

Deuteronomy 26-28

Bible Study

Review

Chapter 23

Laws for the community—who may or may not enter the congregation (v. 1-8 Ancient Israel)
Refuge for a fugitive slave
Not taking advantage of a poor brother

Chapter 24

Laws for preventing frivolous divorce
Misc. laws regarding life and health
Gleaning in the field—something left after harvesting is for the poor, fatherless, widow

Chapter 25

Regulations for corporal punishment—after a court decision
Fair and honest trade
Unfinished business with the Amalekites

Chapter 26

Ch. 26-28 ends Moses' 2nd sermon which began in chapter 12
▪ 3 Declarations given—this chapter (26)

v. 1-11

1st declaration—presenting the first fruits and declaring what God has done for Israel

- ¹ "And it shall be, when you come into the land which the LORD your God is **giving** you *as* an inheritance, and you possess it and dwell in it,
- ² that you shall take some of the first of all the produce of the ground, which you shall bring from your land that the LORD your God is **giving** you, and put *it* in a basket and go to the place where the LORD your God chooses to make His name abide.
- ³ And you shall go to the one who is priest in those days, and say to him, 'I declare today to the LORD your God that I have come to the country which the LORD swore to our fathers to **give** us.'
- ⁴ Then the priest shall take the basket out of your hand and set it down before the altar of the LORD your God.

Upon settling the promised land, they are to bring some of the first produce to the central place of worship, present them to the priest and declare in grateful **acknowledgement** that God's promises have been fulfilled to them

Chapter 12 began Moses' sermon with worship—worshipping only God, and chapter 26 begins with worship—the bringing of the first fruits to the central sanctuary in thanksgiving

Syrian= Aramean (Jacob)

- ⁵ And you shall **answer and say** before the LORD your God: 'My father *was* a Syrian, about to perish, and he went down to Egypt and dwelt there, few in number; and there he became a nation, great, mighty, and populous.
- ⁶ But the Egyptians mistreated us, afflicted us, and laid hard **bondage** on us.
- ⁷ Then we cried out to the LORD God of our fathers, and the LORD heard our voice and looked on our affliction and our labor and our oppression.
- ⁸ So the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm, with great terror and with signs and wonders.
- ⁹ He has brought us to this place and has **given** us this land, "a land flowing with milk and honey";
- ¹⁰ and now, behold, I have brought the firstfruits of the land which you, O LORD, have **given** me.' Then you shall set it before the LORD your God, and worship before the LORD your God.
- ¹¹ So **you shall rejoice** in every good *thing* which the LORD your God has **given** to you and your house, you and the Levite and the stranger who *is* among you.

v. 5 "My father was a Syrian"

(Tyndale) "here it is probably linked to Jacob's ancestors, as well as his long stay in Paddan-Aram and his marriage to Aramean wives [Leah and Rachel]"

(Und. Bible Com. Series) "The most prominent feature of these verses is the emphasis on the land as God's gift. The verb *natan* [give; given] occurs six times (v. 1,2,3,9,10,11). The land itself and the fruit of the land are gifts of grace that must be acknowledged."

v. 12-15 2nd declaration—obedience to the 3rd year tithe—upon receiving the blessings from God, the poor and needy will not be forgotten

- ¹² "When you have finished laying aside all the tithe of your increase in the third year--the year of tithing--and have given *it* to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, so that they may eat within your gates and be filled,
- ¹³ then you shall say before the LORD your God: 'I have removed the holy *tithe* from *my* house, and also have given them to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, according to all Your commandments which You have commanded me; I have not transgressed Your commandments, nor have I forgotten *them*.
- ¹⁴ I have not eaten any of it when in mourning, nor have I removed *any* of it for an unclean *use*, nor given *any* of it for the dead. I have obeyed the voice of the LORD my God, and have done according to all that You have commanded me.
- ¹⁵ Look down from Your holy habitation, from heaven, and bless Your people Israel and the land which You have given us, just as You swore to our fathers, "a land flowing with milk and honey." '

(Und. Bible Com. Series) "These verses repeat a law already given—the 3rd tithe for the benefit of the poor (14:28). By setting it here alongside the harvest thanksgiving in the context of worship, Deuteronomy emphasizes it as the representative of all of the rest of the book's legislation on behalf of the needy."

v. 16-19 3rd declaration—Israel and God as willing partners of the covenant

¹⁶ "This day the LORD your God commands you to observe these statutes and judgments; therefore you shall be careful to observe them with all your heart and with all your soul.

