

# Deuteronomy Devotionals

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## DEUTERONOMY DEVOTIONALS

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### Deuteronomy The Power of God's Word

On June 15, 1215, in the grass field of Runnymede, one document of sixty-three paragraphs changed the course of a whole nation. That charter of human rights, called the Magna Carta, became the rallying point for the British for generations to come.

God gave Israel some words on a mountaintop that were far more powerful than those ratified in an English field two millennia later. But evidently Israel did not find God's words important; they lost some of them for at least half a century. Finally, in 622 B.C., Hilkiah the high priest found a portion of God's Word, perhaps Deuteronomy, in the temple. He gave the sacred section to Josiah the king, and the holy words changed the rest of Josiah's reign. The people destroyed their heathen idols and began to worship God again.

Whenever people in biblical times read and followed God's Word, it changed their lives. As they remembered what God had said, they moved back to the main road. But soon their memories faded, and they once again sauntered down side streets.

To correct mixed-up memories and homemade maps, God gave one final Word—Jesus Christ, the fullest expression of His mind. Christ's Words and life have become not only a precious memory and a spiritual centerpiece, but also the only sure way to find God at the end of the road.

### Deuteronomy 1:21

#### Go and Take Your Property - Faith's Checkbook

"Behold, the Lord thy God hath set the land before thee: go up and possess it, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath said unto thee; fear not, neither be discouraged."—Deuteronomy 1:21

THERE is a heritage of grace which we ought to be bold enough to win for our possession. All that one believer has gained is free to another. We may be strong in faith, fervent in love, and abundant in labor; there is nothing to prevent it. Let us go up and take possession. The sweetest experience and the brightest grace are as much for us as for any of our brethren. Jehovah has set it before us; no one can deny our right; let us go up and possess it in His name. The world also lies before us to be conquered for the Lord Jesus. We are not to leave any country or corner of it unsubdued. That slum near our house is before us, not to baffle our endeavors, but to yield to them. We have only to summon courage enough to go forward, and we shall win dark homes and hard hearts for Jesus. Let us never leave the people in a lane or alley to die because we have not enough faith in Jesus and His gospel to go up and possess the land. No spot is too benighted, no person so profane as to be beyond the power of grace. Cowardice, begone! Faith marches to the conquest.

### Deuteronomy 1:2

Eleven days, and yet it took them forty years! How was this? Alas! we need not travel far for the answer. It is only too like ourselves.

How slowly we get over the ground! What windings and turnings! How often we have to go back and travel over the same ground, again and again. We are slow travelers because we are slow learners. Our God is a faithful and wise, as well as a gracious and patient Teacher. He will not permit us to pass cursorily over our lessons. Sometimes, perhaps, we think we have mastered a lesson and we attempt to move on to another, but our wise Teacher knows better, and He sees the need of deeper ploughing. He will not have us mere theorists or smatterers; He will keep us, if need be, year after year at our scales until we learn to sing. C. H. Mackintosh.

### **Deuteronomy 1:26-33 Carry Me!**

You saw how the Lord your God carried you, as a man carries his son. —Deuteronomy 1:31

Kelsey's daddy was reading to her, just as he did nearly every night before she went to sleep. She had picked the zoo book, and to her active imagination it was as if she and Daddy were there. She looked happily at the pages with the giraffes, zebras, and elephants. But when they got to the page with the grizzly bears, she said, "You would have to carry me." She said the same thing when she saw the gorillas on the next page. Curious, her dad asked her why he would have to carry her. "Because I'd be scared," came her straightforward reply.

When the Israelites saw that the fierce Amorites and Anakim were in the land ahead of them, they were afraid. So Moses, reminding them of how God helped them in the wilderness, said, "You saw how the Lord your God carried you." He would carry them again.

We can be certain that the Lord will do the same for us when we are afraid. When the scary times come, when we are called on to do the hard things life demands, God will lift us up and carry us along. He gives us His strength in Christ.

Is there something frightening in your life? Are there some difficult things you know you have to do? Ask your heavenly Father to see you through. He will hold you in His loving arms and carry you.

Beneath His watchful eye

His saints securely dwell;

That hand which bears all nature up

Shall guard His children well. —Doddridge

With God's arms beneath us, we need not fear what lies before us.

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Is there something frightening in your life? Are there some difficult things you know you have to do? Ask your heavenly Father to see you through. He will hold you in His loving arms and carry you.— by David C. Egner

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### **Deuteronomy 1:32-33**

...the Lord your God, Who went before you in the way, to seek you out a place to pitch your tents in.—Deut. 1.32,33

This Book of Deuteronomy is didactic rather than historical. Its actual history covers a very brief period, probably not many days. It consists of a collection of the final discourses of Moses. The first of these (Deut 1.6-4.43) is retrospective. In it, Moses dealt with the three stages of their wanderings—from Horeb to Kadesh-Barnea (Deut 1.6-46); from Kadesh-Barnea to Heshbon (2); and from Heshbon to Beth-peor (3)—and then exhorted them to obedience (Deut 4.1-43). In dealing with the first stage, he reminded them of the Divine call which caused them to leave Horeb, and recalled their rebellion in the matter of the spies. The purpose of the review was that of setting all the facts of their experience in the light of God's government. Their disturbance at Horeb was that of the direct command of God. The way of the wilderness was a terrible one, but they had not been left to grope their way through it alone. In this connection the words quoted above were used, and they are very full of revealing beauty. Through them we learn that in the government of God nothing is haphazard. How often life is a wilderness way! As we journey, there seems no map, no plan, no timetable. The truth is that our God is not only accompanying us on the march ; He is ever going before us, selecting the places of our pausing. Wherever at night we pitch our tents, the place is chosen by God. That is all we need to know. (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

### **Deuteronomy 1:38**

“Encourage him.” — Deuteronomy 1:38 (Morning and Evening)

God employs his people to encourage one another. He did not say to an angel, “Gabriel, my servant Joshua is about to lead my people into Canaan—go, encourage him.” God never works needless miracles; if his purposes can be accomplished by ordinary means, he will not use miraculous agency. Gabriel would not have been half so well fitted for the work as Moses. A brother's sympathy is more precious than an angel's embassy. The angel, swift of wing, had better known the Master's bidding than the people's temper. An angel had never experienced the hardness of the road, nor seen the fiery serpents, nor had he led the stiff-necked multitude in the wilderness as Moses had done. We should be glad that God usually works for man by man. It forms a bond of brotherhood, and being mutually dependent on one another, we are fused more completely into one family. Brethren, take the text as God's message to you. Labour to help others, and especially strive to encourage them. Talk cheerily to the young and anxious enquirer, lovingly try to remove stumblingblocks out of his way. When you find a spark of grace in the heart, kneel down and blow it into a flame. Leave the young believer to discover the roughness of the road by degrees, but tell him of the strength which dwells in God, of the sureness of the promise, and of the charms of communion with Christ. Aim to comfort the sorrowful, and to animate the desponding. Speak a word in season to him that is weary, and encourage those who are fearful to go on their way with gladness. God encourages you by his promises; Christ encourages you as he points to the heaven he has won for you, and the spirit encourages you as he works in you to will and to do of his own will and pleasure. Imitate divine wisdom, and encourage others, according to the word of this evening.

### **Deuteronomy 2:16-25**

#### **The First Step**

There are many ways to handle an overwhelming task. We may keep putting it off, hoping that God will miraculously take care of it. Or we can take the first step in the right direction.

After 40 years in the wilderness, Moses was told that it was time for the people to take possession of the land God had promised them. The first order of business was to decide what to do about a king named Sihon who stood between the Israelites and the land of Canaan. God's command was, "Begin to possess it, and engage him in battle" (Dt. 2:24). God certainly could have eliminated Sihon without anyone's help, but He commanded His people to take the first step.

The same is often true with us. Difficult circumstances or broken relationships seem to defy solution. When they persist for months or years, we may feel that nothing we do will make a difference. But the Lord says, "Begin." We must make the first move--speak a kind word, ask forgiveness, pay some of what we owe. We must be the initiators.

Joy lies not only in attaining some distant goal but also in walking with our loving God, who says, "I have begun to give ... Begin to possess it" (Dt 2:31).

Is there a first step you should take today? —David C. McCasland (Our Daily Bread) [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#)

It's easy to procrastinate  
And leave good deeds undone,  
But such a course will bring regrets  
When life's short race is run.

-Anon.

**Nothing can be accomplished  
until we take the first step**

**Deuteronomy 2:3**

After the failure of faith at Kadesh-Barnea, the people had turned back into the wilderness, and had tarried long in the neighborhood of Mount Seir. Then again the command came to them to move north-ward. All that Moses told this people, they already knew—as to the actual facts of the long and tedious processes of these forty years. The great burden of his message was that of reminding them how, even amid such sorrowful and suffering discipline they had still been remembered and guided by God. This government of God is a fact which breaks in upon our consciousness in many ways. Over and over again, when we have reached some place of comparative quietness, He upsets all our plans and purposes, and we find ourselves commanded to new journeying, and those often not by ways we would have chosen for ourselves. He is constantly disturbing us. These disturbances are never capricious. He is always leading us toward the fulfilment of His own purposes, and that means that He is leading us toward the realization of our highest good. And yet again, it is not only true that the end to which He leads us is good; it is equally true that He leads us by no unnecessary pathways. There are a meaning and a value in every stretch of the road, however rough and tortuous it may be. We learn lessons in the region of Mount Seir which can be learned nowhere else; we discover God in the country of Moab as we could do in no other region. Let us, then, ever rejoice in His commands, however much they disturb us. His will is always "good and acceptable and perfect." (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

**Deuteronomy 3.22.**

To these people fearlessness was a duty. Over and over again this command was laid upon them. They had no right to be afraid. Moses now argued for this by reminding them of how in the cases where already they had been at war, they had been victorious. But the supreme note in his argument was that contained in these words. The reason for these victories, and the reason therefore why they should be without fear, was that it was Jehovah their God Who fought for them. This needs to be understood. We must be careful to recognize that it does not so much mean that God was on their side, as that they were on the side of God. God would not have fought for them, if their cause had been unrighteous. It was because in their warfare they were carrying out His will, that He fought for them. This is an important distinction of perpetual application. Lincoln was once asked if he thought God was on his side, to which he replied that it had never occurred to him to ask such a question, but that he was persistently anxious to discover whether he were on the side of God. In no conflict have we any right to ask or-expect that God will fight for us, save as we know we are with Him. When we do know that, we have equally no right to be afraid. Fear is disloyalty; it questions the supremacy of righteousness and the power of God. Fear is paralysis; it cuts us off from contact with the forces of righteousness, for it cuts us off from fellowship with God. (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

**Deuteronomy 3:23-29**

**Dying For Encouragement**

In Deuteronomy 3 we read that Moses encouraged Joshua as he was about to assume leadership of the Israelites. No doubt Joshua was filled with fear and a feeling of inadequacy to fill Moses' shoes. The Lord therefore told Moses to encourage Joshua.

All of us need a word of encouragement from time to time to spur us on when we are facing a major new challenge. But we also need words of appreciation and commendation as we carry out our daily responsibilities, whether at home or at work.

When a corporate accountant committed suicide, an effort was made to find out why. The company's books were examined, but no shortage was found. Nothing could be uncovered that gave any clue as to why he took his life—that is, until a note was discovered. It simply said: "In 30 years I have never had one word of encouragement. I'm fed up!"

Many people crave some small sign of approval. They need a word of recognition, a caring smile, a warm handshake, and an honest expression of appreciation for the good we see in them or in their work.

Every day let's determine to encourage (not flatter) at least one person. Let's do our part to help those around us who are dying for encouragement. —Richard De Haan (Our Daily Bread)

It may seem insignificant  
To say a word or two;  
But when we give encouragement,  
What wonders it can do!  
—K. De Haan

**A word of encouragement can make the difference  
between giving up or going on.**

**Deuteronomy 3:28**

**READ: Deuteronomy 3:23-29**

WHEN an accountant for a certain business committed suicide, people who knew him tried to discover a reason. The company examined its books but found no evidence of wrongdoing. Nothing gave any clue as to why he took his life until someone discovered a note that said: "In thirty years I have never had one word of encouragement. I'm fed up!"

We all need to hear words of appreciation and commendation as we carry out our daily responsibilities at home and at work. We also need encouragement to spur us on when we are facing a new challenge. Joshua, for example, needed encouragement when he was about to assume leadership of the Israelites, and God instructed Moses to give it to him.

People need approval—a word of recognition, a caring smile, a warm handshake, an honest expression of appreciation for the good we see in them or in their work.

If each of us were to encourage (not flatter) one person each day, think of the difference it would make in the level of energy people have with which to serve the Lord.—R W De Haan (Our Daily Bread)

**Deuteronomy 4:1**

Now therefore, hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the judgments which I teach you, for to do them, that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers giveth you

"Hearken" and "do," that ye may "live" and "possess." This is a universal and abiding principle. It was true for Israel, and it is true for us. The pathway of life and the true secret of possession is simple obedience to the holy commandments of God. We see this all through the inspired volume, from cover to cover. God has given us His Word, not to speculate upon it or discuss it, but that we may obey it. And it is as we, through grace, yield a hearty and happy obedience to our Father's statutes and judgments, that we tread the bright pathway of life, and enter into the reality of all that God has treasured up for us in Christ. - C. H. Mackintosh

**Deuteronomy 4:1-9 Story Stewards**

Take heed ... lest you forget the things your eyes have seen ... And teach them to your children and your grandchildren. — Deuteronomy 4:9

Many people take great care to make sure their resources are used well after they die. They set up trusts, write wills, and establish foundations to guarantee that their assets will continue to be used for a good purpose after their life on earth is done. We call this good stewardship.

Equally important, however, is being good stewards of our life story. God commanded the Israelites not only to teach their children His laws but also to make sure they knew their family history. It was the responsibility of parents and grandparents to make sure their children knew the stories of how God had worked in their behalf (Deut. 4:1-14).

God has given each of us a unique story. His plan for our lives is individualized. Do others know what you believe and why? Do they know the story of how you came to faith and how God has worked in your life to strengthen your faith? Do they know how God has shown Himself faithful and has helped you through doubts and disappointments?

The faithfulness of God is a story that we have the privilege to pass on. Record it in some way and share it. Be a good steward of the story that God is telling through you.

How great, O God, Your acts of love!

Your saving deeds would now proclaim

That generations yet to come

May set their hope in Your great name. —D. DeHaan

A life lived for God leaves a lasting legacy.

