouth.” (Deuteronomy 23:21-23)

The Importance of Keeping Our Vows

As Moses continued to teach the Law to those who would soon cross the Jordan River to possess the Promised Land, he emphasized the importance of their keeping their vows to God. This meant that God expected His people to be completely honest with Him and to perform the things that they had promised to do for Him. Notice that God reminded His people that He was referring to things that they had “voluntarily vowed” to Him (v. 23). If Israelites made a vow to God, God expected them to honor it and to “not delay to pay it” because He would “surely require it” of them (v. 21). If one was not certain as to whether they could fulfill a vow, they were to “abstain from vowing” (v. 22). Moses was in no way condemning the making of vows here. He was simply advising His people to abstain from making foolish vows that they would not be able to keep. David made vows to God and considered these vows to be “binding” (Psalm 56:12) to the point that he promised to “daily perform” them (Psalm 61:8). Years later, King Solomon’s teachings indicated that Israel had not forgotten this important teaching of Moses when the wise king told his people, “When you make a vow to God, do not delay to pay it...Pay what you have vowed!” (Ecclesiastes 5:4-5).

Prayer Emphasis: **Consider** any vows or promises that you have made to God and be diligent to **honor** them. **Refuse** to accept the breaking of promises as a standard business practice. **Remember** that our **Kingdom Performance** will ultimately be judged by God’s standards and not the standards of our society.

Day 29: Deuteronomy 24:1-22

“But you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and the LORD your God redeemed you from there; therefore I command you to do this thing.” (Deuteronomy 24:18)

“Remember”

The word translated “remember” in our focus verse is found more often in Deuteronomy than any other book in the Law of Moses. God often asked His people to “remember” that they were once a homeless people while they were in bondage to Egypt. He knew that if they were always mindful of what He had done for them, then they would be more compassionate in the way that they dealt with others. As such, they were to always be mindful of those who were homeless and in need. One of the ways that they could show compassion to the less fortunate was to intentionally leave behind some of their harvest so that the poor and needy could come and harvest it for their families. One of the things that we have to note about God’s welfare program was that the needy had to come behind the gleaners and gather their own food. God did not demand that the farmer deliver the food to the needy. This policy required that the poor be active and work for their food, making a way for them to provide for their own needs with dignity. The poor were not reduced to the humiliation of having to beg for their food. At the same time, this wonderful way of helping the poor would teach the people to have generous hearts. Verse 19 clearly contains a wonderful promise to those who so willingly shared when God said, “the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands.”

Prayer Emphasis: Most of us have experienced some difficult times in our lives. We should be careful to **remember** those times when we see others suffering around us. God clearly teaches us that honoring His laws requires that we **help** those who are less fortunate than us.

Day 30: Deuteronomy 25:1-26:11

“...if the wicked man deserves to be beaten, that the judge will cause him to lie down and be beaten in his presence, according to his guilt, with a certain number of blows. Forty blows he may give him and no more, lest he should exceed this and beat him with many blows above these... ” (Deuteronomy 25:2-3)

Judgment and Mercy

Although it is clear from our focus verses that God prescribed the judgment of corporal punishment for those who were considered to be “wicked” and deserved “to be beaten”, it is also clear that God, in His mercy, gave specific instructions to protect anyone from being punished too severely. A maximum amount of “blows” was set at “forty” with anything above that being considered excessive. Later, the Jewish rabbis, and teachers of the law set the limit at 39. We read in the New Testament that the apostle Paul was punished in this manner five times. His personal testimony was that “From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one” (2 Corinthians 11:24). When compared to the cruel beatings and excessive punishments so often found among the Gentile races and other ancient societies, this law of limitation concerning corporal punishment appears very merciful. The physical punishment was never to be more severe than what could be endured. Even in His righteous indignation and His consistent opinion that sin was to be punished, God continually exhibited mercy even upon those who were “wicked.”

Prayer Emphasis: Understand that grace is when we receive that which we do not deserve, and mercy is when we do not receive that which we do deserve. **Exhibit mercy** to someone today. **Remember** that God alone has the right to exact vengeance upon sinful man.

