

GOD'S ONE EXPECTATION

PREACHING THROUGH THE BIBLE: DEUTERONOMY

The Shema and Perils of Prosperity—**Deuteronomy 6:1-19** (NASV)

I. INTRODUCTION

A. NAME OF BOOK

1. HEBREW TITLE

- a. **devarim** = [spoken] words
- b. From opening phrase—Dt 1:1—“*These are the words Moses spoke . . .*”

2. GREEK TITLE

- a. From Greek translation of Dt 17:18

Now it shall come about when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself a copy of this law on a scroll

- b. Septuagint translated ‘copy of this law’ as—‘this second law’—**δευτερονομιον τουτο**

B. MAIN THEMES

- ❖ LOVE AND SERVE THE ONE AND ONLY GOD
- ❖ DO NOT FORGET GOD WHEN YOU ENTER CANAAN
- ❖ SHOW YOUR LOVE AND DEVOTION BY OBEYING HIS LAWS

C. STRUCTURE

1. HISTORICAL RECAP—40-YEAR JOURNEY—SINAI TO PLAINS OF MOAB—**1:1-4:43**
2. EXHORTATION TO SERVE GOD ONLY—AND OBEY HIS LAWS—**4:44-29:1**

a. Chapters 5-11

- Recounts giving of 10 Commandments
- Exhortations to obedience and rewards
- Warnings and consequences of disobedience
- Promised land described

b. **Chapters 12-26—Deuteronomic Code**—how to live in the Promised Land

- Laws about worship (**Ch 12-16**)
- Appointment and regulation of community and religious leaders (**Ch 16-18**)
- Social regulations—civil and criminal laws (**Ch 19-25**)
- Dedication of First Fruits—confess identity and express loyalty (**Ch 26**)

c. Chapters 27-28

- Curses to be pronounced at Mt. Ebal (**Ch 27**)
- Blessings to be pronounced at Mt. Gerizim (**Ch 28**)

3. RENEWAL OF COVENANT AND CLOSING EVENTS—**29:2-34:12**

- **Chapter 29**—Covenant renewed on Plains of Moab—warning against apostasy
- **Chapter 30**—Restoration promised—exhortation to choose obedience and life
- **Chapter 31**—Moses' last counsel—apostasy predicted—Joshua commissioned
- **Chapter 32**—Song of Moses
- **Chapter 33**—Blessing of Moses
- **Chapter 34**—Death of Moses

II. BIBLICAL TEXT

A. LOVE AND SERVE THE ONE AND ONLY GOD

¹ Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the judgments which the LORD your God has commanded *me* to teach you, that you might do *them* in the land where you are going over to possess it, ² so that you and your son and your grandson might fear the LORD your God, to 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 O Israel, you should listen and be careful to do *it*, that it may be well with you and that you may multiply greatly, just as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has promised you, *in* a land flowing with milk and honey. ⁴ “Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! ⁵ You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. ⁶ These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. ⁷ You shall teach them diligently to your sons 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 You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. ⁹ You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

SUMMARY LOGIC OF PASSAGE:

1. THE LORD IS OUR GOD—THE COVENANT LORD HAS BECOME OUR GOD
2. THE LORD IS ONE—HE ALONE IS GOD—AND SINGULARLY DEVOTED TO US
3. WE ARE HIS COVENANT PEOPLE
4. BE SINGULARLY DEVOTED TO HIM—LOVE HIM WITH ALL OUR BEING
5. PASS COVENANT DEVOTION ON TO FUTURE GENERATIONS—FOREVER

B. DO NOT FORGET GOD WHEN YOU ENTER THE PROMISED LAND

¹⁰ Then it shall come about when the Lord your God brings you into the land which he swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give you, great splendid cities which you did not build, ¹¹ and houses full of all good things which you did not fill, and hewn cisterns which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant, and you shall eat and be satisfied, ¹² then watch yourself, lest you forget the Lord who brought you from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. ¹³ You shall fear only the Lord your God; and you shall worship Him, and swear by His name. ¹⁴ You shall not follow other gods, and of the gods of the peoples who surround you, ¹⁵ for the Lord your God in the midst of you is a jealous God; otherwise the anger of the Lord your God will be kindled against you, and He will wipe you off the face of the earth. ¹⁶ “You shall not put the Lord your God to the test, as you tested Him at Massah. ¹⁷ You should diligently keep the commandments of the Lord your God, and His testimonies and His statutes which He has commanded you. ¹⁸ And you shall do what is right and good in the sight of the Lord, that it may be well with you and that you may go in and possess the good land which the Lord swore to give your fathers, ¹⁹ by driving out all your enemies from before you, as the Lord has spoken.

GOD’S ONE EXPECTATION—REMEMBER HIM!