**Deuteronomy 4:1-9 Words To Live By**

For many years I've maintained a file folder labeled "Speaking." It has become thick with articles, quotations, and illustrations that

might be useful. Recently I went through it to discard things that are out of date. I found it difficult to throw away many of the items, not because I haven't used them in a talk but because I haven't put them into practice. I closed the folder thinking, "These aren't words to talk about; these are words to live by."

After 40 years in the desert, Moses addressed the people poised to enter the Promised Land: "Now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I teach you to observe, that you may live, and go in and possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers is giving you" (Deut. 4:1). Moses' repeated theme (vv.1,2,5,6,9) is that God's commandments are to be kept. He said it well, "Surely I have taught you statutes and judgments ... that you should act according to them" (v.5).

It is so easy to talk about doing more than we actually do and to speak about truth we're not living by. We can become bloated with words, yet starved for reality, forgetting that all of God's commands flow from His heart of love for us.

Help us, Lord, not to be just hearers of the Word;

help us to be doers as well. Teach us to be honest

with ourselves about who we really are. We want

to walk in Your ways and to guide others to You.

The strength of our actions should match the strength of our words.

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May set their hope in Your great name. —D. DeHaan

A life lived for God leaves a lasting legacy.

INSIGHT: In today's passage, Moses reminded the people of Israel that—unlike the nations around them—they were the only ones privileged to have intimate fellowship with God (Deut 4:7) and the only nation given God's law (Deut 4:8). If they faithfully obeyed His law, God would make them a great and wise people (Dt 4:6,8-9).

### **Deuteronomy 4:1-9 Words To Live By**

Surely I have taught you statutes and judgments ... that you should act according to them. —Deuteronomy 4:5

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The strength of our actions should match the strength of our words.

INSIGHT: Far from being a burden, the commands God gave to the Israelites were life-giving. They outlined a life lived in response to His love. In today’s text, Moses reminded the Israelites that the commands were for their wisdom and understanding (Dt 4:6). The result of living by the words of the Lord would be that the nations around them would recognize the one true God (Dt 4:7-8).

### **Deuteronomy 4:1-10 Every Word Matters**

You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God.  
—Deuteronomy 4:2

Kim Peek was a savant (a person with extraordinary memory) who memorized all of Shakespeare’s plays. During a performance of Twelfth Night, Peek noticed that the actor had skipped a word from one of the lines. Peek suddenly stood up and shouted, “Stop!” The actor apologized and said he didn’t think anyone would mind. Peek replied, “Shakespeare would.”

Words matter. But especially when they are the very words of God. Moses warned Israel, “You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God” (Deut. 4:2). Moses often reminded Israel of God’s mercy and faithfulness to them in the past. But he also stressed the importance of obedience to God’s commands as they prepared to enter the Promised Land. He told them that obedience would result in blessings of life and a rich inheritance (vv.39-40). Every command and regulation mattered to God. The value His people placed on God’s Word showed their view of Him.

Today, when we value God’s Word, handle it with great care, and obey what it says, we give God the reverence He truly deserves.

God’s Word needs no additions or subtractions.

### **Deuteronomy 4:1-14 Misquote**

Imagine the frustration of a mother as she tries to gather her family for supper. Her 8-year-old son comes through the door smuggling a dead bird behind his back. “Call Ann for dinner,” says his mother. “Then wash your hands and come to the table.”

A minute later the 4-year-old daughter comes running into the kitchen, sobbing uncontrollably. Her brother had just waved the stiff bird under her nose and told her that if she wasn’t at the table in 17 seconds, Mom wouldn’t let her go out and play for a whole week.

This story about a misquoted mother doesn’t begin to capture the confusion that follows when we misquote the heavenly Father. Often we become preoccupied with our own ideas of how things should be, like Job’s friends, who didn’t speak rightly about the Lord (Job 42:7). The result is that we say more, or less, than God actually said in His Word (Deuteronomy 4:2). We need to make sure we know exactly where His words stop and our opinions begin. If we don’t, we may misrepresent Him, and Proverbs 30:6 warns that we are then in danger of being found liars before God.

Let’s take care that we don’t express our opinions as if they were God’s words. —Mart De Haan (Our Daily Bread)

Lord, grant us wisdom to discern  
The truth that You’ve made known,  
And may we never teach one word  
Beyond what You have shown.

—D. De Haan

**We must adjust our lives to the Bible—  
never the Bible to our lives.**

## **Deuteronomy 4:2; John 12:47–48 God's Sole Authority**

A disastrous earthquake struck Tokyo and Yokohama in 1923. A quarter of a million people died and over half a million homes and buildings were destroyed. One of the few large buildings left intact was the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo—the creation of Frank Lloyd Wright. An official in the Japanese government cabled congratulations to Wright because his hotel stood, a monument to his genius. God “does not take back his words,” Isaiah wrote (31:2 NIV). In that sentence is the encouragement God offers the world. Whatever else changes or collapses, God's Word remains stalwart and inviolable. Each generation may reassess its tradition and rewrite its opinions, but God's Word remains inflexibly written, unchanging, unchangeable. Other writings may speak only to their time—the Bible speaks to all time. -Speaker's sourcebook of new illustrations

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## **Deuteronomy 4:6; 1 Timothy 4:13 A Rare Value**

Mr. N. Hartas rummaged through an attic in northern England and found A Hare Among Plants, with a Robin, Lizard, and Insects—the only existing painting of sixteenth-century German artist Hans Hoffman. Aside from the accumulated grime, the painting was in fine condition and looked exceptional when cleaned. Lying within reach of the homeowners for years, the painting simply gathered dust and went unappreciated. Only when an art expert discovered it did the owners reap the financial advantage they could have enjoyed long before: \$610,500. How often the Bible suffers the same fate in millions of homes around the world. Perhaps it is kept in a safe place as the repository of family history and events, or it is placed carefully on the coffee table or mantle—always closed and unused. If we were to read it, we would find in its message of forgiveness the power to manage life confidently today and the hope to anticipate life tomorrow. We would find the wisdom to imitate the life of Christ rather than the manners of people. We would find the strength to climb to the high ground of committed discipleship and never descend, to embrace spiritual ideals and never compromise. - Speaker's sourcebook of new illustrations

## **Deuteronomy 4:9**

Lest thou forget.—Deut. 4.9.

Having surveyed the history of the Divine guidance and governance of the people from Horeb to Beth-peor, Moses exhorted them to obedience. He based his appeal upon the greatness of their God, and the perfection of His law. He challenged them to put their God and His commandments into comparison with all others. He reminded them that their existence' and history as a nation were centred in a spiritual ideal. No visible form of God had been granted to them, even amid the solemn and majestic manifestations of Sinai. In the midst of this discourse he warned them, as indeed he did upon more than one occasion, not to forget. What a necessary warning this ever is! It is most strange how prone man is to forget. It is true that, while some things can never be actually forgotten, they nevertheless are constantly forgotten in the sense of being of any value. We forget the law of God, we forget the deliverances of God, we forget the disciplines of God, we forget the very love of God, in so far as memory serves us as an inspiration to true conduct, to trust, to amended life, to the loyalty which love demands. Such forgetfulness is not an aberration of intellect; it is a definite wrong done to God, a sin against Him. Memory is a non-moral function of the soul. If it is either to help or hinder it must be trained and used. When it is employed to keep certain great facts in the mind, so that they may influence the will, it is one of the greatest forces for good. (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

## **Deuteronomy 4:9**

The Bible is full of instruction about how we should raise our children in the “fear and admonition of the Lord.” God often reminded His ancient people of Israel that they should not depart from His Word, but they should diligently teach the younger generation the things they had learned and experienced by His grace. This month as we are thinking about our children returning to the grade



schools and higher institutions of learning, how important it is to remind ourselves not to neglect their spiritual education.

An agnostic who once went to visit the famous poet Coleridge took strong issue with him. He argued vehemently against any spiritual indoctrination of youth, and declared his own determination not to "prejudice" his children in favor of any form of "religion," but to allow them at maturity to choose for themselves. The defensive answer of Coleridge is worth noting. "If your position is sound," said he, "why then do we prejudice a garden in favor of flowers and fruits? Why not let the clods choose for themselves between cockleburs and strawberries?" The agnostic was silenced!

Contrary to popular opinion, children do not naturally tend in the right direction. Being sinners they must be converted, trained, and encouraged to develop Christian character and aspire to noble deeds. Parents, teachers, and preachers all have a contribution to make. Much of the trouble we are experiencing in the world today is due to the fact that the older generation has frequently failed our young people in this important area of life. Beware of developing "cockleburs" when you should be nurturing "strawberries"! If we had paid no more attention to our plants than we have to our children, we would now be living in a jungle of weeds.—Luther Burbank

### **Deuteronomy 4:1-9 Story Stewards**

Take heed ... lest you forget the things your eyes have seen ... And teach them to your children and your grandchildren. — Deuteronomy 4:9

Many people take great care to make sure their resources are used well after they die. They set up trusts, write wills, and establish foundations to guarantee that their assets will continue to be used for a good purpose after their life on earth is done. We call this good stewardship.

Equally important, however, is being good stewards of our life story. God commanded the Israelites not only to teach their children His laws but also to make sure they knew their family history. It was the responsibility of parents and grandparents to make sure their children knew the stories of how God had worked in their behalf (Deut. 4:1-14).

God has given each of us a unique story. His plan for our lives is individualized. Do others know what you believe and why? Do they know the story of how you came to faith and how God has worked in your life to strengthen your faith? Do they know how God has shown Himself faithful and has helped you through doubts and disappointments?

The faithfulness of God is a story that we have the privilege to pass on. Record it in some way and share it. Be a good steward of the story that God is telling through you.

How great, O God, Your acts of love!

Your saving deeds would now proclaim

That generations yet to come

May set their hope in Your great name. —D. DeHaan

A life lived for God leaves a lasting legacy.

### **Deuteronomy 4:15-27 Don't Forget!**

Take heed to yourself, ... lest you forget the things your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. —Deuteronomy 4:9

You would think the people of ancient Israel would never forget God. Not only had God brought them through the Red Sea, but each day in the wilderness He fed them with manna. He saw to it that their clothes didn't wear out. And He brought them into a land filled with lavish resources. Everywhere they looked, the Israelites saw God at work. Yet they turned to other gods and forgot the One who had led them and cared for them. That memory loss proved fatal.

Aleksander Solzhenitsyn, the Russian philosopher, said, "More than half a century ago, while I was still a child, I recall hearing a number of older people offer the following explanation for the great disasters that had befallen Russia: 'Men have forgotten God. That's why all this has happened.' Since then I have spent well-nigh 50 years working on the history of our revolution... If I were asked today to formulate as concisely as possible the main cause of the ruinous revolution that swallowed up some 60 million of our people, I could not put it more accurately than to repeat: 'Men have forgotten God. That's why all this has happened.'"

Must that happen to us today? Let's pray that it doesn't. Let's take time to remember what God has done for us and then give Him the love and devotion He deserves.— by Haddon W. Robinson

As we all enjoy God's blessings,

Oh, may we not forget  
Our Lord, from whom all good gifts come—  
In Him our needs are met. —Fitzhugh

**The first step on the road to ruin is to forget God.**

**Deuteronomy 4:15-31 UNSEEN MAJESTY**

"You shall not make for yourself a carved image." -- Exodus 20:4

The Encyclopedia Britannica describes Marcus Terentius Varro (116-27 BC) as "Rome's greatest scholar." He wrote more than 600 books on many subjects. Among his writings is this statement:

"They who first introduced images of the gods removed fear and added error."

This profound statement helps us understand why Moses reminded Israel at Sinai, "You saw no form when the Lord spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire" (Dt. 4:15). It also underscores the reason behind God's command prohibiting any physical representations of Him.

We cannot love and serve the Lord in an acceptable manner unless we have an accurate understanding of His character. Any physical portrayal, however, whether with pictures, icons, or statues, distorts our perception of His true character and lessens a healthy respect for His awesome holiness and power.

If Rome's greatest secular scholar, guided only by the light of nature and reason, could see the dangers of misrepresenting deity, how much more should we who have special revelation carefully attend to every word God has spoken.

Let's ask the Lord to instill in us a healthy respect of Him and help us grow in our knowledge of His character. - D J De Haan (Our Daily Bread)

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,  
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,  
Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,  
Almighty, victorious -- Thy great name we praise.  
- Smith

**God made us in His image;  
Don't try to make Him in yours.**

**Deuteronomy 4:32-40 Singing Bowl**

Artist and scientist Michael Flynn designed a singing bowl for display in ArtPrize, an international art competition held in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The bowl requires no electricity but it does require something that is in short supply: cooperation.

As I observed people trying to make the bowl sing, I was surprised that none of them bothered to read the directions about rocking it gently. Instead, impatient to make music, they kept trying their own ideas. After a few minutes they walked away frustrated and disappointed, as if the bowl was defective.

How many times, I wonder, do we become frustrated that life isn't working the way we think it should? We keep trying ways that seem right, but things keep turning out wrong. Instead of following God's Word, we continue trying to find our own way.

The singing bowl reminds us that we can't expect life to go well if we ignore the instructions of the Designer (Deut. 4:40). Failing to obey divides us from one another and separates us from God. To fulfill His plan for the world and make the way of salvation known (Ps. 67:2), we need to follow His instructions about living and working peacefully together. When life doesn't go well, it may be that we've stopped following God's plan. — by Julie Ackerman Link

Sure it takes a lot of courage to put things in God's hands,

To give ourselves completely, our lives, our hopes, our plans;

To follow where He leads us and make His will our own;

But all it takes is foolishness to go the way alone! —Kline

**Life is a beautiful song that God is teaching us to play.**

### **Deuteronomy 5:1-7**

BRITISH statesman W. E. Gladstone (1809–98) visited Christ Church College and spoke optimistically about the betterment of English society during his lifetime. His outlook was so positive that a student challenged him:

"Sir, are there no adverse signs?"

Gladstone reflected,

"Yes, there is one thing that frightens me—the fear that God seems to be dying out of the minds of men."

Obedying the first commandment would prevent this from happening. Yet people attempt to make gods out of such things as money, possessions, pleasure, knowledge, and people, and in so doing forget the true God. But no created thing can ever fill the place in our hearts that God intends for Himself.

A child was asked,

"How many gods are there?"

"Only one," he replied.

"How do you know?"

"Because," he said, "God fills heaven and earth, so there's room for only one."