¹⁷ Today **you have proclaimed** the LORD to be your God, and that you will walk in His ways and keep His statutes, His commandments, and His judgments, and that you will obey His voice.

¹⁸ Also today the LORD has proclaimed you to be His special people, just as He promised you, that *you* should keep all His commandments,

¹⁹ and that He will set you high above all nations which He has made, in praise, in name, and in honor, and that you may be a holy people to the LORD your God, just as He has spoken."

This passage resembles Israel's pledge made at the conclusion of the reading of the book of the covenant (Ex. 24:7)



Exodus 24:7

⁷ Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said, "All that the LORD has said we will do, and be obedient."

Chapter 27

Covenant renewal and curses—an event in the promised land

¹ Now Moses, with the elders of Israel, commanded the people, saying: "Keep all the commandments which I command you today.

² And it shall be, on the day when you cross over the Jordan to the land which the LORD your God is giving you, that you shall set up for yourselves large stones, and whitewash them with lime.

³ You shall write on them all the words of this law, when you have crossed over, that you may enter the land which the LORD your God is giving you, 'a land flowing with milk and honey,' just as the LORD God of your fathers promised you.

v. 1 "keep all the commandment which I command you today"—refers not only to the instructions given in chapters 12-26 but also to the command to renew the covenant in the promised land (v. 9-10)

v. 2-3 The recording of the law on stones

The stones upon being erected were whitewashed—the white background would make it more visible and easier to read

(NICOT) "The stones not only served to carry the written text of the law, but they also functioned as silent witnesses to the renewal of the covenant."

II Corinthians 3:7 "the ministry of death written and engraved on stones"—referring to the civil law code which administered the penalties, including death, for many of the violations recorded in the statutes and judgments

Ceremony of covenant renewal

⁴ Therefore it shall be, when you have crossed over the Jordan, *that* on Mount Ebal you shall set up these stones, which I command you today, and you shall whitewash them with lime.

⁵ 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.

⁶ You shall build with whole stones the altar of the LORD your God, and offer burnt offerings on it to the LORD your God.

⁷ You shall offer peace offerings, and shall eat there, and rejoice before the LORD your God.

⁸ And you shall write very plainly on the stones all the words of this law."

Mt. Ebal [v.4] and Mt. Gerazim [v.12] were twin mountains in the area of Shechem, located west of the Jordan, approximately 40 miles north of the city of Jerusalem
In addition to setting up the stones, the Israelites were to build a rough uncut altar of complete uncut stones [v.5]

Exodus 20:25

²⁵ And if you make Me an altar of stone, you shall not build it of hewn stone; for if you use your tool on it, you have profaned it.

(NICOT) "The injunctions concerning this future ceremony reflect the ceremony already undertaken at the initial making of the covenant at Sinai. (Ex. 24:5-11)



Mt. Ebal and
Mt. Gerazim

Shechem—the area as a whole
The site of Abraham’s first altar in Canaan, and God’s promise to give the land to his descendants (Gen. 12: 6-7)

v. 9-10 Covenant renewal and exhortation to obey its requirements

⁹ Then Moses and the priests, the Levites, spoke to all Israel, saying, "Take heed and listen, O Israel: This day you have become the people of the LORD your God.