Day 31: Deuteronomy 26:12-27:23

“*And there you shall build an altar to the LORD your God, an altar of stones; you shall not use an iron tool on them.*” (Deuteronomy 27:5)

“An Altar of Stones”

Immediately upon their arrival in the Promised Land, the people of Israel were to build a special altar made of large stones. Upon those stones they were to “write...all the words” of the Law (v. 3). Considering this command, it is easy to understand why the stones needed to be “large” (v. 2). Furthermore, the people were commanded to not “use an iron tool on them” to reshape or carve the stones. No doubt, this command was to help Israel not to create any kind of graven image. Verse 8 commanded that the Law should be written “very plainly.” The word that is translated “plainly” in verse 8 was only used twice in all the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible) and was the equivalent of our term “bold print.” This altar served two specific purposes. It became a reminder to all of Israel that their success depended on their obedience to God’s Word, and it also became an altar of sacrifice. God commanded the people to offer “peace offerings” upon this altar (v. 7). We find Joshua and the people obeying this command when Joshua, immediately after leading the people into the Promised Land, “built an altar to the LORD God of Israel” and “in the presence of the children of Israel, he wrote on the stones a copy of the law of Moses” (Joshua 8:30, 32).

Prayer Emphasis: Realize that a very important part of our **Kingdom Performance** is to make the Word of God available for all to see. **Make** every effort to ensure that your lifestyle is “plainly” declaring a positive testimony of God and His glory.

Day 32: Deuteronomy 27:24-28:26

“*Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the LORD your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the LORD your God:*” (Deuteronomy 28:1-2)

A Very Big “If”

We have often come across some very important “ifs” in our reading through the various books of the Bible. Today’s “if” is as significant as any that we have read and hopefully it looms as large for us today as it must have for these people in Old Testament times. Moses uses this word to confront the people of Israel with a very important choice. God has always desired to reveal Himself to the world through His relationship with His people. That fact is just as true today as it was with Israel in the Old Testament. He would reveal Himself through blessings so great that the world would have to know that they came from the hand of God! But the “if” was found in the fact that these blessings came only if they “diligently” obeyed “the voice of the LORD.” The choice was before God’s people then just as it is before us today. The words that God spoke to His people in these verses are very similar to the treaties that were made among nations in ancient times. Except, here we find a treaty that is not made between earthy nations but between Heaven and its King and Earth and its inhabitants. As it was customary for legal treaties to conclude with language regarding the terms for obeying or disobeying the terms of the treaty, so it was with this agreement between God and His followers.

Prayer Emphasis: Remove all doubt as to whom you are following. **Believe** that blessings come as a result of *choice* and not *chance*. **Know** that it is never a coincidence when God’s children are blessed!

Day 33: Deuteronomy 28:27-57

“Your sons and your daughters shall be given to another people, and your eyes shall look and fail with longing for them all day long; and there shall be no strength in your hand.” (Deuteronomy 28:32)

The Saddest Curse of All

As you read today’s verses, you will read about some of the curses that would befall Israel “if” they made the foolish choice to not obey and follow God. Verse 27 seems to indicate that God, when He said that He would “strike (them) with the boils of Egypt,” was saying, “If you want to live like the godless world then you will have to suffer like the godless suffered!” But of all the curses that their willful disobedience was to bring upon them, perhaps none was more sorrowful than the one mentioned in verse 32: “Your sons and your daughters shall be given to another people, and your eyes shall look and fail with longing for them all day long; and there shall be no strength in your hand.” The phrase “there shall be no strength in your hand” means that their disobedience was ultimately going to cost them their children and there was absolutely nothing within their own power that they could do to prevent it! Verse 41 explains that their children would be taken captive by enemy nations. Verse 34 indicates how these events would almost drive the people of Israel to madness while verse 45 explains, in detail, that all this trouble and sorrow had come upon them because they “did not obey the voice of the LORD (their) God, to keep His commandments and His statutes.”

Prayer Emphasis: Perhaps the best place to review our own **Kingdom Performance** is in our own homes and in the lives of our children. **Strive** to be a godly example to your children and **pray** for them on a regular basis.

Day 34: Deuteronomy 28:58-29:18

“Now Moses called all Israel and said to them: ‘You have seen all that the LORD did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land—the great trials which your eyes have seen, the signs, and those great wonders.’” (Deuteronomy 29:2-3)

Some Things Are Worth Repeating

More than once, we have read where Moses was instructed to tell the people to “remember” and then reminded them of all that God had done for them. Here again, Moses is reminding his people about the goodness and divine provisions that God had faithfully bestowed upon them up to this point. He specifically urged Israel to remember the “signs and...great wonders” that they had witnessed at the hand of Almighty God! Take a few moments to reread today’s verses from chapter 29 and mark the different blessings that God mentioned to His people. You will find that God reminded them of blessings of His provision, protection, and His presence. Look again at our focus verse and note that there was something other than the “signs and wonders” that God wanted them to remember. He also mentioned the “great trials which (their) eyes (had) seen.” If you look back at Deuteronomy 4:34 and 7:19, you will see that every time God reminded His people of the “signs and wonders” that they had seen He always also reminded them of the “great trials” that they had faced. These reminders were important because God used them to strengthen His people so that there would not be “among (them) man or woman...whose heart turned away...from the LORD” (29:18).