Why does God command us to love and worship Him alone? Because in Him we live and move and have our being (Acts 17:28), and from Him we receive eternal life (Colossians 1:13–18). He has every right to say, "No other gods!" because He alone is the living and true God who created us and redeemed us. —D J De Haan (Our Daily Bread)

### **Deut. 5:6-21 The Word Among Us**

Read: Psalm 119:17-24 | Bible in a Year: Leviticus 14; Matthew 26:51-75

Your testimonies also are my delight and my counselors. —Psalm 119:24

The Word of God comes to us in many forms. Bible-centered preaching, Scripture reading, songs, study groups, and devotional articles bring to us the truths of God from Scripture. But we can't overlook personal reading and studying either.

My heart has recently been touched by a careful, paragraph-by-paragraph study of Deuteronomy alongside the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5–7. Both passages contain codes of belief: The Ten Commandments (Deut. 5:6-21) and the Beatitudes (Matt. 5:3-12). Deuteronomy shows us the old covenant—the law God wanted His people to follow. In Matthew, Jesus shows us how He has come to fulfill that law and establish the principles of the new covenant, which frees us from the burden of the law.

The Holy Spirit comes alongside the Word of God to teach, empower, instruct, convict, and purify us. The result is understanding, repentance, renewal, and growth in Jesus. Theologian Philip Jacob Spener wrote: "The more at home the Word of God is among us, the more we will bring about faith and its fruits." Let's pray with the psalmist: "Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your law" so that we might live it out in our lives (Ps. 119:18).

"Heavenly Father, we bow in Your presence. Let Your

Word be our rule and guide, Your Spirit our teacher,

and Your greater glory be our supreme concern,

through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen." —John R. W. Stott

When the Word of God is within us, it flows out from our life.

INSIGHT: Psalm 119 is a celebration of God's law, broken down into 22 sections that follow the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. When we take a look at the individual sections, we see that the psalmist personally looks to God's law as a source of life and guidance. In today's passage, the psalmist celebrates God's grace as he acknowledges that it is only through Him that he can keep His Word (v.17).

### **Deuteronomy 5:12 The Command to Keep the Sabbath**

**QUESTION:** What is meant by the command to “Keep the Sabbath Day holy?” And, why isn’t it included in the New Testament?

**ANSWER:** To keep it “holy” meant to observe the day according to God’s instructions. The central idea was rest from labor, as specified in Deut. 5:12–15.

### **Deuteronomy 5:16 - Honoring Our Parents**

In the Deuteronomic account of the Ten Commandments, the Lord reminds the people that they had been slaves in Egypt and that He had brought them out from there. Therefore, He explains, He commanded them to observe the Sabbath. The weekly rest would remind them of a time when they could not rest when they were slaves. The link between slavery in Egypt and the Sabbath is reiterated in Ezek. 20:5, 12: “On the day I chose Israel... [the Lord says] I gave them my Sabbaths as a sign between us, so they would know that I the Lord made them holy.” The Sabbath was essentially Jewish, which explains, in part, its absence in New Testament instructions to Christians. It should be noted that nine of the Ten Commandments are both moral and timeless. It will always be wrong to lie or steal—on earth and in heaven. But in heaven, there will be no Sabbaths. Observation of a Sabbath was moral only as an act of obedience to a command limited to a specific earthly people. (C. Donald Cole, “Questions & Answers,” Today in the Word, October 1997, p. 12)

The year was 1727. The place was a small bookshop in Lichfield, England. A man who kept bursting into violent fits of coughing was packing books to sell in his market stall in Uttoxeter. Between coughs he asked his 18-year-old son to take the books that day. But the young man, deeply engrossed in the Latin classic he was reading, heard him but ignored the request. The stagecoach arrived, and the father stepped out into the pouring rain with his load of books to take the 20-mile ride to the market.

Fifty years later an elderly man stood for hours in the pouring rain at a market stall in Uttoxeter. When the storm finally subsided, he slowly walked back to a waiting carriage and returned home. There he bowed his head and sobbed. That man was the famous literary genius Samuel Johnson. He was still haunted by the memory of what he did so long ago.

Honoring our parents is more than an obligation. It’s also a privilege. As children we honor them by obedience; as adults, by frequent calls or visits and self-sacrificing care. Missed opportunities to show love and honor may bring deep regret years later.

The command is simple: “Honor your father and your mother.” And God always rewards obedience. — by Herbert Vander Lugt (Our Daily Bread)

Don't miss the opportunity  
To honor and obey  
The parents God has given you—  
For they'll be gone someday. —Sper

**Children let their parents down if they forget who brought them up.**

### **Deuteronomy 5:16**

A teacher gave her class of second-graders a lesson on the magnet and what it does. The next day, in a written test, she included this question: “My name has six letters. The first one is m. I pick up things. What am I?” When the test papers were turned in, the teacher was astonished to find that almost 50 percent of the students answered the question with the word mother.

Yes, mothers do pick up things. But they are much more than “magnets,” gathering up clothes and picking up toys around the house. As willing as many mothers are to do such chores, they have a higher calling than that.

A good mother loves her family and provides an atmosphere where each member can find acceptance, security, and understanding. She is there when the children need a listening ear, a comforting word, a warm hug, or a loving touch on a fevered brow. And for the Christian mother, her greatest joy is in teaching her children to trust and to love Jesus as their Savior. —R. W De Haan (Our Daily Bread)

**Godly mothers not only bring you up.  
They bring you to God!**

### **Deuteronomy 5:20 Tell The Truth**

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. --Exodus 20:16

How prone we are to lying! With a stroke of exaggeration here, an omitted detail there, or a misleading silence we distort the truth. Yet truth is the foundation and superstructure of all relationships. Remove the girders of truth, and society crumbles in on itself. This

moral absolute is so self-evident that even criminals punish their own who lie to them.

The ninth commandment forbids purposeful deceit against our neighbor and underscores the sacredness of truth in all our dealings. The two Hebrew words used for "false" in Exodus 20:16 and in Deuteronomy 5:20 mean "untrue" and "insincere." Any expression of insincerity and untruthfulness, therefore, is bearing false witness against our neighbor.

This commandment also exposes two underlying motives that God hates--malice and pride. When we lie, it is usually to cast a person in a bad light or to place ourselves in a good light. The first springs from malice, the second from pride.

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (Jn. 14:6). The closer we are to Him, the more truthful we will become with ourselves and with others. The question is, "Are we followers of Him who is the truth?" --D J De Haan (Our Daily Bread)

Lord, cleanse my heart of all deceit  
And teach me what is true;  
Help me to have integrity  
In all I say and do. --Sper

**Nothing weakens the truth  
more than stretching it.**

### **Deuteronomy 5:24**

**"The Lord our God hath shewed us his glory." — Deuteronomy 5:24** (Morning and Evening)

God's great design in all his works is the manifestation of his own glory. Any aim less than this were unworthy of himself. But how shall the glory of God be manifested to such fallen creatures as we are? Man's eye is not single, he has ever a side glance towards his own honour, has too high an estimate of his own powers, and so is not qualified to behold the glory of the Lord. It is clear, then, that self must stand out of the way, that there may be room for God to be exalted; and this is the reason why he bringeth his people oftentimes into straits and difficulties, that, being made conscious of their own folly and weakness, they may be fitted to behold the majesty of God when he comes forth to work their deliverance. He whose life is one even and smooth path, will see but little of the glory of the Lord, for he has few occasions of self-emptying, and hence, but little fitness for being filled with the revelation of God. They who navigate little streams and shallow creeks, know but little of the God of tempests; but they who "do business in great waters," these see his "wonders in the deep." Among the huge Atlantic-waves of bereavement, poverty, temptation, and reproach, we learn the power of Jehovah, because we feel the littleness of man. Thank God, then, if you have been led by a rough road: it is this which has given you your experience of God's greatness and lovingkindness. Your troubles have enriched you with a wealth of knowledge to be gained by no other means: your trials have been the cleft of the rock in which Jehovah has set you, as he did his servant Moses, that you might behold his glory as it passed by. Praise God that you have not been left to the darkness and ignorance which continued prosperity might have involved, but that in the great fight of affliction, you have been capacitated for the outshinings of his glory in his wonderful dealings with you.

### **Deuteronomy 5:23-33 From The Heart**

Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments! —Deuteronomy 5:29

A Colorado Springs woman sits in her car in front of an elementary school every weekday afternoon and points a hair dryer out her window at passing vehicles. Many drivers mistake the hand-held dryer for a radar gun and slow down. Mission accomplished! The speed limit is posted in the school zone but it often takes the threat of punishment to make drivers obey the law.

That's a sobering picture of us all, even in our relationship with God. Instead of an inner willingness to follow God, it may take the force of difficult circumstances to turn us toward Him. But that's not how our heavenly Father wants it to be.

The Lord has always longed for His people to obey Him from their hearts. When the Israelites were poised to enter the Promised Land, Moses reviewed the Ten Commandments and then told them God's response to their intention to keep His law: "Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children forever!" (Deuteronomy 5:29).

God doesn't want us to obey Him just because we're afraid of punishment. He longs for loving obedience that comes from our hearts.

God sometimes has to break our will

To get us to obey;

But He desires obedience

That loving hearts display. —Sper

Obedience to God flows freely from a heart of love.

### **Deuteronomy 5:28 -29**

They have well said all that they have spoken. Oh, that there were such a heart in them!—Deut. 5. 28, 29.

These were the words of God to Moses, concerning what the nation had said, through the heads of the tribes and the elders, in answer to the giving of the Law; and Moses reminded the people of them as he began his second discourse, which consisted of a resume of the laws already given. They had confessed their sense that these were indeed laws from God, had expressed their fear of God, and had asked that Moses would mediate between them and God. Of all this God said that they had spoken well, but He, added: "Oh, that there were such an heart in them!" In these words we have the recognition of a persistent difficulty in human experience. The mind of man recognizes the beauty of the Divine ideal, realizes human weakness, understands the necessity for inter-mediation; and yet the heart of man breaks down. This touches a very deep note in human nature. The deepest fact therein, and the one most powerful in producing results, is not that of the intelligence or the mind; it is that of the desire or heart. A man becomes what he really desires. That also is the significance of the declaration: "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." A man may be intellectually convinced that righteousness is good, but he only arrives at righteousness when his desires put confidence in the Lord of righteousness. All this shows how supremely right the great evangelists have always been, when they have represented Christ as asking for the human heart. (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

### **Deuteronomy 5:29 - From The Heart**

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God doesn't want us to obey Him just because we're afraid of punishment. He longs for loving obedience that comes from our hearts. — by David C. McCasland (Our Daily Bread)

God sometimes has to break our will  
To get us to obey;  
But He desires obedience  
That loving hearts display. —Sper

**Obedience to God flows freely from a heart of love.**

### **Deuteronomy 6 Forgotten Wife**

After stopping for gas in Montgomery, Alabama, Sam drove more than 5 hours before noticing he had left someone behind—his wife. So at the next town he asked the police to help get him in touch with her. Then Sam called his wife to tell her he was on his way back. He admitted with great embarrassment that he just hadn't noticed her absence.

How Sam could forget his wife is beyond me. But wait! We're not much different in our relationship to God. We actually fail to remember the One who created us and redeemed us. How is this possible? I don't know. But we do forget. And it's a constant struggle not to.

Man's short attention span is no surprise to God. Speaking to Israel, He offered solutions in Deuteronomy 6.

God gave these instructions:

Focus on life's purpose, and keep your priorities straight (Dt. 6:4-5).

Become so familiar with the Bible that it is a part of what you think and feel and do (Dt 6:6).

Talk about God to your children, and look for opportunities to tell them of His love (Dt 6:7).

Write reminders to yourself and put them where they can be easily seen (Dt 6:8-9).

Realize that your need for God is not limited to times of obvious stress or danger. Enjoy with gratitude whatever health and happiness you have (Dt 6:10-11).

Can we put God out of our mind? I'm afraid so. That's why we must acknowledge and obey Him continually. It's the only way of keeping Him in mind. -M. R. De Haan II (Our Daily Bread)

King of my life I crown Thee now—

Thine shall the glory be;

Lest I forget Thy thorn-crowned brow,

Lead me to Calvary.

- Hussey

**Backsliding begins**

**when knee-bending stops.**

**Deuteronomy 6:1-15 - Who Is On The Throne?**

According to English poet Oliver Reynolds, an old man had a family altar where he burned incense to an engraving of Napoleon. When asked why he worshiped the picture as a god, the man replied that he would worship anything.

Imagine venerating a picture of that French general! Imagine burning incense to the portrait of a human being who has no meaningful relationship to his worshipers! That's idolatry at its worst!

We don't think of ourselves as idolaters, of course, but are we in subtle ways disobeying God's commandment: "You shall have no other gods before Me"? (Exodus 20:3). We would never dream of bowing down to the picture of any mortal, however famous or powerful. But who is on the throne of our hearts?

Are we giving a loved one first place in our lives? Is that person number one in our affections? Maybe we're worshiping money. Or perhaps our job is our top priority.

Jesus said, "You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve" (Luke 4:8). Are we worshiping and serving only Him?

Spend some time alone with God to examine your heart. Make sure that you haven't become an idolater. —V C Grounds (Our Daily Bread)

Unless we worship only God  
Our lives cannot be truly free;  
For we were made for Him alone—  
All else is but idolatry. —D. De Haan

**An idol is anything that takes the place of God.**

**Deuteronomy 6:1-9a**

**Check Your Blind Spots**

When I was in high school, I had a driving instructor who gave me some sound advice. "You think by looking in the rearview mirror you know what is on your left side, but your vision is limited," he said. "Always look over your shoulder before changing lanes. There may be another car in your blind spot." His wise instruction has kept me out of more potential wrecks than I care to think about.

Moses had some wise instruction for the people of Israel. They were to make the study and contemplation of God's commandments an integral part of life. Moses said, "You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up" (Deuteronomy 6:7). In short, God's words were to permeate every aspect of their lives.

The Bible is our instruction manual from God for navigating life's journey. But merely owning a copy is not enough. It must be

studied, applied, and passed on to others.

Just as checking our blind spot should become an automatic response while we drive, applying God's Word should be our natural response as we encounter the hazards of life. It will help us avoid a spiritual crash. —Dennis Fisher (Our Daily Bread)

The Bible will transform our lives  
And turn us from our sin,  
If we will read it and obey  
God's principles within.  
—Sper

**The Bible will tell you what is wrong before you have done it!**

—Moody

## **Deuteronomy 6:1-9**

### **EDUCATION STARTS AT HOME**

"The father shall make known Your truth to the children." - Isaiah 38:19

It's time for the lazy days of summer to give way to the busy days of fall. Time again for school to start. Getting youngsters ready for school can leave parents gasping for breath.