III. BACKGROUND

A. GOD’S GRACIOUS DELIVERANCE OF ISRAEL

1. DELIVERY FROM BONDAGE—10 MIRACULOUS PLAGUES
2. DESPOILING EGYPTIAN WEALTH—**Ex 12**
3. PARTING RED SEA—DEFEATING PHARAOH’S ARMY
4. MIRACLES OF PROVISION
 - Water purified at Marah—water from rock at Massah
 - Quail in Wilderness of Sin
 - Manna daily for 40 years
5. MILITARY VICTORIES
 - Amalekites at Rephidim—**Ex 17**
 - Canaanite king Arad at Atharim—**Nu 21**
 - Amorite kings Sihon and Og—**Nu 21**

B. GOD’S GRACIOUS PROMISE OF PROSPERITY

Dt 8:7-10—*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; a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey; a land where you will eat food without scarcity, in which you will not lack anything; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you can dig copper. When you have eaten and are satisfied, you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land which He has given you.*

C. DO NOT FORGET GOD IN YOUR PROSPERITY

1. STRUCTURE OF PASSAGE

v12 Do not forget God—pairs with—**vv17-19** Remember by obeying Him

v13a Fear (respect) God—pairs with—**v16** Don't take God for granted

v13b Worship (revere) God—pairs with—**vv14-15** Don't commit idolatry

2. TWO-FOLD EMPHASIS

a. Enjoy!

1. God allows them to enjoy newfound prosperity

v11b—*you shall eat and be satisfied*

2. It is all right for us to enjoy our prosperity—not feel guilty—**BUT . . .**

b. Watch out!—[*then watch yourself*]

v12—**shawmar** = keep, guard, watch, protect

As in **Pr 29:18**—blessed [happy] is he who **keeps** the law

IV. DO NOT FORGET GOD—REMEMBER AND OBEY HIM

A. EXPLANATION OF HEBREW TEXT—v 12

Then watch yourself, lest you forget the Lord who brought you from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery

1. **shawkakh** = FORGET—IGNORE
2. More than just absent-mindedness
 - Actively ignoring God when you know about Him
 - Habitual, persistent pattern—imperfect mood = continuous action
 - Beware—avoid a lifestyle that ignores God

B. HISTORICAL AND BIBLICAL CONTEXT

1. IMPORTANCE OF REMEMBERING GOD—CORNERSTONE OF 10 COMMANDMENTS

Ex 20:1-2—*Then God spoke all these words, saying, “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.*

2. IN **DT 6** GOD KNOWS THE FUTURE—WHAT ISRAEL WILL DO LATER

- a. Israel will repeatedly forget God
- b. Culminates in His judgment—see Jeremiah (800 years later)

Jer 2:13—*My people have committed two evils; They have **forsaken** Me, the fountain of living waters, to hew for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.*

Jer 2:19—*Your own wickedness will correct you, and your apostasies will reprove you; know therefore and see that it is evil and bitter—For you **forsake** the Lord your God, and the dread (**fear**) of Me is not in you, declares the Lord God of hosts.*

1. Israel's first mistake—**forsaking** (actively ignoring) God
2. Israel's second mistake—**turning elsewhere** for help—Egypt and Assyria—and their gods

3. PRINCIPLES

- a. We cannot remain neutral about God
 - Either we follow Him and forsake dependence on the world
 - Or we forsake Him and depend on the world

Mt 6:24—we cannot serve two masters—either God or money!

- b. Do not be passive about this—be proactive—seize the initiative!
 1. KEY: verb in **vv 12 & 17** is the same
 2. **shawmar** = watch (out), guard, protect, keep, take care, observe

- c. How do we actively honor God?

1. **v12**—*then **watch** yourself, lest you forget the Lord*

- a. Two verbs are used here

- *watch yourself* = **shawmar**
- *lest you forget* = another verb—**shawkah**

- b. Meaning

- **watch out!** (imperative)—lest you **be forgetting** (imperfect)
- OR—be careful to keep remembering the Lord

2. **v 17**—*diligently **keep** the commandments of the Lord your God*

- a. Double use of the **same** verb

- *diligently* = watch yourself (shawmar)
- *keep* = keep the commandments (shawmar)

b. Meaning: **keep on keeping** the commandments

C. 'BE CAREFUL' TO REMEMBER GOD [not to forget God—v 12]

ISRAEL DID THIS IN AT LEAST FIVE WAYS

1. PERSONALLY—ACTIVELY MEDITATING UPON HIM—THE PSALMIST

Ps 63:1a—*O God, Thou art my God; I shall seek Thee earnestly*

Ps 63:6-8—*When I remember Thee on my bed, I meditate on Thee in the night watches, for Thou hast been my help, and in the shadow of Thy wings I sing for joy. My soul clings to Thee; Thy right hand upholds me.*