¹⁰ Therefore you shall obey the voice of the LORD your God, and observe His commandments and His statutes which I command you today."

v.9 "This day you have become the people of the LORD your God"

➤ meaning the renewal of the covenant and their status as God's people

(NICOT) "They were already the people of God, of course, but the ceremony on the plains of Moab reminded them of that status and renewed its reality."

v. 11-13 Preparations for the blessings and cursing ceremony

¹¹ And Moses commanded the people on the same day, saying,

¹² "These shall stand on Mount Gerizim to bless the people, when you have crossed over the Jordan: Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin;

¹³ and these shall stand on Mount Ebal to curse: Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali.

The description of the blessing and cursing ceremony...to be held in the vicinity of Shechem: Mt. Gerazim and Mt. Ebal

- Six tribes would stand on Mt. Gerazim to represent the blessing—v. 12
- Six tribes would stand on Mt. Ebal to represent the cursing—v. 13

(Joshua 8:33-34)—Describes the ceremony when it took place:

The ark of the covenant was positioned in the valley between the mountains representing God's presence at the ceremony

v. 14-26 Curses recited by the Levitical priests

(Und. Bible Com. Series) “The list of curses differs from that found in chapter 28 in that here there is a selection of specific actions that are placed under a curse without the nature of the curse being spelled out, whereas in chapters 28 the content of the curse is described in graphic detail.”

¹⁴ "And the Levites shall speak with a loud voice and say to all the men of Israel:

¹⁵ 'Cursed *is* the one who makes a carved or molded image, an abomination to the LORD, the work of the hands of the craftsman, and sets *it* up in secret.' And all the people shall answer and say, 'Amen!'

(Tyndale) “The first curse is the longest, and deals with the making of carved images or cast idols, the chief symbol of turning away from God.”

¹⁶ 'Cursed *is* the one who treats his father or his mother with contempt.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

The cornerstone of Israel's law and society

v.17-19 Care and respect for others

¹⁷ 'Cursed *is* the one who moves his neighbor's landmark.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

¹⁸ 'Cursed *is* the one who makes the blind to wander off the road.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

¹⁹ 'Cursed *is* the one who perverts the justice due the stranger, the fatherless, and widow.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

v. 20-23 Sexual offenses

²⁰ 'Cursed *is* the one who lies with his father's wife, because he has uncovered his father's bed.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

²¹ 'Cursed *is* the one who lies with any kind of animal.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

²² 'Cursed *is* the one who lies with his sister, the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

²³ 'Cursed *is* the one who lies with his mother-in-law.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

v.24-25 Relating to murder

²⁴ 'Cursed *is* the one who attacks his neighbor secretly.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

²⁵ 'Cursed *is* the one who takes a bribe to slay an innocent person.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

²⁶ 'Cursed *is* the one who does not confirm *all* the words of this law.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

The people to respond 'Amen' to confirm that the actions that bring on the curses are worthy of punishment and to live a life in accordance with the law

(New Amer. Com.) "The present curse section ends, finally, with a general malediction against anyone who fails to uphold the words of the law, namely, the entire covenant text."

Chapter 28

Blessings and cursings (Lev. 26)

Moses winds up this sermon

v. 1-14 Blessings for obedience

¹ "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.

² And all these blessings shall come upon you and **overtake** you, because you obey the voice of the LORD your God:

Ultimate fulfillment in the kingdom

³ Blessed *shall you be* in the city, and blessed *shall you be* in the country.

⁴ Blessed *shall be* the fruit of your body, the produce of your ground and the increase of your herds, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks.

⁵ Blessed *shall be* your basket and your kneading bowl.

v. 3-5 Agricultural blessings

v. 6-7 The blessing of safety and protection

⁶ Blessed *shall you be* when you come in, and blessed *shall you be* when you go out.

⁷ "The LORD will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before your face; they shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways.

v. 8-10 Abundance, and to be set apart as a holy people to be respected

⁸ The LORD will command the blessing on you in your storehouses and in all to which you set your hand, and He will bless you in the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

⁹ The LORD will establish you as a holy people to Himself, just as He has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in His ways.