But there's more to getting the children ready than filling their backpack and getting them to the bus on time. They must also be prepared spiritually. Before they hit the books, they need to know that the most important things they will ever learn come from THE Book: the Bible.

There are many ways this can be done. One family takes time before school to have Bible reading. While Dad and the kids eat, Mom reads a chapter as they work through the whole Bible. Another family uses the time to read and discuss shorter passages -- Dad taking one child, Mom the other. Some parents use the night before to share scriptural truths.

If you have school-age children, the pattern you develop for teaching them God's Word is important. No matter what their school situation is - whether home-school, Christian school, private school, or public school - the main responsibility of spiritual training belongs to the parents.

Before anyone else has a chance to educate our children, we need to teach them about God. - J D Brannon (Our Daily Bread)

God gives us children for a time,  
To train them in His way,  
To love them and to teach them how  
To follow and obey. - Sper

**If children are to find their way to God,  
someone must point the way.**

## **Deuteronomy 6:1-9b Our Children Are Watching**

It can be disturbing to realize that our children often mirror the way we speak and act. I remember being concerned about the way my son angrily lashed out at his sister when she was annoying him. My wife gently pointed out to me that his behavior was a reflection of mine.

A few weeks later, I caught myself lashing out at my son when I was frustrated. Through my wife's encouragement, I apologized to him for my behavior and told him I would learn to treat him with more respect. In the months that followed, I noticed that my son's attitude toward his sister also improved.

Children do not learn to love and obey God only by what we say. They also learn by watching what we do. We are to teach them constantly about God and His Word as we "sit in [our] house, when [we] walk by the way, when [we] lie down, and when [we] rise up" (Deuteronomy 6:7). Along with what we say to our children, we need to set an example by our love and obedience to the Lord.

We can't be perfect parents, but our children must see our desire to please the Lord. And when we fall short, they need to see our repentance. We teach them by both what we say and what we do. —Albert Lee (Our Daily Bread)

You're teaching a lesson each day that you live;  
Your actions are blazing a trail



That children will follow for good or for ill;  
You can help them or cause them to fail.  
—Bosch

### **A godly parent is a child's best guide to God.**

#### **Deuteronomy 6:1-9 The Task Of A Father**

What admirable quality is common to marmosets, siamangs, sea horses, and jacanas? Here are your clues. Marmosets are squirrel-size monkeys. Siamangs are members of the ape family. Sea horses aren't really horses. And jacanas are robin-size wading birds, sometimes called "lily trotters" because their long toes allow them to walk across water on lily pads.

Your time is up. Here's the answer I'm looking for: The male of each of these species takes care of its young.

I wish this could be said of all Christian fathers about the spiritual nurture of their children. Dads have a wonderful opportunity to encourage, to warn, to teach, to counsel, and to model the Christian life for them. It's significant that Moses' instruction in Deuteronomy 6 was directed toward fathers. Verse 7 especially spells out one task of a father—to teach his children.

This sounds like Paul's statement in Ephesians 6:4. He said that fathers should rear their children "in the training and admonition of the Lord." Christian fathers who do this will distinguish themselves from other dads and will be obedient to God's will. Oh, that our children would be nurtured by moms and dads who love the Lord! — by Mart De Haan

Fathers, give your children guidance  
And instruction from God's Word;  
Then with wisdom and compassion  
Teach them how to love the Lord. —Sper

### **A Christlike example is a father's greatest gift to his children.**

#### **Deuteronomy 6:1-9**

**Read: Proverbs 22:6 (Ed: Remember this is not a promise but a saying which is generally true).**

A FRIEND called on Michelangelo as the sculptor was putting what appeared to be the finishing touches on a statue. Later, when the visitor stopped in to see the artist again, he was surprised to find him busy on the same piece of work. Seeing no evident changes, he exclaimed,

"You haven't been working on that statue all this time, have you!"

"Yes," the sculptor replied. "I've been retouching this part, and polishing that part; I have softened this feature, and brought out that muscle; I've given more expression to the lips, and more energy to that arm."

"But all those things are so insignificant," said his visitor. "They are mere trifles."

"That may be so," replied Michelangelo, "but trifles make perfection, and perfection is no trifle."

The training of children demands that same kind of diligence. Like great works of art, children do not perfect themselves. Raising children calls for patience, diligence, determination, wise instruction, and loving correction.

By reading the Bible, telling its stories, praying, and teaching "line upon line," parents shape and mold the character of their children. And the proper training of a child is indeed the making

of a masterpiece.—R W De Haan (Our Daily Bread)

#### **Deuteronomy 6:4**

##### **Monotheism**

"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD" (Deuteronomy 6:4).

This great verse has been recited countless times by Israelites down through the centuries, setting forth their distinctive belief in one great Creator God. The Jews had retained their original belief in creation, handed down from Noah, while the other nations had all allowed their primitive monotheistic creationism to degenerate into a wide variety of religions, all basically equivalent to the polytheistic evolutionism of the early Sumerians at Babel.

But along with its strong assertion of monotheism, there is also a very real suggestion that this declaration, with its thrice-named subject, is also setting forth the Triune God. The name, "LORD," of course, is Yahweh, or Jehovah, the self-existing One who reveals Himself, while "God" is Elohim, the powerful Creator/Ruler. "Jehovah our Elohim is one Jehovah" is the proclamation. A number of respected Jewish commentators have acknowledged that the verse spoke of a "unified oneness," rather than an "absolute oneness." The revered book, called the Zohar, for example, even said that the first mention was of the Father, the second one the Messiah; and the third, the Holy Spirit.

The key word "one" (Hebrew = 'echad) is often used to denote unity in diversity. For example, when Eve was united to Adam in marriage, they were said to be "one flesh" (Genesis 2:24). Similarly, on the third day of creation, the waters were "gathered together unto one place," yet this gathering together was called "Seas" (Genesis 1:9,10).

Thus Israel's great declaration should really be understood as saying in effect: The eternally omnipresent Father, also Creator and sustainer of all things, is our unified self-revealing Lord." -H M M (Our Daily Bread)

### **Deuteronomy 6:1-9 Waving The White Flag**

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God. —Deuteronomy 6:4-5

Recently, while watching a video of a church service held in South America, I noticed something I had never seen before in church. As the pastor passionately called his flock to yield their lives to Jesus, one of the parishioners took a white hankie out of his pocket and started waving it in the air. Then another, and another. With tears running down their cheeks, they were expressing full surrender to Christ.

But I wonder if there was more to the moment than the flags of surrender. I think they were waving flags of love to God. When God told His people to "love the Lord your God" (Deut. 6:5), it was in the context of His urging them to surrender their lives to Him.

From God's point of view, life with Him is far more than just trying to be good. It is always about relationship—relationship in which surrender is the way we express our grateful love to Him. Jesus, in amazing love for us, surrendered Himself on the cross to rescue us from our helpless bondage to sin and set us on a journey to all that is good and glorious.

We don't have enough words to tell God how much we love Him! So, let's show Him our love by surrendering our hearts and lives to follow Him.

Lord, take my life and make it wholly Thine;

Fill my poor heart with Thy great love divine.

Take all my will, my passion, self, and pride;

I now surrender, Lord—in me abide. —Orr

Surrender is God's love language.

### **Deuteronomy 6:4-9 Our Life Is A Primer**

You shall teach them diligently to your children ... when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. — Deuteronomy 6:7

The New England Primer was published in the late 1600s. Throughout the colonies that would later become the United States, the book became a widely used resource.

This early American textbook was based largely on the Bible, and it used pictures and rhymes based on Scripture to help children learn to read. It also included prayers like this one: "Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord, my soul to keep. If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take."

In Colonial America, this became a way that one generation was able to pass along their faith to the next generation. It fit well with what God wanted of His people, the ancient Israelites, as recorded in Deuteronomy 6:6-7, "These words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach [God's commandments] diligently to your children, and shall talk of them ... when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up."

As we talk about who God is, what He has done for us, and how He desires our love and obedience, our lives can become primers to the next generation. We can be teaching tools that God will use to help people in their walk with Him.

Lord, we love You. We want to learn to love

You with all our heart, soul, and strength.

Use our lives and our words to point others to You,

who first loved us.

When we teach others, we're not just spending time, we're investing it.

INSIGHT: Deuteronomy 6:4-9, known as the Shema (from the Hebrew for "hear," v.4), is the basic Jewish confession of faith. Every devout Jew was to recite the Shema twice daily as a reminder of the first and second commandments (Ex. 20:2-5). After giving the Ten Commandments (Deut. 5:6-22), Moses gave God's people the one heart principle that undergirds the entire law: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength" (Dt 6:5). God demands exclusive, wholehearted, and undivided allegiance and devotion. Jesus said that this is "the first and greatest commandment" (Matt. 22:36-38).

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I now surrender, Lord—in me abide. —Orr

Surrender is God's love language.

INSIGHT: Deuteronomy 6:4 contains the Shema (or Shema Yisrael). This affirmation of the oneness of God ("Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one!") is the centerpiece of the morning and evening prayers of observant Jews. The title Shema comes from the Hebrew term for the first word in the verse, hear.

### **Deuteronomy 6:4-9 A Lasting Legacy**

My middle-aged friend, who was a medical doctor, knew that he was suffering from a disease that would gradually cripple him and eventually kill him. What an emotional struggle he experienced in coming to accept his condition! He had expected to be helping sick children for many years. He had also hoped that he would provide a comfortable life for his family and the best possible education for his children. But how could he do that now? What could he leave as an inheritance to his children?

In my visits with him, my despairing friend would often raise that issue. But he gradually came to believe that the all-important legacy we can leave our families is not a comfortable home and a large income. The greatest legacy is a spiritual one that no amount of money can buy. It's an example of unwavering trust in God's love and wisdom. It's also an example of steadfast endurance, courage, patience, and hope for eternity when all hope in this world is gone. I told him that if he left that legacy for his family, they would bless his memory until they too departed for glory.

Are we laying up a lasting spiritual legacy of priceless value for those we love? — by Vernon C. Grounds (Our Daily Bread)

Faithful parents never carve their name  
On marbled columns built for earthly fame;  
They build instead a legacy that springs

**A life lived for Christ is the best inheritance we can leave our children.**

**Deuteronomy 6:4-9 Weeds**

British poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge once had a discussion with a man who firmly believed that children should not be given formal religious instruction, but should be free to choose their own religious faith when they reached maturity. Coleridge did not disagree, but later invited the man into his somewhat neglected garden. "Do you call this a garden?" the visitor exclaimed. "There are nothing but weeds here!" "Well, you see," Coleridge replied, "I did not wish to infringe upon the liberty of the garden in any way. I was just giving the garden a chance to express itself." (Our Daily Walk)

**Deuteronomy 6:4a THE WRONG "GOD"**

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart" (Deuteronomy 6:5).

Many people come to a sad end because they worship wrong gods. Some are wicked, having made a god out of sensual pleasure. Others are decent people, yet they too have worshiped the wrong god.

After a young farmer committed suicide, his wife said, "Farming wasn't just a job with Floyd. It was his identity, his nationality, his religion. Working with the ground gave us both a sense of connection with the Almighty. But it had gone sour by the time Floyd killed himself."

My heart goes out to people like Floyd. They have a deep appreciation of God's natural world and are willing to work hard. But when-ever an occupation or anything temporal takes priority in life, it be-comes our god. The apostle John admonished us, "Do not love the world or the things in the world... For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world" (1 John 2:15-16). This can apply to any earthly pursuit that becomes central in our lives.

When we love anything more than the true and living God revealed in the Bible, we are worshiping it. Whatever it is, it won't last. And it won't be able to help us when our plans shatter, our health fails, or death beckons. Only the true God can help us then. —H. V. Lugt (Our Daily Bread)

**The "WORLD" is whatever  
cools our affection for Christ!**

**(Ed: I would add this is a good "definition" of an IDOL!)**

**Deuteronomy 6:4–9. The Essence of Family Life - Howard Hendricks**

If I had just one sentence of advice to offer parents, I'd encourage them to drench their minds with Deuteronomy 6:4–9. I really think that's the essence of what family life is all about. First, the principle of instruction—you talk about it, you teach it. And finally the principle of involvement—you encourage children to apply it in their thinking and behavior.

**Deuteronomy 6:5** When asked by a lawyer to identify the most important rule in life, Jesus replied, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength" (Mark 12:30). In those words, Jesus summed up what God most desires from us.

I wonder how I can possibly learn to love God with all my heart, soul, and mind. Neal Plantinga remarks on a subtle change in this commandment as recorded in the New Testament. Deuteronomy charges us to love God with all our heart, soul, and strength (6:5). Jesus added the word mind. Plantinga explains, "You shall love God with everything you have and everything you are. Everything."

That helps us change our perspective. As we learn to love God with everything, we begin to see our difficulties as "our light and momentary troubles"—just as the apostle Paul described his grueling ordeals. He had in mind a "far more exceeding and eternal ... glory" (2 Cor. 4:17).

In the advanced school of prayer, where one loves God with the entire soul, doubts and struggles do not disappear, but their effect on us diminishes. "We love Him because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19), and our urgent questions recede as we learn to trust His ultimate goodness.

Once earthly joy I craved, sought peace and rest;

Now Thee alone I seek; give what is best.

This all my prayer shall be:

More love, O Christ, to Thee. —Prentiss

The most treasured gift we can give to God is one that He can never force us to give—our love.

### **Deuteronomy 6:5A Matter Of Love**

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. —Deut 6:5

“Where intellect and emotion clash, the heart often has the greater wisdom” wrote the authors of A General Theory of Love. In the past, they say, people believed that the mind should rule the heart, but science has now discovered the opposite to be true. “Who we are and who we become depends, in part, on whom we love.”

Those familiar with Scripture recognize this as an ancient truth, not a new discovery. The most important commandment God gave to His people gives the heart the prominent place. “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength” (Deut. 6:5). Not until the gospels of Mark and Luke do we learn that Jesus added the word mind (Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27). So, what scientists are just now discovering, the Bible taught all along.

Those of us who follow Christ also know the importance of whom we love. When we obey the greatest commandment and make God the object of our love, we can be assured of having a purpose that transcends anything we could imagine or our strength could achieve. When our desire for God dominates our hearts, our minds will stay focused on ways to serve Him, and our actions will further His kingdom on earth and in heaven.