Prayer Emphasis: **Accept** the trials that God allows you to face and grow from them. **Believe** that He is able to bless you with His provision, protection, and presence even in the midst of difficult times and trying circumstances. **Encourage** someone who is experiencing some difficulties today.

Day 35: Deuteronomy 29:19-30:19

“Now it shall come to pass, when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the LORD your God drives you, and you return to the LORD your God and obey His voice...” (Deuteronomy 30:1-2)

“All These Things”

I find it very interesting that, while under divine inspiration and the direct leading of the Holy Spirit, Moses said to Israel, “Now it shall come to pass when these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind...and you return to the LORD your God and obey His voice.” There are several important things to note about this statement. First, note that God said *when* (and not *if*) “it shall come to pass” that the “blessing and the curse” would “come upon them.” It is true that God knows all things and it is certainly true that He knows the hearts of His people. When you look closely at this statement you will see that Moses was not saying that both blessings and curses *could* come upon them but that they *would* come upon them. As we read through the Old Testament, we see Israel at the height of blessing during the reigns of David and Solomon and in the depths of cursing at the fall of Jerusalem. It is sad, but true, that Israel’s history has been a legacy of being either blessed or cursed under the terms of their covenant with God. A careful look at the closing words of verse one will reveal that God, Himself, would be the One to drive them into the captivity of their enemies.

Prayer Emphasis: Confess your sins of commission (the wrong things that you do) and your sins of omission (the right things that you fail to do) on a regular basis. **Understand** that our successful **Kingdom Performance** must be based on a heart that is cleansed daily by God’s mercy and forgiveness.

Day 36: Deuteronomy 30:20-31:19

“Then Moses went and spoke these words to all Israel. And he said to them: ‘I am one hundred and twenty years old today. I can no longer go out and come in. Also the LORD has said to me, “You shall not cross over this Jordan.”’” (Deuteronomy 31:1-2)

A Really Big Difference!

In Numbers 20:12, after Moses had allowed his pride to get the best of him and lead him into smiting the rock rather than only speaking to it as God had commanded, God told Moses that he would “not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them.” If we carefully consider that statement, we could conclude that God is merely going to remove Moses from his position of leadership when the time came for Israel to cross the Jordan River and begin the conquest of Canaan. After all, verse two of today’s reading clearly tells us that Moses was 120 years old by the time Israel was finally ready to cross the Jordan and claim the Promised Land – and that is plenty old enough for retirement. However, today’s focus verses contain a statement that is much stronger than, “You will not lead my people into the Promised Land!” In today’s verses, we see God saying to Moses, “You shall not cross over this Jordan.” There is a really significant difference between being removed from your position of leadership and being removed from the scene entirely. There is no record that Moses responded or argued with God’s decision. Moses simply told Joshua that he would be the one to go with this people to the land which the LORD had sworn to their fathers (v. 7).

Prayer Emphasis: Ask God to give you the kind of humility that will allow you to **accept** the consequences that always follow willful sin and to willingly **accept** any change that God desires to bring into your life.

Day 37: Deuteronomy 31:20-32:19

“Then Moses spoke in the hearing of all the assembly of Israel the words of this song until they were ended:”
(Deuteronomy 31:30)

The Song of Moses (Part One)

The word that is translated “spoke” when we read that, “Moses spoke in the hearing of all the assembly of Israel the words of this song” (31:30) is earlier used to describe God speaking to Noah (Genesis 8:15) and continues through God’s conversations with Abram (Abraham) in Genesis 17. This same word is also used to describe the way that Abraham would later “speak” to the sons of Heth (Genesis 23:3) and then when Isaac “spoke” to his son, Esau (Genesis 27:5). Later in Genesis, this same word will be used to describe the way Joseph “spoke” to Pharaoh and, later, to his own brothers when they visited him in Egypt (Genesis 41:28, 42:7). This is the same word that was found in the opening verse of Deuteronomy when we were told that “These are the words that Moses “spoke” to all Israel.” The point that I am trying to make here is that God used the same word to describe how Moses “spoke” in a song as he did in a sermon! As you read through these first verses that record the Song of Moses, look for some of the same important points and reminders that made up the messages of Moses that we have read previously in this book. We should never underestimate the value of “speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs” (Ephesians 5:19).

Prayer Emphasis: Realize that the songs we sing in public worship are an opportunity for every person in the congregation to be a witness for Christ! **Sing** praises to God at every opportunity and from your heart.