2. IN FAMILIES—ACTIVELY TEACHING ABOUT HIM—AND WHAT HE HAS DONE

Dt 4:9—*Only give heed to yourself and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things which your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life; but make them known to your sons and your grandsons.*

Dt 6:6-7—*And these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your sons 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.*

3. AS A COVENANT PEOPLE—REHEARSING AND RECITING GOD'S GOODNESS

Ex 17:14—*Then the Lord said to Moses, "Write this in a book as a memorial and recite it to Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven.*

- The first account of God directing man what to write
- Key reason we have Bible: to **remember** and **recite** what God did
- New Testament church continued this:

1. Paul and Barnabas at Antioch

Acts 14:27—*And when they had arrived and gathered the church together, they began to report (rehearse) all things that God had done with them and how He had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles.*

2. Again, later in Jerusalem—after first missionary journey

Acts 15:4—*And when they arrived at Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them.*

4. IN THE BROADER COMMUNITY—ACTIVELY SPREADING GOOD NEWS AT WORK

- This continued in the workplaces of Israel—Deborah's Song

Jdg 5:11—*At the sound of those who divide flocks among the watering places, there they shall recount the righteous deeds of the Lord, the righteous deeds for His people across the countryside of Israel.*

b. Jesus did this

- Called Peter, Andrew, James, John—while preparing to fish
- Called Matthew—at his tax collector’s booth
- The Samaritan woman—at Jacob’s well—her ‘watering place’

c. Likewise—we should tell the story—at our own ‘watering places’

5. GLOBALLY—ACTIVELY PROCLAIMING ABROAD

a. Israel remembered God in the Diaspora

Ezek 6:8-9—*However, I shall leave a remnant, for you will have those who escaped the sword among the nations when you are **scattered** among the nations when you are **scattered** among the countries. Then those of you who escape will **remember Me** among the nations to which they will be carried captive.*

Zech 10:9—*When I **scatter** them among the peoples, they will **remember Me** in far countries [before God returns them home]*

b. Good examples of **active** witness in ‘far countries:

1. Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego (**Dan 3**)—fiery furnace
2. Daniel (**Dan 6**)—lion’s den
3. Jeremiah (**Jer 43**)—continues prophesying in Egypt

D. TAKE CARE TO OBEY GOD [keep the Lord’s commandments—**vv 17-18a**]

You should diligently keep the commandments of the Lord your God and His statutes which He has commanded you.

1. THIS GOES BEYOND **verse 12** = *watch out not to forget*

2. DOUBLE USE OF IMPERATIVE AND IMPERFECT IN **verse 17**

- Keep (diligently)!—keeping →→→ the commandments

3. SO—DON’T JUST REMEMBER WITH ONLY WORDS OF REHEARSAL

a. Beware of **empty** repetition of God’s **past** action

b. **Prove** we believe it by our **present** actions—by our obedience

3. TWO DIMENSIONS OF OBEDIENCE (**v18a**)

*And you shall do what is **right** and **good** in the sight of the Lord*

a. **yashar** = right = straight—correct—just—upright—proper

b. **towb** = good = kind—agreeable—pleasant—ethical

4. THIS IS OBEDIENCE IN THE FULLEST SENSE

a. Do what is right **and good** in God's sight

Hos 6:6—*For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.*

b. Follow Jesus' example

Mt 12:6-7—*But I say to you, that something greater than the temple is here. But if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not a sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the innocent.*

1. Context: after his disciples shucked/ate grain on Sabbath
2. He explained—difference letter and spirit of the law
3. He totally pleased God—He **fulfilled** the law

c. One of the poorest testimonies to the world—empty legalism!

V. RESPECT GOD—DO NOT PUT HIM TO THE TEST

A. EXPLANATION OF HEBREW TEXT (vv13, 16)

1. **v13**—**yawray** = 'FEAR'—ONLY THE LORD YOUR GOD

You shall fear only the Lord your God; and you shall worship Him, and swear by His name.

- a. Fear really means: respect—honor—hold in awe
- b. Opposite = disrespect—arrogance—contempt

2. CONNECTED WITH IDEA IN **v16**

You shall not put the Lord your God to the test, as you tested Him at Massah.