Lord, we long to make You the supreme desire of our

heart. As You taught Your disciples to pray,

so too we ask You to teach us how to love.

Guide us today.

Count as lost each day you have not used in loving God. —Brother Lawrence

INSIGHT: According to rabbinic tradition, there are 613 commandments in the Torah (the Pentateuch) which every pious Jew must keep. When asked which of these commandments is the most important, Jesus (quoting Deuteronomy 6:4-5 and Leviticus 19:18) said to “love the Lord your God” and “love your neighbor” (Mark 12:30-31). All the commandments are summarized in the duty to love (Matt. 22:40). This priority of love is echoed by John, the apostle of love, in 1 John 4:7-21.

### **Deuteronomy 6:4-9 Transforming Power**

Many people love to play games that test their knowledge. Recently, a colleague and I were testing a Bible-knowledge game. Since we were seated in an open area of our office, those nearby could hear our conversation. Soon questions ranging from Noah’s ark to the woman at the well were being answered by those within earshot of us. It was a delight to hear various staff members volunteering responses to Bible questions.

A knowledge of the Bible is important, but God desires us to be saturated with His Word and to internalize it so we can grow in our relationship with Him. The Holy Spirit uses the Word to make us more like Christ (Eph. 4:20-24). Consider these benefits of internalizing the Bible: joy and rejoicing (Jer. 15:16); spiritual success (Josh. 1:8); a tool in spiritual warfare (Matt. 4:1-11); correction (2 Tim. 3:15-16); light for our path (Ps. 119:105); wisdom with problem solving (Prov. 1:1-2); and stimulating faith (Rom. 10:17).

Learning about the Bible just to increase our knowledge can lead to spiritual pride (1 Cor. 8:1). But allowing the Holy Spirit to transform us by the Word helps us navigate through life’s twists and turns and respond in love to God and to each other.

My hunger for the truth He satisfies;

Upon the Word, the Living Bread, I feed:

No parching thirst I know, because His grace,

A pool of endless depth, supplies my need. —Sanders

Many books can inform, but only the Bible can transform

### **Deuteronomy 6:4-9 The Dead Sea Squirrels**

Our family was excited to visit the Dead Sea Scrolls exhibit that was coming to town all the way from Israel. These ancient copies of

the Old Testament provide evidence that our Bible has remained accurate over the centuries. Our nephew Daniel was so elated about this outing that he told his schoolmates, "Our family is going to see 'the dead sea squirrels!'" We all laughed when we heard his misquote. His little ears had turned a word he had never heard (scrolls) into a word he did know (squirrels). And in his childlike enthusiasm, he also knew that the family was going to see something wonderful!

Daniel's excitement underscores an important spiritual aspect of parenting. Values are transmitted to our children not only by what we say but by the emotions we convey. Both content and heartfelt appreciation for God's Word can be communicated to children in a variety of ways (Deut. 6:4-9), including what they overhear in our conversation with others.

Young children may not initially understand each spiritual idea we discuss, but they can catch the importance we place on it. Children pick up on spiritual values and grow in understanding as we express reverence and excitement about the Word of God. — Dennis Fisher (Our Daily Bread)

Lord, give us wisdom to provide  
The proper atmosphere  
To lead our children in Your ways  
By what they see and hear.  
—Sper

**Train up a child in the way he should go—  
but be sure you go that way yourself.**

### **Deuteronomy 6:5 Love Goes Beyond Liking**

From childhood on, we are urged to show love, whether it's for parents or pets or friends, and especially for Jesus. But what is love?

We think of love as an emotion, a tender feeling, a positive reaction. So when Scripture commands us to love God and our neighbor, we may be confused about the meaning of love (Matthew 22:37-40).

Feelings simply cannot be commanded. A mother can order her child to love spinach, but she can't compel him to react positively when faced with a helping of that green vegetable.

So love must be more than an emotion. An old translation of our Lord's command may help us to understand love as an action that we choose: "Thou shalt love ... " It's choosing to be patient, kind, selfless, and humble (1 Corinthians 13:4-5). We can love others even though we may not like them, because it's a matter of making a choice.

Yes, we can respond obediently to what our Savior directs us to do. He knows, though, that we are not capable of doing this on our own. That's why He's given us the Holy Spirit to empower us to a life of loving obedience. With His help, we can learn to love those we don't like. Who knows? We may even begin to like them. —Vernon C Grounds (Our Daily Bread)

O Lord, how often selfishness  
Will raise its ugly head,  
So help us, Lord, to conquer it  
And show Your love instead.  
—D. De Haan

**Loving others requires a heart of obedience to God.**

### **Deuteronomy 6:6-7 Who Meets Their Needs?**

Parents are often disturbed to find their children spending valuable time and hard-earned money on things that contradict biblical principles. For example, it can be distressing to discover that young people devote hours listening to music with ungodly lyrics.

Al Menconi thinks he knows why. In his publication Media Update, he observed that popular music meets three basic needs of today's youth: (1) The artists (via tapes, CDs, and videos) spend huge amounts of time with the young person. (2) The stars accept the young person as he or she is. (3) The performers relate to the young person's problems.

Of course, those musicians do not actually love your son or daughter, Menconi points out. They're in it for the money. But they do meet the three basic needs of companionship, acceptance, and identification. Fulfilling these needs is the primary job of parents. When they fail, young people fill that void with something else.

Are you spending time with your children, loving them unconditionally, and trying to be understanding? If not, you may be causing them to run into the open arms of those who might meet their needs, but who care nothing about them.— by Dave Branon (Our

Daily Bread)

Our children are a gift from God  
To nurture and to love;  
They need our help in guiding them  
To turn their thoughts above. —Sper

**Time spent with your children is time wisely invested.**

### **Deuteronomy 6:4-9 Our Life Is A Primer**

You shall teach them diligently to your children ... when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. — Deuteronomy 6:7

Use Left/Right Arrow keys to advance one second, Up/Down arrows to advance ten seconds.

The New England Primer was published in the late 1600s. Throughout the colonies that would later become the United States, the book became a widely used resource.

This early American textbook was based largely on the Bible, and it used pictures and rhymes based on Scripture to help children learn to read. It also included prayers like this one: "Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord, my soul to keep. If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take."

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You with all our heart, soul, and strength.

Use our lives and our words to point others to You,

who first loved us.

**When we teach others, we're not just spending time, we're investing it.**

### **Deuteronomy 6:6,9**

Shortly after Scottish preacher G. Campbell Morgan's wedding, his father visited the home the newlyweds had just furnished and decorated. After they had shown him the place with pride and satisfaction, he remarked, "Yes, it's very nice, but no one walking through here would know whether you belong to God or the devil!"

Morgan was shocked by his father's gruff but well-meaning comment. But he got the point. From that day forward, he made certain that in every room of his home there was some evidence of their faith in Christ.

Many believers make an effort to include reminders of God's grace and goodness in their homes. Just a Bible verse inscribed on a plaque or a tasteful work of art with a Christian theme may be all that is needed to encourage family members to serve and praise the Lord.

Then too, the presence of Christian books and magazines can foster meditation on God's Word. Such quiet testimonies may also open opportunities to speak to house guests about the goodness of the Lord.

What about your home? Would a visitor have any clue as to your spiritual allegiance? --H G Bosch

If people should enter your home today,  
Could they tell you were walking in Jesus' way?  
Would Bible and books tell them what you read,  
And would scriptural mottos proclaim your creed?

-H G Bosch

**What's in your home  
mirrors what's in your heart.**

**Deuteronomy 6:6-7 A FIRM Foundation**

Before she was 2 years old, my granddaughter Katie did something that would make any grandpa proud: She began to recognize cars by make and year. This all started when she and her daddy began spending time together playing with his old collection of toy cars. Daddy would say, "Katie, get the 1957 Chevy," and she would pick it out of the hundreds of tiny cars. And once, while he was reading a Curious George book to her, she climbed down from his lap and ran to get a miniature Rolls Royce—an exact replica of the car pictured in the book.

If a 2-year-old child can make such connections, doesn't that show the importance of teaching children the right things early on? We can do this by using what I call the FIRM principle: Familiarity, Interest, Recognition, and Modeling. This follows Moses' pattern in Deuteronomy 6 of taking every opportunity to teach biblical truths so that children become familiar with them and make them a part of their lives. Using their interests as teaching opportunities, we repeat Bible stories so they become recognizable, while modeling a godly life before them.

Let's give the children in our lives a FIRM foundation by teaching them about God's love, Christ's salvation, and the importance of godly living.— by Dave Branon (Our Daily Bread)

O give us homes built firm upon the Savior,  
Where Christ is Head and Counselor and Guide,  
Where every child is taught His love and favor  
And gives his heart to Christ, the crucified. —Hart

**Build your children's lives on the firm foundation of the Word.**

**Deuteronomy 6:6,7**

A little girl called out, "Mommy, you know that vase in the china cabinet—the one that's been handed down from generation to generation?" "Yes dear, I know which one you mean. What about it?" "Well Mommy, I'm sorry, but this generation just dropped it!"

Now, some earthly possessions have sentimental value, and to break them is a great loss. But how much more tragic it would be for a new generation to "drop it" spiritually—to fail to pass along the godly heritage they have received! That would be an eternal loss.

We must diligently instruct our children by word and example so they can provide a rich spiritual heritage for their children. Only then will God's truth not be lost from generation to generation. —R. W. De Haan.

**The best safeguard for the next generation  
is a good example by this generation.**

**Deuteronomy 6:6-12 Little Cucumbers**

When I was just a boy, I was intrigued by a large cucumber. It was no different from any other cucumber, but it was in the strangest place. My uncle kept it in a bottle on a shelf. This particular cucumber was many times too large to go through the neck of the bottle. I wondered how it got there in the first place.

I was filled with awe of my uncle who could perform such a feat. He joked about it and never told me how he did it. My mother finally explained that when the cucumber was very tiny, it had been passed through the narrow neck and allowed to grow while still attached to the vine.

My mother practiced a similar principle with her children. From my earliest memory she surrounded me with prayer and instruction and the gospel. As a result, I was brought to Christ and am now safe in the bottle of His salvation.

What a lesson for parents who have "little cucumbers" at home. Don't let anything interfere with your first duty toward them. The person who said "Give me a child till he is 7 and I care not who gets him after that" knew the value of early training.

Don't neglect your little cucumbers. Soon they will be big.

Our children are a gift from God  
To nurture and to love;  
They need our help in guiding them



To turn their thoughts above. —Sper

### **A parent's life is a child's guidebook.**

#### **Deuteronomy 6:7 Side by Side**

In my family scrapbook is a picture of my daughter at age 4 working next to me, using a toy hammer to repair the siding on the house. Side by side we worked that day; she imitated my every action, absolutely convinced that she too was fixing the house. Rarely have I enjoyed a chore more. In the picture, it's obvious that she's enjoying it too.

That photo reminds me that our children mimic most of what they see in us—words and deeds. They also form their images of God from the images they have of us as parents. If we're stern and unmerciful, they're likely to see God that way too. If we're distant and cold, so God will seem to them as well. It is one of our most important duties as parents to help our children see God clearly, especially the unconditional nature of His love.

I can imagine the family scrapbook of my relationship with God having a similar picture. I'm learning from Him how to live life, how to love, and how to make it a permanent part of my being. He then teaches me how to teach others (Deut. 6:1-7).

May the Lord grant us an understanding of Him and the wisdom to pass it on.— by Randy Kilgore (Our Daily Bread)

We must teach our children clearly  
What is right and what is wrong;  
Live before them an example—  
Godly, righteous, pure, and strong. —Fitzhugh

**To teach your children well, let God teach you.**

#### **Deuteronomy 6:7 STRONG FAMILIES**

"You shall teach (these words) diligently to your children." - **Deuteronomy 6:7**

David Williams, a football player for the Houston Oilers, gave up a week's salary to be present at the birth of his son Scot. His coach objected, but Williams put his wife and family before his career. If he continues to demonstrate this kind of commitment to his family, then Scot too is likely to see the importance of right priorities.

In more than 40 years of ministry, I have encountered many situations in which a father put his work before his family, only to see his children rebel.

Although Eli had done much for the Lord as a priest, he failed as a parent (1 Samuel 2:12-17, 22-26). He waited too long to discipline his sons, and when he did try to restrain them his rebuke was so weak that they paid no attention. Eli's life ended in heartbreak because his sons didn't follow the ways of the Lord.

Even the best of parents can't be sure their children won't turn from the Lord, but the risk can be minimized. If children know their parents expect obedience and will punish disobedience, especially when discipline is fair and given in love, they are more likely to turn out well.

A strong family is one of life's most precious gifts. Let's do all we can to make ours a place where each member feels loved and respected. - H V Lugt (Our Daily Bread)

Our children are a gift from God  
On loan from heaven above,  
To train and nourish in the Lord  
And show to them His love.-- Sper

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

**Christian homes don't just happen - they're built.**

#### **Deuteronomy 6:7**

Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children. Deut. 6:7.

God's thought of the children, and care for them, is evidenced throughout, all the enactments of the Law, and indeed in all the ceremonies of worship. A careful study of these writings from that viewpoint will show how constantly arrangements were made which would appeal to the natural curiosity of a child, inspiring it to ask questions. It was the business of parents to answer such questions, and so to instruct each successive generation in the matter of the national history in its relationship to the Divine

government. So with the Law. It was the duty of parents to teach "the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments" to their children. Moreover, it is well that we remember that the fathers were principally responsible for the giving of this religious instruction. Some-times it seems as though Christian people have lost something of this ideal, and especially Christian fathers. There is a great tendency to trust the religious teaching of our children to others than ourselves, such as preachers, Sunday-school teachers, and those who specialize in that work in one form or another. For the work of all such we cannot be too thankful; but we ought to remember that the first responsibility for the diligent teaching of the children belongs to those to whom they are entrusted as the most sacred and blessed gift of God. The teaching of the things of God by fathers and mothers has a value and a virtue which can be supplied by none other. (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

### **Deuteronomy 6:10-19 When All Looks Bright**

Life looks rosy to many people. Their work is fulfilling. The house or apartment doesn't need repair. Their bank account shows a surplus. Family members are enjoying good health. Friends are loyal.

Good times, however, can be dangerous. The comforts and pleasures of this world can become so important that we give God little or no place in our thoughts. Prosperity can quickly lead to complacency.

God knew this would happen to His people when they entered the Promised Land. So He warned them not to forget the source of their blessings (Deut. 6:12). He instructed them:

- Fear the Lord (Dt 6:13).
- Serve Him (Dt 6:13).
- Do not go after other gods (Dt 6:14).
- Do not tempt the Lord (Dt 6:16).
- Keep the commandments (Dt 6:17).
- Do what is right and good (Dt 6:18).