¹⁰ Then all peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they shall be afraid of you.

v. 11 Healthy children, abundant livestock, and produce from the land

¹¹ And the LORD will grant you plenty of goods, in the fruit of your body, in the increase of your livestock, and in the produce of your ground, in the land of which the LORD swore to your fathers to give you.

v. 12—A lending nation and not a borrower

v. 13 A leader in the world (head not the tail)

¹² The LORD will open to you His good treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your hand. You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow.

¹³ And the LORD will make you the head and not the tail; you shall be above only, and not be beneath, if you heed the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you today, and are careful to observe *them*.

¹⁴ So you shall not turn aside from any of the words which I command you this day, *to* the right or the left, to go after other gods to serve them.

v. 15—68 Curses for disobedience

v. 15-20 The opposite of the blessings previously spoken

¹⁵ "But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you:

¹⁶ Cursed *shall you be* in the city, and cursed *shall you be* in the country.

¹⁷ Cursed *shall be* your basket and your kneading bowl.

¹⁸ Cursed *shall be* the fruit of your body and the produce of your land, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks.

¹⁹ Cursed *shall you be* when you come in, and cursed *shall you be* when you go out.

²⁰ "The LORD will send on you cursing, confusion, and rebuke in all that you set your hand to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, because of the wickedness of your doings in which you have forsaken Me.

v. 21-22—diseases and epidemics

v. 23-24—drought

²¹ The LORD will make the plague cling to you until He has consumed you from the land which you are going to possess.

²² The LORD will strike you with consumption, with fever, with inflammation, with severe burning fever, with the sword, with scorching, and with mildew; they shall pursue you until you perish.

²³ And your heavens which *are* over your head shall be bronze, and the earth which is under you *shall be* iron.

²⁴ The LORD will change the rain of your land to powder and dust; from the heaven it shall come down on you until you are destroyed

v. 25-26 Defeat at the hand of enemies

- ²⁵ The LORD will cause you to be defeated before your enemies; you shall go out one way against them and flee seven ways before them; and you shall become troublesome to all the kingdoms of the earth.
- ²⁶ Your carcasses shall be food for all the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and no one shall frighten *them* away.

v. 27 Diseases and epidemics

v. 28-29 Mental illness

- ²⁷ The LORD will strike you with the boils of Egypt, with tumors, with the scab, and with the itch, from which you cannot be healed.
- ²⁸ The LORD will strike you with madness and blindness and confusion of heart.
- ²⁹ And you shall grope at noonday, as a blind man gropes in darkness; you shall not prosper in your ways; you shall be only oppressed and plundered continually, and no one shall save *you*.

v. 30-34 Consequences of defeat in battle

³⁰ You shall betroth a wife, but another man shall lie with her; you shall build a house, but you shall not dwell in it; you shall plant a vineyard, but shall not gather its grapes.

Opposite of the excusals from war

³¹ Your ox *shall be* slaughtered before your eyes, but you shall not eat of it; your donkey *shall be* violently taken away from before you, and shall not be restored to you; your sheep *shall be* given to your enemies, and you shall have no one to rescue *them*.

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.

³³ A nation whom you have not known shall eat the fruit of your land and the produce of your labor, and you shall be only oppressed and crushed continually.

³⁴ So you shall be driven mad because of the sight which your eyes see.

Diseases of the skin

³⁵ The LORD will strike you in the knees and on the legs with severe boils which cannot be healed, and from the sole of your foot to the top of your head.

v.36-46 Exile, poor harvests, decline in status

³⁶ The LORD will bring you and the king whom you set over you to a nation which neither you nor your fathers have known, and there you shall serve other gods--wood and stone.

³⁷ And you shall become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword among all nations where the LORD will drive you.

³⁸ You shall carry much seed out to the field but gather little in, for the locust shall consume it.

³⁹ You shall plant vineyards and tend *them*, but you shall neither drink *of* the wine nor gather the *grapes*; for the worms shall eat them.

⁴⁰ You shall have olive trees throughout all your territory, but you shall not anoint *yourself* with the oil; for your olives shall drop off.