- a. **nacah** = [do not] tempt—try—test [God]
- b. Only arrogant, disrespectful, untrusting and selfish attitudes do this

B. TWO ISSUES IN VERSE 13

1. HONOR ONLY THE LORD GOD = DO NOT HONOR ANY OTHER GODS

- a. This is the **third** major point of text—**v 13b**
 - First two were: **remember** God—**obey** God
- b. It looks to the fourth point: **worship only** God—in **verses 13-14**

2. KEY POINT OF **v13a** = **HONOR** THE LORD OUR GOD!

- a. Here—this connects with **v16**—and the issue of testing God
 - We **honor** (and worship) God by **trusting** Him
 - The opposite of **honoring/trusting** God—is **testing** God

b. Israel showed remarkable **lack of trust—grumbling** against God

1. It began at Marah—grumbling about no water—**Ex 15**
2. It continued—Wilderness of Sin—wanted meat—**Ex 16**
3. Third occasion—at **Massah (v16)**—wanted water—**Ex 17**
4. It continued **ten times**—until God had enough!

[When Israel refused to enter and take the Promised Land]

Nu 14:22-23—*Surely all men who have seen My glory and My signs, which I performed in Egypt and in the wilderness, yet have put Me to the test these **ten times** and have not listened to My voice, **shall by no means see the land** which I swore to their fathers, nor shall nay of those who spurned Me see it.*

c. This shows that the Lord is long-suffering—but up to a point!

d. How important is this?

1. The temptations of Jesus highlighted this
 - a. Luke made this the last temptation

Lk 4:9-11—throw yourself down [from the Temple]

b. Satan attacked Jesus' **trust** in the Father

c. Satan used Scripture to do this

Ps 91:11-12—He will command his angels concerning you

d. Jesus responded by quoting **Dt 6:16**:

Lk 4:12—‘*You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.*’

f. Respect and trust—(awe and holy ‘fear’)

- They are at the core of our relationship with God!
- They are at the center of our attitude about worshipping God!

VI. REVER GOD—WORSHIP HIM, AND HIM ALONE

This is the fourth point:

- 1—Remember God
- 2—Obey God
- 3—Respect and trust God
- 4—Worship God—and God alone

A. TWO-FOLD EMPHASIS—vv 13-15

*You shall fear only the Lord your God; and you shall **worship Him** and swear by His name. You shall **not follow other gods**, and of the gods of the peoples who surround you, for the Lord your*

God in the midst of you is a jealous God; otherwise the anger of the Lord your God will be kindled against you, and He will wipe you off the face of the earth.

1. EXORTATION—TO WORSHIP GOD

2. WARNING—AGAINST IDOLATRY—WORSHIP HIM ONLY

B. EXHORTATION—SCRIPTURAL CONTEXT OF—‘WORSHIP’ (awbad)

1. THE MAIN REASON GOD FREED THEM FROM EGYPTIAN BONDAGE

Ex 4:23; 7:16—let my people go so that they may serve [worship] me

2. USUALLY TRANSLATED—‘SERVE’

a. Worship is all-encompassing

To worship is to serve—To serve is to worship

b. Jesus’ quote during His temptation emphasizes this

Lk 4:8—*It is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God and serve Him only.’*

c. Paul also emphasizes this

Rom 12:1—*I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.*

C. WARNING—SCRIPTURAL CONTEXT OF—‘DO NOT COMMIT IDOLATRY’

1. THE FIRST TWO COMMANDMENTS

- Have no other gods before me—**Ex 20:3**
- Do not make any idols—**Ex 20:4**

2. THE WARNING AND PROMISE ARE GIVEN WITH THE SECOND COMMANDMENT

Ex 20:5-6—*You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep my commandments.*

3. **Dt 6: 14-15**—REITERATES THE WARNING—TWO-FOLD DANGER

- The danger of other gods
- The danger of God’s wrath

4. THE DANGER OF OTHER GODS

- This admits that there **are** other gods
- They were powerful enough to entice Israel away from God
- APPLICATION**

1. Anything we put ahead of God is an idol
 2. If they could entice Israel—they can seduce us
5. THE DANGER—AND MERCY AND GOODNESS—OF GOD’S WRATH

a. He is jealous—**kahnaw**

1. Word is used **only** in association with **God** (6 times in Bible)
2. It *always* speaks of punishing iniquity—as consuming fire
3. Usually described as consuming fire or kindling wrath

b. This is good—it speaks of the intensity of His love for us

1. Paul refers to this kind of **godly jealousy = godly zeal**

II Cor 11:2—For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin.

2. Because He **loves** us—he **rebukes** and calls us to **repent**
3. Irony—He calls us to **repent** with same kind of jealousy (zeal)

*Rev 319—Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; be zealous (**jealous**) therefore, and **repent**.*

SUMMARY

HOW TO LIVE IN THE LAND OF GOD’S PROSPERITY

1. **REMEMBER GOD—DO NOT FORGET HIM**
2. **REMEMBER GOD—DO OBEY HIM**
3. **RESPECT GOD—TRUST HIM AND DO NOT TEST HIM**
4. **REVERE GOD—WORSHIP AND SERVE HIM ONLY**