Historians tell us that religious fervor usually declines during prosperous times. But if we will learn from Israel's experience and heed the Lord's instruction, this need not happen to us.

Let's be careful that we do not forget the Lord—especially when all looks bright! —Herbert Vander Lugt (Our Daily Bread)

Help us, O Lord, to ponder this:  
We have no good apart from You;  
For we are prone to take our ease  
When all is bright and skies are blue.  
—D. De Haan

**PROSPERITY**  
**may be a greater test of character than**  
**POVERTY**

### **Deuteronomy 6:12**

#### **The Peril of Prosperity**

When things are going well, it is very easy to forget God. He knew that this temptation lay in the path before the people of Israel.

The way had been rough. For 40 years the people had endured the difficulties of being desert nomads, literally burying a generation (see Deut. 1:35). Only the young, along with Caleb and Joshua, were spared from the judgment of God. Now Moses was preparing them to move into the Promised Land.

God was giving them cities that they did not build, houses filled with good things, wells that were in place, and vineyards and olive groves that they did not plant.

With blessing, however, comes a peril. The peril of prosperity is that we sometimes forget God and His blessings. Instead, we rely on self, enjoying the ease. The words of Moses ring true for us today. He said, "When you eat and are satisfied, be careful that you do not forget the LORD" (Dt 6:11-12).

Solomon's prayer also is vital in this regard: "Give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise, I may

have too much and disown you and say, 'Who is the LORD?'" (Prov. 30:8-9).

Write out a list of God's blessings, and then add to it each day for a week. It will keep you from forgetting the goodness of God.  
(Back to the Bible - Woodrow Kroll)

### **Deuteronomy 6:18**

READ: Deuteronomy 6:16-25

GOD expects us to do what is right. And because we love Him, we want to. But knowing what is right isn't always easy in our complex world.

Samuel Florman, an ethics theorist, wrote,

"Most evil acts are committed not by villains but rather by decent human beings (**Ed**: I would beg to disagree - we are all depraved - the expression of our depravity may be aggravated by circumstances, so "decent" should be taken in a relative sense)—in desperation, momentary weakness, or an inability to discern what is morally right or wrong amid the discordant claims of circumstances. The determination to be good may be modeled at an early age, but we grapple all our lives with the definition of what is good, or at least acceptable."

With the complexity of today's social, educational, and medical issues, more and more people are having trouble knowing what's right. In fact, universities are putting ethics courses in their curriculums to help students discern right from wrong.

Here is where the followers of Christ have an advantage. We know what is right because God has spelled it out for us in the Bible. If no specific command is given, there are principles to guide us. If we study the Bible with our minds set on honesty and our hearts set on obedience, we will know right from wrong. Then we need to do right cheerfully and consistently so that the world will be convinced that God's way is the right way. —D C Egnor (Our Daily Bread)

### **Deuteronomy 6:20**

#### **Responsibility to Teach Children**

On three separate occasions, God told parents in Israel how to answer the serious questions of their sons and daughters (see Exodus 13:14, Deuteronomy 6:20, and Joshua 4:6,21). This would indicate that God wants us to take the time to answer our children when they ask us about spiritual matters. How we respond can either greatly help or terribly discourage them.

Russian novelist Leo Tolstoy told of an aunt who hurt him deeply when she didn't take time to answer some questions that were troubling him. She stirred his emotions by telling him of Jesus' crucifixion, but when he cried out, "Auntie, why did they torture Him?" she said simply, "They were wicked." "But wasn't He God?" Tolstoy asked. Instead of explaining that Jesus was indeed God, that He had become a man so He could die for our sins, she said, "Be still—it is 9 o'clock!" When he persisted, she retorted, "Be quiet, I say, I'm going to the dining room to have tea." This left young Tolstoy greatly agitated.

Commenting on this scene, Calvin Miller said,

"Tolstoy found it incomprehensible that Christ had been brutalized and his aunt was not interested enough to stay a little past tea time and talk about it."

Do we allow our own interests—a television program, a sporting event, a hobby—to keep us from taking time to listen, admonish, and instruct our children, or anyone who may ask us about God? If we pause long enough to explain His truth, He will use it to change lives. -H. V. Lugt (Our Daily Bread)

Lord, teach me how to love and live

That I may cheer each heart,

And to my fellowman in need

Some blessing rich impart. - Anon.

**Do all the good you can,**

**In all the ways you can,**

**For all the people you can,**

**While you can.**

## Deuteronomy 7:6-16

### News Bulletin

The news bulletin commanded attention. Several inmates had escaped from a penitentiary. They were armed and considered extremely dangerous. A police spokesman stressed to the community the importance of caution. He said, "These men are desperate. They have nothing to lose. They have killed and could kill again."

Deuteronomy 7 contains a far more serious warning. Overall, the passage is a positive expression of blessing. It shows the willingness of God to help those who trust Him. But that's not the whole picture. Did you catch the "news bulletin" in verse 10? The Lord alerted Israel to be on the lookout—not for bad men roaming the streets but for a good God who will destroy all those who hate Him.

It's true. Evil men are not the only ones to be feared. We are also to fear our good God. Even though He is merciful and full of compassion, His awesome holiness makes all other kinds of fear look mild by comparison.

We might not like to face this sobering truth. But God will not always be patient with those people who have no love or respect for Him. That's a news bulletin we can't afford to miss. —Mart De Haan (Our Daily Bread)

You've heard the news—there's no escape—  
The Lord is coming to make right  
The wrongs in this dark world of hate;  
So make your choice—come to the Light.  
—Hess

**Live  
TODAY  
as if you will stand before God  
TOMORROW.**

### Deuteronomy 7:7

The Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people. Deut 7. 7.

Here at the entrance to the land of their possession, the people were warned against that most persistent peril of a passion for statistics and pride of numbers. By this time they were comparatively a great nation, having an army of over six hundred thousand. They would be tempted to trust in numbers, and to fall into the gross error of imagining that God had chosen them because of their numerical strength; in other words—as Napoleon said—that God is on the side of the big battalions. Let them guard against this utterly false idea by remembering that from which they had sprung, that they "were the fewest of all peoples," and that they had multiplied under His guardian care. God is never seeking for numbers, for the sake of numbers. He- is always seeking for such as "love Him, and keep His commandments." It would be entirely false to say that God cannot use great companies, but it is certainly true that quality is more than quantity with Him. If God were in need of big battalions, He could create them. That fact John the Baptist declared with a fine touch of satire when he said : "God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham!" And yet how the false idea persists! Our annual reports are always in danger of giving the impression that our work is only successful in the measure in which it is capable of being expressed in impressive figures, and by "impressive" we generally mean big. Figures are only really impressive as they stand for those who are true, loyal, devoted. With two or three of such God can do great things anywhere. (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

### Deuteronomy 7:10 News Bulletin

He repays those who hate Him to their face, to destroy them. —Deuteronomy 7:10

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You've heard the news—there's no escape—  
The Lord is coming to make right  
The wrongs in this dark world of hate;  
So make your choice—come to the Light.  
—Hess

**Live today as if you will stand before God tomorrow.**  
**[Just Before Heaven- The Judgment Seat Of Christ](#)**

## **Deuteronomy 7:25**

### **Iconoclastic**

Here's another discussion starter for your Sunday school, Bible study, or social occasion. In January, Texas evangelist James Robison and his wealthiest convert, T. Cullen Davis, smashed a million dollars worth of jade, ivory, and gold art objects which had a history of Oriental religious worship. Their grounds: Deuteronomy 7:25, wherein the Lord told the Israelites: "The graven images of their gods shall you burn with fire. You shall not desire the silver or gold that is on them, nor take it unto yourselves, lest you be snared by it, for it is an abomination to the Lord your God." Robison and Davis destroyed, among other things, a half million dollar jade pagoda. If you are shocked, ask yourself what you would have done back in that Deuteronomy 7 era. If you are not shocked, look up the meaning of "iconoclastic" and define how far you want to carry the principle. - Source unknown

## **Deuteronomy 7:22**

### **Acquiring Perseverance - Faith's Checkbook**

"The Lord thy God will put out those nations before thee by little and little."—**Deuteronomy 7:22**

WE are not to expect to win victories for the Lord Jesus by a single blow. Evil principles and practices die hard. In some places it takes years of labor to drive out even one of the many vices which defile the inhabitants. We must carry on the war with all our might, even when favored with little manifest success.

Our business in this world is to conquer it for Jesus. We are not to make compromises, but to exterminate evils. We are not to seek popularity, but to wage unceasing war with iniquity. Infidelity, Popery, drink, impurity, oppression, worldliness, error—these are all to be "put out."

The Lord our God can alone accomplish this. He works by His faithful servants; and, blessed be His name, He promises that He will so work. "Jehovah thy God will put out those nations before thee." This He will do by degrees, that we may learn perseverance, may increase in faith, may earnestly watch, and may avoid carnal security. Let us thank God for a little success and pray for more. Let us never sheathe the sword till the whole land is won for Jesus.

**Courage, my heart! Go on little by little,**

**for many littles will make a great whole.**

## **Deuteronomy 8:1-18**

### **Give Credit Where It's Due**

Every Sunday in many churches, people recite the Lord's Prayer, which contains this line: "Give us this day our daily bread" (Matthew 6:11). Then during the remainder of the week, most of them go out and earn money to buy their food. Secretly, they may sometimes feel like the ungrateful cartoon character who prayed before his meal and said, "Dear God, we paid for all this ourselves, so thanks for nothing."

How easy it is to give ourselves the credit for acquiring things we need—that is, until we're driven to our knees because of the lean times. In Deuteronomy 8:3, the Lord reminded Israel of their hunger in the wilderness and of His daily supply of manna to sustain them. Through this amazing provision God proved that He was their source and provider. He wanted them to remember that it was His power, not merely their own, that enabled them to get wealth (Dt 8:17-18).

Writer Os Guinness recommends building a "ministry of remembering" into our Christian living by taking stock often, by keeping a

record of God's goodness, and by thanking Him daily for countless tiny joys. These moments of remembering help us say a decisive no to self-sufficiency. Then we can honestly pray to the Father, "Give us this day our daily bread," with our faith resting securely in Him. —Joanie Yoder (Our Daily Bread)

Often we forget as we eat our daily bread,  
From whom it all has come, to us who are well-fed;  
But may we all remember, as we walk upon this sod,  
That everything we have is from the hand of God.  
-Fitzhugh

**Give credit where credit is due—  
give thanks to God**

**Deuteronomy 8:1-20**

**Self-Made?**

The story is told of a millionaire who attended a banquet and sat next to some people who were discussing the subject of prayer. He declared, "Prayer may be all right for you, but I don't need it. I worked hard for everything I have. I didn't ask God for anything!" A university president responded, "Sir, there is one thing you don't have that you might pray for." "And what might that be?" asked the man. The educator replied, "You could pray for humility."

When the Israelites were about to occupy the land of Canaan, Moses looked ahead and knew they would be blessed with an abundance of flocks, silver, and gold—all the result of God's goodness. Knowing that this could easily lead to a feeling of self-sufficiency, he warned that no one should ever boast by saying, "My power and the might of my hand have gained me this wealth" (Dt. 8:17).

We are all prone to a certain amount of pride. If everything goes well, we feel self-sufficient. When a blessing comes our way, we may think we received it because we deserved it. That's foolish pride, and it's out of place in the life of the child of God.

Let's honor the Giver of every good and perfect gift (Jas. 1:17) by praising Him for His generosity. —Richard De Haan (Our Daily Bread)

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!  
O my soul, praise Him, for He is thy health and salvation!  
All ye who hear, now to His temple draw near;  
Join me in glad adoration!  
-Neander

**The trouble with some self-made men  
is that they worship their creator.**

**Don't Forget** - Deuteronomy 8:7-18 | Bible in a Year: Psalms 23-25; Acts 21:18-40

I don't agree with those who rail against material things and say that owning stuff is inherently evil. And I have to admit that I'm a consumer—often tempted to pad my pile of treasures with items I think I need.

But I do recognize that one of the dangers of owning a lot of stuff is that it can lead to spiritual loss. The more we have and the more we feel as if we have all we need, the more prone we are to forget our need for God and even our desire for Him. Yet, ironically, everything we have comes ultimately from God, who "gives us richly all things to enjoy" (1 Tim. 6:17).

Sadly, our enjoyment of God's provisions might just mean that we end up loving the gift and forgetting the Giver. This is why, when God was getting ready to give His people a life full of bounty in the Promised Land of good and plenty, He warned, "Beware that you do not forget the Lord your God" (Deut. 8:11).

If God has allowed you to enjoy material abundance, remind yourself where it came from. In fact, all of us, whether rich in this world's goods or not, have much to be thankful for. Let's heed the warning not to forget the Lord and praise Him for His abundant goodness.

Love the Giver more than the gifts!

**Deuteronomy 8:2 - H A Ironside**

All the wilderness experiences of God's redeemed ones are designed to bring them to an end of themselves and to cast them more implicitly upon Himself. If He allows us to hunger it is that we may learn to appreciate the Bread from Heaven. If He permits us to thirst it is that we may more fully enjoy the clear crystal streams of grace flowing from the smitten Rock. What memories all His ways will stir when safely home at last!

All the way by which He led us,  
All the grievings that He bore,  
All the patient love that taught us,  
We'll remember ever more;  
And His rest will seem the sweeter,  
As we think of weary ways,  
And His light will shine the clearer,  
As we muse o'er cloudy days.

## **Deuteronomy 8:2**

### **Two Lessons Learned**

A few weeks after writing an Our Daily Bread article about the importance of obeying the law, I set out on an 850-mile trip—determined to stay within the posted speed limit. While driving out of a small town in New Mexico, I became more occupied with unwrapping a sandwich than with watching the road signs, and I got a speeding ticket. My first lesson that day was that not paying attention costs the same as deliberate disregard for the law. And I still had 700 miles to go!

My second lesson was that our resolve will always be tested. I thought of Moses' words to God's people as they prepared to enter the Promised Land: "You shall remember that the Lord your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not" (Deut. 8:2).

Pastor and author Eugene Peterson called the process of following Christ "a long obedience in the same direction." Every resolution to begin to obey must be followed by many decisions to continue.