⁴¹ You shall beget sons and daughters, but they shall not be yours; for they shall go into captivity.

⁴² Locusts shall consume all your trees and the produce of your land.

⁴³ The alien who *is* among you shall rise higher and higher above you, and you shall come down lower and lower.

⁴⁴ He shall lend to you, but you shall not lend to him; he shall be the head, and you shall be the tail.

⁴⁵ Moreover all these curses shall come upon you and pursue and **overtake** you, until you are destroyed, because you did not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you.

⁴⁶ And they shall be upon you for a sign and a wonder, and on your descendants forever.

v.47-57 Attack from a foreign nation and the horrors of war

⁴⁷ "Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and gladness of heart, for the abundance of everything,

⁴⁸ therefore you shall serve your enemies, whom the LORD will send against you, in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in need of everything; and He will put a yoke of iron on your neck until He has destroyed you.

⁴⁹ The LORD will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, *as swift* as the eagle flies, a nation whose language you will not understand,

⁵⁰ a nation of fierce countenance, which does not respect the elderly nor show favor to the young.

⁵¹ And they shall eat the increase of your livestock and the produce of your land, until you are destroyed; they shall not leave you grain or new wine or oil, *or* the increase of your cattle or the offspring of your flocks, until they have destroyed you.

⁵² They shall besiege you at all your gates until your high and fortified walls, in which you trust, come down throughout all your land; and they shall besiege you at all your gates throughout all your land which the LORD your God has given you.

⁵³ You shall eat the fruit of your own body, the flesh of your sons and your daughters whom the LORD your God has given you, in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you.

⁵⁴ The sensitive and very refined man among you will be hostile toward his brother, toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the rest of his children whom he leaves behind,

⁵⁵ so that he will not give any of them the flesh of his children whom he will eat, because he has nothing left in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates.

⁵⁶ The tender and delicate woman among you, who would not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground because of her delicateness and sensitivity, will refuse to the husband of her bosom, and to her son and her daughter,

⁵⁷ her placenta which comes out from between her feet and her children whom she bears; for she will eat them secretly for lack of everything in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates.

v. 58-68 Summary section of the curses

⁵⁸ "If you do not carefully observe all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and awesome name, THE LORD YOUR GOD,

⁵⁹ then the LORD will bring upon you and your descendants extraordinary plagues--great and prolonged plagues--and serious and prolonged sicknesses.

⁶⁰ Moreover He will bring back on you all the diseases of Egypt, of which you were afraid, and they shall cling to you.

⁶¹ Also every sickness and every plague, which *is* not written in this Book of the Law, will the LORD bring upon you until you are destroyed.

v. 62-67 Blessings promised to Abraham taken away for disobedience

⁶² You shall be left few in number, whereas you were as the stars of heaven in multitude, because you would not obey the voice of the LORD your God.

Captivity—anciently and the future

⁶³ And it shall be, *that* just as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good and multiply you, so the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you and bring you to nothing; and you shall be plucked from off the land which you go to possess.

⁶⁴ "Then the LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other, and there you shall serve other gods, which neither you nor your fathers have known--wood and stone.

⁶⁵ And among those nations you shall find no rest, nor shall the sole of your foot have a resting place; but there the LORD will give you a trembling heart, failing eyes, and anguish of soul.

⁶⁶ Your life shall hang in doubt before you; you shall fear day and night, and have no assurance of life.

⁶⁷ In the morning you shall say, 'Oh, that it were evening!' And at evening you shall say, 'Oh, that it were morning!' because of the fear which terrifies your heart, and because of the sight which your eyes see.

⁶⁸ And the LORD will take you back to Egypt in ships, by the way of which I said to you, 'You shall never see it again.' And there you shall be offered for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but no one will buy *you*."

Lessons

Israel was to remember God when settled in the promised land by bringing their first fruits in offering both in thanksgiving and worship

God's people should always be grateful in thanksgiving giving of our best to Him

God promises special blessings to those who carefully and faithfully obey Him