Day 38: Deuteronomy 32:20-52

“And He said: “I will hide My face from them, I will see what their end will be, for they are a perverse generation, Children in whom is no faith...I will heap disasters on them; I will spend My arrows on them.””
(Deuteronomy 32:20 & 23)

The Song of Moses (Part Two)

In one of the last verses that we read yesterday, God used a song to speak to the hearts of His people and say to them, “You are unmindful, and have forgotten the God who fathered you” (v. 18). After making that statement, God inspired Moses to include two very important lines in his song that indicated how He would respond to such a forgetful, disrespectful people. God said that His first course of action would be to “hide my face from them” (v. 20.) When God’s people forsake Him and refuse to honor His commandments, He sometimes withdraws the intimacy of His presence. Initially, this may seem as almost a relief to a sinning Christian because the conviction of sin that comes from being in God’s presence is briefly minimized. Then, just a few lines later, God said, “I will heap disasters on them” (v. 23). God then continued that line of thought by mentioning some of the “disasters” that He would “heap” upon them. Among them were hunger, pestilence, bitter destruction, the teeth of beasts, the poison of serpents, and the sword (vs. 24-25). As we read about these tragic consequences that come upon those who forget and forsake God, we have to be reminded of what we read in the Book of Revelation and ask ourselves, “Did God do this because He was angry or because He desired to use these desperate circumstances to lead His people to repent and turn to Him?”

Prayer Emphasis: Consider the importance of God’s presence in your life today and **refuse** to sacrifice it for any temporary, worldly pleasure. **Remind** yourself that the pleasures of sin are always short-lived.

Day 39: Deuteronomy 33:1-23

“Now this is the blessing with which Moses the man of God blessed the children of Israel before his death.” (Deuteronomy 33:1)

The Final Blessing

Deuteronomy 33 contains the final words that Moses spoke to the people of Israel. For 40 years he had loved and led them and now, realizing that he would soon die and never see them again, he had some final things he wanted to communicate to them. Moses viewed Israel through the eyes of a shepherd, and he loved them with a shepherd's heart. As such, there was no way that he could leave them without speaking a word of blessing to them. You cannot read this chapter without being reminded of the way that the book of Genesis closed with Jacob (who would be renamed Israel) pronounced his blessings upon his 12 sons. Since Moses was the person that God used to record that blessing, it is possible that he chose to follow the pattern that Jacob had earlier provided. When you read these final words of Moses, they, like the blessing that Jacob pronounced on his sons, sound more like a prophecy than a blessing. There is a very important phrase found in our focus verse that is used for the very first time in the Scripture. It is the important and powerful phrase used to describe Moses when the Holy Spirit called him, “The man of God.” We do not see this phrase in the Bible again until we get to Joshua 14:6 where it was again used to describe Moses.

Prayer Emphasis: **Seek** to speak blessings on your friends and family members. **Ask** God to help you to be the kind of person that could be described as a man or woman of God. **Remember** that Moses spoke these words of blessing and encouragement to others during a very sorrowful time in his own life.

Day 40: Deuteronomy 33:24-34:12

“So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD. And He buried him in a valley in the land of Moab...” (Deuteronomy 34:5-6)

“The Servant of the Lord”

Yesterday we read where Moses was referred to as “the man of God” (33:1). Today we see him called “the servant of the LORD” (34:5). After all the things that we have read and learned about Moses, there have been many things that might have been chosen to be written on his headstone or grave marker. Some examples that come to mind are, “Moses, the Prophet” or even “Moses, the Priest.” Looking farther back into his life, we might have etched the words, “Moses, the Prince of Egypt” on his gravestone. However, here at the time of his death, the Holy Spirit chose to use the words, “Moses the servant of the LORD.” I find it hard to imagine that Moses would have wanted his epitaph to have been anything different than that. It takes a special kind of person to be truly satisfied living out their lives in the role of a servant. Some of the happiest Christians that I know are happy because they live their lives in service to the Lord. I have heard it said that “When the Master is *glorified*, His servants are *satisfied*.” Now Moses' time of service in this world had come to an end, and “Moses the servant of the LORD died.” One can only imagine the joy that this man who had once pleaded to see God face to face must have felt when his spirit was transported to glory! He lived to be 120 years old, and “His eyes were not dim nor his natural vigor diminished” (v. 7).

Prayer Emphasis: **Thank** God for leaders like Moses! **Pray** for all spiritual leaders and **ask** God to strengthen them in their work for Him. **Contact** us at gary@seminolebc.com or 850-562-8069 if we can pray for you or help you in any way.