God gave me a humbling reminder of how vital it is to keep my heart set on obeying Him—and to pay attention along the way.— by David C. McCasland (Our Daily Bread)

Thou who hast freely given  
Thine all in all for me,  
Claim this life for Thine own to be used,  
My Savior, every moment for Thee. —Christiansen

**To love God is to obey God.**

## **Deuteronomy 8:2**

### **Are We There Yet?**

If there is any such thing as a universal question, it may be this: Are we there yet? Generations of children have asked it. They have then grown into adults who have to answer the same question when their children ask.

Whenever I read the books of Moses, I wonder how many times he heard that question from the Israelites. Before rescuing them from slavery and leading them out of Egypt, Moses told them that the Lord would lead them to "a land flowing with milk and honey" (Ex. 3:8). He did, but first they spent 40 years wandering in the wilderness. This was no ordinary wandering, however. They were not lost; they were wandering for a purpose. After 400 years of slavery, the children of Israel needed to have their hearts, souls, and minds reoriented toward God. This was accomplished in the wilderness (Deut. 8:2,15-18), but not before an entire generation died because of their disobedience (Num. 32:13).

In life, it sometimes seems as if we are wandering in circles. We feel lost. We want to ask God, "Are we there yet? How much longer?" At such times, it helps to remember that the journey, not just the destination, is important to God. He uses it to humble us, test us, and show us what is in our hearts. — by Julie Ackerman Link (Our Daily Bread)

All God's testings have a purpose—  
Someday you will see the light;  
All He asks is that you trust Him,  
Walk by faith and not by sight. —Zoller

**It's the journey, not just the destination, that's important.**

## **Deuteronomy 8:2**

September 16

LOOKING BACKWARD

"Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God hath led thee these forty years."--**Deuteronomy 8:2.**

THE KEYNOTE of this chapter is "Remember!" Faith begins without certain evidence of an external and positive kind, but as life advances, one day after another adds the weight of its indisputable testimony. If we step out on the supposition that there is an eternal and spiritual world enwrapping us on all sides, we shall come to so clear and distinct an assurance of it, that it would be easier to doubt our existence. It is a good thing to look back and see the way; it is as certain as possible that the thread of Divine purpose is stringing together the many-coloured links of our life.

Notice the alliteration of **Deuteronomy 8:15, Deuteronomy 8:16.** "Who led thee"; "Who fed thee." Where God leads, He feeds! Look back on the past, and see that just as sure as the guidance of God, has been His care. There is no lack to those who allow Him to lead them in His own paths.

Look back on the past!--Its sins and backslidings--leave them behind for ever, and rise to newness of life. Its discipline--intended to chasten and strengthen us. Its trials--meant to reveal God's power to deliver in the hour of trouble that we may glorify Him. The terrible wilderness of loneliness, the fiery serpents of temptation, the manna which has never failed to fail, the water which the Rock has ever yielded. **Deuteronomy 8:17-18** teach us the lesson of humility. If, for some reason, you have been put into a position of wealth, honour, or influence, do not be proud, or think that your talents or abilities are to receive the praise. Thank God, and remember that it is He who gives the power to get wealth or honour, and He does it with a very definite purpose! Will you not pledge yourself to serve and worship Him? As you climb the crest of the hill, and begin to descend into the plain, not knowing what lies before, veiled in the mist, fear not, tighten your girdle, put your hand in His, and walk with Him to be His instrument to bless the world of men.

PRAYER -

**Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet;  
Lest we forget--lest we forget! AMEN.**

## **Deuteronomy 8:3**

That He might make thee know.—Deut. 8.3.

The methods of God with His own are always those which have as their object the bringing of them to knowledge of the deepest facts of life. If we once grasp that truth, we shall have discovered a secret which will guide us continuously and rightly. The one question we should ever be asking is, what God is intending to teach us by the circumstances through which we are passing at any given time. God humbled these people, suffered them to hunger, and fed them, all for the same purpose; that they might know that their life depended, not upon position, or bread, or hunger, but upon Himself. Note care-fully that they were not to learn through hunger only, but also through bread. This is very important. We are sometimes strangely prone to think that God only speaks to us through limitation and suffering. It is not so. He speaks through prosperity and through joy. In the day of adversity He certainly speaks, and we generally listen. But He also is intending to teach us in the day of abounding gladness. Let us listen then also. To the soul who realizes this, all life becomes sacra-mental. Every experience through which He leads us, is a sign. How often we have eyes and see not, ears and hear not; and therefore we pass through the days learning nothing, While all the time our Father is overruling all the details of them, so that we may come to fuller knowledge of life in all its deepest meaning, because we gain profounder and fuller knowledge of Himself. (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

## **Deuteronomy 8:1-3, 11-16 The View From The End**

All things work together for good to those who love God. —Romans 8:28

Over the course of one year, Richard LeMieux's lucrative publishing business collapsed. Soon, his wealth disappeared, and he became depressed. Eventually, LeMieux began to abuse alcohol and his family deserted him. At the lowest point in his life, he was homeless, broken, and destitute. However, it was during this time that he turned to God. He later wrote a book about what he learned.

The Israelites learned some valuable spiritual lessons when God allowed them to endure homelessness, uncertainty, and danger. Their hardships humbled them (Deut. 8:1-18).



They learned that God would provide for their needs. When they were hungry, He gave them manna. When they were thirsty, He gave them water from a rock. God taught them that, despite difficult times, He could bless them (Deut. 8:1). Finally, the Israelites learned that adversity is not a sign of abandonment. Moses reminded them that God had been leading throughout their 40 years in the wilderness (Deut. 8:2).

When we encounter desperate times, we can look for the spiritual lessons embedded in our difficulties—lessons that can help us rely on the One who causes all things to work together for our good and for His glory (Rom. 8:28).

Dear God, please give me the faith  
to believe that You can bring good out of  
any situation. Help me to see what You  
want to show me during adversity.

The clearest view of everything that happens comes from heaven.

INSIGHT: Remembering the hunger Israel experienced during their 40 years in the wilderness, Moses told them it was “to do you good in the end” (Deut. 8:16). What good? To “make you know that ... man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord” (Deut. 8:3). Some lessons are best learned through trials and understood in perspective.

### **Deuteronomy 8:3**

#### **Desert Lessons**

Douglas Burton-Christie decided to walk the last few miles to his spiritual retreat at an Egyptian monastery. He stepped off the bus in a small village and confidently set out across the desert. A few hours later, he realized that he was lost. Instead of arriving at the monastery self-assured and proud, he eventually found his way there humbled and grateful to be alive.

He said, “I gradually came to understand one of the most important things the desert had to teach me: To enter the desert is to relinquish the illusion of control.”

Being in charge of our own destiny is a fantasy we cling to. But when God takes us through a “desert experience,” we learn that our only hope rests in Him.

After 40 years in the wilderness, with the Promised Land finally in sight, Moses challenged God’s people to remember a lesson from those years: “He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna ... , that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord” (Dt. 8:3).

If you’re in a desert today, take heart. God is still in control. He’s teaching you to depend on Him.— by David C. McCasland (Our Daily Bread)

I strode into the desert of my will,  
Obsessed with each mirage that I could chase;  
God let me wander aimlessly until  
I cried for the oasis of His grace. —Gustafson

**In every desert of trial God has an oasis of comfort.**

### **Deuteronomy 8:3**

#### **Dissident Soviet Jew**

Anatoli Shcharansky, a dissident Soviet Jew, kissed his wife goodbye as she left Russia for freedom in Israel. His parting words to her were, “I’ll see you soon in Jerusalem.” But Anatoli was detained and finally imprisoned. Their reunion in Jerusalem would not only be postponed, it might never occur. During long years in Russian prisons and work camps Anatoli was stripped of his personal belongings. His only possession was a miniature copy of the Psalms. Once during his imprisonment, his refusal to release the book to the authorities cost him 130 days in solitary confinement. Finally, twelve years after parting with his wife, he was offered freedom. In February 1986, as the world watched, Shcharansky was allowed to walk away from Russian guards toward those who would take him to Jerusalem. But in the final moments of captivity, the guards tried again to confiscate the Psalms book. Anatoli threw himself face down in the snow and refused to walk on to freedom without it. Those words had kept him alive during imprisonment. He would not go on to freedom without them. (Discipleship Journal, Issue #43 1988)

## Deuteronomy 8:7-18

### A Full Life

During the celebration of the Chinese New Year, it is customary to use certain words in print and conversation. One word is often used by itself. It is the word full, meaning “abundance of” and is used to wish someone material prosperity for the year ahead.

Moses told the Israelites about the wealth and prosperity in the land of Canaan before they entered it (Deut. 8:7-9). They would have everything they needed and more. But he warned them of the danger of forgetting that God, the One who had brought them out of Egypt and protected them along the way, had given them that abundance (v.11). Thus Moses commanded them, “You shall remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth” (v.18).

“Wealth,” of course, is not just material things. Everything you have is from God. Our Lord Jesus told His disciples, “I have come that [you] may have life, and that [you] may have it more abundantly” (John 10:10).

We too may be tempted to forget that it’s the Lord who has blessed us and has met our needs. Our lives will be full, abundant, and satisfying only when we are connected to Jesus Christ.— by C. P. Hia (Our Daily Bread)

You only are true Life,  
To know You is to live  
The more abundant life  
That earth can never give. —Clarkson

**Never let the abundance of God’s gifts cause you to forget the Giver.**

## Deuteronomy 8:11

### Out Of The Cradle

**Read: 1 Samuel 6:20-7:6**

Beware that you do not forget the Lord your God. -Deuteronomy 8:11

The art, music, and pageantry of Christmas focus on the “little town of Bethlehem” and the baby asleep in a manger. What mother can’t close her eyes and recall her own child asleep in the crib? We delight in these precious expressions of the coming of Jesus into the world. But we can’t let a baby in a manger be the only part of our understanding of Christ. We don’t bow in homage to a sleeping child. We have a living, vital relationship with the crucified, risen, glorified Christ!

First Samuel 7 tells us how the ark of the covenant, the very symbol of God’s presence and power, had long languished in a remote village (1 Sa 7:2). The nation of Israel had not revered the Almighty God in a long time. He was shelved, forgotten. How could they do such a thing? Yet many of us show the same memory lapse. Do we think of Jesus only at Christmastime? Do our only thoughts of the King of all creation picture Him as a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes? Then we’re still missing the true message of Christmas!

We can’t keep Jesus in a nativity scene. He longs for a living, dynamic relationship with us. Just as Israel brought the ark out of obscurity and into everyday life, so let us bring Christ out of the cradle and into our lives. -D C Egnor

When we look beyond the manger  
To the cross of Calvary,  
We will know the reason Christmas  
Brings such joy to you and me.  
-DJD

**If Christ is kept on the outside,  
something must be wrong on the inside**

## Deuteronomy 8:11-20 Deceptive Currents

When they had pasture, they were filled; they were filled and their heart was exalted. —Hosea 13:6

In his book *The Hidden Brain*, science writer Shankar Vedantam describes the day he went for a leisurely swim. The water was calm and clear, and he felt strong and proud for covering a long distance so easily. He decided to swim out of the bay and into open water. But when he tried to return he couldn’t make any progress. He had been deceived by the current. The ease of swimming had not been due to his strength but to the movement of the water.

In our relationship with God something similar can happen. “Going with the flow” can lead us to believe we’re stronger than we are. When life is easy, our minds tell us that it’s due to our own strength. We become proud and self-confident. But when trouble hits, we realize how little strength we have and how helpless we are.

This happened with the Israelites. God would bless them with military success, peace, and prosperity. But thinking they had achieved it on their own, they would then become proud and self-sufficient (Deut. 8:11-12). Assuming that they no longer needed God, they would go their own way until an enemy attacked and they would realize how powerless they were without God’s help.

When life is going well we too need to beware of self-deception. Pride will take us where we do not want to go. Only humility will keep us where we ought to be—grateful to God and dependent on His strength.

Lord, we don’t dare trust in our own strength to do our tasks today. You are the Giver of our talents and opportunities. Help us use them not for our own advancement, but to help others.

True humility credits God for every success.

INSIGHT: The book of Deuteronomy, the final book of the Pentateuch, covers a period of only 40 days. The children of Israel had wandered in the wilderness for 40 years and now stood at the threshold of the Promised Land. This important book reviews their covenant with God.

### **Deuteronomy 8:11-18 Pointing To God**

Remember now your Creator ... before the difficult days come. —Ecclesiastes 12:1

“God bless our homeland, Ghana” is the first line of Ghana’s national anthem. Other African anthems include: “O Uganda, may God uphold thee,” “Lord, bless our nation” (South Africa), and “O God of creation, direct our noble cause” (Nigeria). Using the anthems as prayers, founding fathers called on God to bless their land and its people. Many national anthems in Africa and others from around the world point to God as Creator and Provider. Other lines of anthems call for reconciliation, transformation, and hope for a people often divided along ethnic, political, and social lines.

Yet today, many national leaders and citizens tend to forget God and do not live by these statements—especially when life is going well. But why wait until war, disease, storms, terrorist attacks, or election violence occurs before we remember to seek God? Moses warned the ancient Israelites not to forget God and not to stop following His ways when life was good (Deut. 8:11). Ecclesiastes 12:1 urges us to “remember now your Creator ... before the difficult days come.”

Getting close to God while we are strong and healthy prepares us to lean on Him for support and hope when those “difficult days” in life come.

Father, I always need You. Forgive me for  
thinking I am sufficient in myself. Help me to  
follow You and Your ways whether life is easy  
or difficult. Thank You for caring for me.

Remembering our Creator can be our personal anthem.

INSIGHT: Deuteronomy records a significant moment in Old Testament history. At the end of Israel’s wilderness wanderings, Moses reaffirmed the laws of God. A generation had died in the wilderness and the new generation needed these lessons to prepare them for entry into the land of promise. The challenges that awaited them in Canaan made it important to remind the people of both God’s provisions and God’s instructions.

### **Deuteronomy 8:15-16**

#### **BENEFICIAL DISCOMFORT**

[God] led thee through that great and terrible wilderness... that he might humble thee, and that he might test thee, to do thee good at thy latter end. Deuteronomy 8:15, 16

I sometimes feel sorry for the boys and girls living in this age of affluence and comfort! Few of them know what it is to swelter under a hot sun as they toil in a field, or to feel the bite of winter’s bitterly cold blasts while walking to school, or doing chores. Those who have known the discomfort of blistering heat have also appreciated the welcome coolness of a large shade tree, and those who have endured the stinging pain of frostbite have also known the cozy feeling of entering a warm house. This may sound as if I am

saying the discomfort was good because it made us appreciate simple pleasures — much like the boy who said he liked to hit himself with a hammer because it felt so good when he stopped. That is not the point, however. True, those hard experiences did make us appreciate ordinary comforts, but they also taught us valuable lessons in self-reliance, determination, courage, and industry! We felt challenged to accomplish our tasks even though doing so involved some misery and much weariness. Those difficult lessons of life could not be learned in the way of ease and luxury.

The Israelites too had to endure their forty years of wandering through the wilderness, with its fiery serpents, scorpions, and drought, but the Lord subjected them to these trials to humble them and make them ready for their future role as His chosen people in the land of Canaan (Deut. 8:16).

Christian, you may not find pleasure in some of the disciplines of life, but remember that God in this way is also preparing you for eternity. He wants "to do thee good at thy latter end."

When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,  
My grace, all sufficient shall be thy supply;  
The flames shall not hurt thee; I only design  
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.

**Sore trial makes common Christians into uncommon saints,  
fit for uncommon service!**

### **Deuteronomy 9:1-6**

#### **How Deserving Are We?**

I remember the day our secondhand refrigerator finally broke down. As a young newlywed employed by a Christian ministry, I didn't have much money to spend on repairs. Not knowing where to turn for reliable help, I called a friend in the electrical business. He assured me that he would handle the problem. Later that evening, I found a brand-new refrigerator in our kitchen. I asked myself, "What did I do to deserve such help?"

It's easy to think we deserve the help that others graciously give us. When we're successful, we tend to assume that we deserve our possessions. Success goes to our head. It makes us proud and can even turn us away from God.

In Deuteronomy 9, we read of God's reminder to Israel about the reason they would be successful. God wanted His people to remember that He was leading them into the land to fulfill His purpose and promises. They would succeed because of Him, not because of their own righteousness (Dt 9:4-5). He knew they would be tempted to become ungrateful after they were prospering in the Promised Land.

Ungratefulness is a temptation for us today as well. If our endeavors are successful, let's make sure we are thankful to God for His goodness, help, and protection. —Albert Lee (Our Daily Bread)

Help me, O Lord, lest my heart become proud,  
For all of my talents by You are endowed;  
Nothing I have can I claim as my own—  
What mercy and grace in my life You have shown!  
—D. De Haan

**We don't need more to be thankful for,  
we just need to be more thankful.**

### **Deuteronomy 9:3 - GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY - OUR RESPONSIBILITY**

"He will destroy them...so that you may drive them out and destroy them." (Deut. 9:3 NASB)

In all of God's dealings with mankind, there is a curious merging of the divine and the human.

Take the Bible, for example. There is the divine Author, and there are human authors, who wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

As far as salvation is concerned, it is of the Lord from start to finish. There is nothing a man can do to earn or deserve it. And yet he must receive it by faith. God clearly elects individuals to salvation, but they must enter in at the strait gate. And so Paul writes to Titus of "the faith of God's elect (Tit. 1:1).

From the divine standpoint, we are “kept by the power of God.” Yet there is also the human side—“through faith” (1 Pet. 1:5). “Kept by the power of God through faith.”

Only God can make me holy. Yet He will not make me holy without my cooperation. I must add to my faith virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and love (2 Pet. 1:5-7). I must put on the whole armor of God (Eph. 6:13-18). I must put off the old man and put on the new man (Eph. 4:22-24). I must walk in the Spirit (Gal. 5:16).

You find the merging of the divine and the human in the whole area of Christian ministry. Paul plants, Apollos waters, but God gives the increase (1 Cor. 3:6).

When we come to leadership in the local church, we learn that only God can make a man an elder. Paul reminded the Ephesian elders that it was the Holy Spirit who had made them overseers (Acts 20:28). Yet a man’s own will is involved. He must desire to exercise oversight (1 Tim. 3:1 JND).

Finally, in the text with which we began, we see that it is God who destroys our enemies, but we must drive them out and destroy them (Deut. 9:3 NASB).

In order to be balanced Christians, we must recognize this merging of the divine and human. We must pray as if everything depended on God but work as if everything depended on us. Or to borrow the wartime exhortation, “Praise the Lord and pass the ammunition.” As someone suggested, we must pray for a good harvest but keep on hoeing. (William MacDonald Truths to Live By)

#### **Deuteronomy 9:4; 2 Corinthians 4:7 ACHIEVEMENTS—not given their due**

Not According to Its Worth - One night in the fall of 1861, while watching campfires from thousands of bivouacs around Washington, D.C., Julia Ward Howe experienced a powerful inspiration of words and music—the melody familiar, the prose militantly biblical. They danced separately in her head at first, then together, then arm in arm. She sent the poem to the Atlantic Monthly, which published it in the spring of 1862. “The Battle Hymn of the Republic” became an instant sensation all over the North. Julia did not profit by it, however; she received only \$5 for her classic. Lorraine Petersen became the Sun-Maid Raisin Girl in 1915, appearing in a red bonnet, holding a basket of the fruit. The company made millions. She received \$15 a week as part-time model and part-time seeder/packer for the Griffin and Skelley Packing Company. The company purchased the original Sun-Maid portrait from her for \$1,700.

In seventy days General Tomoyuki Yamashita’s troops in Northern Malaya advanced seven hundred miles, all the while outfighting, outwitting, and out-maneuvering General Percival. Then, with a stroke of military genius, his 30,000 men captured Singapore and its 100,000 Britons. For this stunning achievement, military commander Tojo, ever jealous, transferred Yamashita to Manchuria, a military no-man’s-land. There he stayed for three years while Japan lost the war. There is a quintessential unrewarded merit: God in Christ reconciling the world to himself—an expressed spiritual elegance the unsaved cannot fathom, an accepted spiritual glory the saved fail to esteem. (Hurley, Virgil - Speaker’s sourcebook of new illustrations)

#### **Deuteronomy 9:6**

Know, therefore, that the Lord thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness.—Deut. 9:6.

In these words another peril, constantly threatening the people of God, is revealed, that, namely, of interpreting His goodness to them as resulting from their own righteousness. In the case of these very people, in process of time this was the peculiar sin that wrought their undoing. They came to look with contempt upon others, a sure sign of self-righteous pride. The result was that national exclusivism which prevented their fulfilment of purpose and ensured their downfall. The matter may be stated most powerfully perhaps by a personal application. It is well, therefore, that we constantly remind ourselves that when at last life’s probationary experiences are done, and we pass on to the Father’s home and the greater things beyond, our right of entrance there will be that of His abounding grace alone. As to service, we must never forget our Lord’s words, that having done everything, we have but done our duty, and remain unprofitable servants. As to life itself, no long triumph over temptation, or realization of the character of holiness, can be thought of as creating our claim on God. Pride in our own righteousness, satisfaction with our own goodness, trust in our own holiness, are alike foolish and reprehensible. To the soul that knows itself, it is a growing wonder that God should love us at all. That He does so, is our only confidence. (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

#### **Deuteronomy 9:9-16**

##### **Fast Freeze**

Thanks to Internet technology, I can watch ice building up on Lake Michigan from my warm office 30 miles away. The changing angle of the sun’s rays in winter chills the earth. Frigid temperatures turn surging water into rock-hard ice in a surprisingly short time. Witnessing this rapid transition reminds me of how quickly our hearts can turn cool toward God.

That happened to the ancient Israelites. After God miraculously rescued them from slavery, they became impatient when Moses climbed Mt. Sinai to meet God and didn't return according to their timetable. So they got together and created their own god (Exodus 32:1). The Lord told Moses to hurry back down the mountain because the people had so quickly turned away (Deuteronomy 9:12).

When situations don't unfold according to our timetable, we might assume that God has lost interest in us. When we no longer feel close to Him, our hearts may grow cold. But God is always with us. As the psalmist wrote, "Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence?" (Psalm 139:7).

Even when God seems distant, He's not. His presence fills heaven and earth (Ps 139:8-10). There's never a reason to let our hearts freeze over.—Julie Ackerman Link (Our Daily Bread)

Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,  
With all Thy quickening powers;  
Kindle a flame of sacred love  
In these cold hearts of ours. —Watts

**The question is not where is God,  
but where isn't He**

### **Deuteronomy 10:4**

He wrote on the tables, according to the first writing.—Deut. 10.4.

Moses now told the people again the story of how God gave him the writing of the great words of the Law a second time, and distinctly affirmed that the second tables were also written by the finger of God. In the previous chapter we read how he told them that he had broken the first two tables in the hour of his consternation in the presence of their sin in making the golden calf. What an experience this must have been to Moses! We can understand with what fulness of heart he would remember it, and refer to it in these last discourses ere he left the people. That breaking of the first tables was natural; and unintentionally, it was symbolic. That is what man has ever done with the law of God. Here then is the impressive fact about the writing of the second tables. That is what God is ever doing. The whole Bible is full of the truth that He finds a way for His banished ones to return, gives to failing man his second chance; writes again the , broken law, restores the years the canker-worm has eaten, makes the marred vessel over anew, seeks and saves the lost. Upon the basis of that grace, men may hope, and start anew. In a passage of great beauty, thrilling with earnestness, Moses summarized the requirements of God in view of His grace. Let these be considered with care. The people were to fear Him, that is reverence; to walk in His ways, that is obedience; to love Him, that is worship; to serve Him, that is co-operation; to keep His commandments, that is fidelity. (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

### **Deuteronomy 10:12**

#### **Fear and Love**

Someone shared with me her observation about two bosses. One is loved but not feared by his subordinates. Because they love their boss but don't respect his authority, they don't follow his guidelines. The other boss is both feared and loved by those who serve under him, and their good behavior shows it.

The Lord desires that His people both fear and love Him too. Today's Bible passage, Deuteronomy 10, says that keeping God's guidelines involves both. In verse 12, we are told "to fear the Lord your God" and "to love Him."

To "fear" the Lord God is to give Him the highest respect. For the believer, it is not a matter of feeling intimidated by Him or His character. But out of respect for His person and authority, we walk in all His ways and keep His commandments. Out of "love," we serve Him with all our heart and with all our soul—rather than merely out of duty (v.12).

Love flows out of our deep gratitude for His love for us, rather than out of our likes and dislikes. "We love Him because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19). Our fear and love for God enable us to walk willingly in obedience to God's law. — by Albert Lee (Our Daily Bread)

Lord, You are holy and Your thoughts are much higher  
than mine. I bow before You. Thank You for salvation in Jesus.  
I love You and want to obey You with all of  
my heart, soul, mind, and strength. Amen.

**If we fear and love God, we will obey Him.**

## **Deuteronomy 10:12**

### **READ: Deuteronomy 11:8-25**

THREE-YEAR-OLDS see fathers as "all powerful." Dads can scoop them up with one mighty arm. But children recognize something else. That same awesome strength also provides great security. The huge arms can hold the child close and convey unflinching, protective love.

But suppose the child disobeys. The father's once-gentle face becomes stern, and his once playful hand inflicts a controlled spanking. The child begins to learn that the father loves what is good and right and hates what is wrong. Therefore, obedience to a loving father results in the most security for the child.

As it is with fathers and sons, it is with God and us. Our greatest security is found in fearing, loving, and obeying our heavenly Father. That's the message of Deuteronomy, and it's also what Jesus said, "Fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matthew 10:28). The only one who can do that is God. Christ also commanded, "You shall love the LORD your God" (Matthew 22:37). His words express the thrust of Moses' final instructions to Israel in Deuteronomy.

Shallow sentimentality is not love, and cringing dread is not fear. Fearing God is hating evil (Proverbs 8:13), and loving God is keeping His commandments (John 14:15).—D J De Haan

### **Deuteronomy 10:12-22 |Loved To Love**

"A heart is not judged by how much you love, but by how much you are loved by others." I saw this quotation, attributed to the Wizard of Oz, on a wall plaque in a gift shop.

The Wizard of Oz may be a good story, but it's not a reliable source of spiritual information. God said something quite different. According to Him, the greatest commandment is to love—to love Him first and then others (Mark 12:29-31). Scripture says nothing about expecting to be loved in return. In fact, Jesus stated the opposite in His most famous sermon: "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven" (Matt. 5:11-12).

When it comes to love, the important thing we need to know is this: All love starts with God (1 John 4:19). As Moses told the Israelites, God delighted in them to love them (Deut. 10:15), and because of that they were to love others, even strangers (v.19). God's intent is that the people who receive His love will become the conduit of His love to others.

Apart from God—who Himself is love—none of us could truly love or be loved (1 John 4:7-8).

"Love seeketh not her own," and so

He did not stay as God above,

But chose a manger and a cross

To show that He was Love. —Wilmshurst

He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. —1 John 4:8

### **Deuteronomy 10:12-22 Loved To Love**

Therefore love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. —Deuteronomy 10:19

Dietrich Bonhoeffer's life was at risk every day he stayed in Hitler's Germany, but he stayed nonetheless. I imagine he shared the apostle Paul's view that being in heaven was his heart's desire, but staying where he was needed was God's present purpose (Phil. 1:21). So stay he did; as a pastor he offered clandestine worship services and resisted the evil regime under Hitler.

Despite the daily danger, Bonhoeffer penned Life Together—a book on hospitality as ministry. He put this principle to the test when he lived and worked in a monastic community and when he was imprisoned. Every meal, every task, and every conversation, Bonhoeffer taught, was an opportunity to show Christ to others, even under great stress or strain.

We read in Deuteronomy that just as God ministered to the Israelites who were leaving Egypt, He instructed them to imitate Him by loving and hosting strangers and widows (10:18-19; Ex. 22:21-22). We too are loved by God and empowered by His Spirit to serve Him by serving others in countless ways each day through kind words and actions.

Who on our daily journey seems lonely or lost? We can trust the Lord to enable us to bring them hope and compassion as we live

and labor together for Him.

That I may serve Him with a full surrender,

My life a crucible, His eye the test,

Each hour a gift from Him, the gracious Sender,

Each day a pledge to give to Christ my best. —Anon.

The more we understand God's love for us the more love we'll show to others.

### **Deuteronomy 10:17-22**

#### **I.O.N.U.**

Sometimes the Christian life boils down to the uncommon expression of common virtues. For example, you would expect that people indwelt by the Spirit of love would be friendly. What a difference practicing that virtue would make in society!

Tim Sanders, in his book *Likeability Factor*, says that a person who provides others with "a sense of joy, happiness, relaxation, or rejuvenation" is more likely to be hired or promoted. He maintains that some companies have actually abolished unfriendliness. They call their system I.O.N.U.: "I observe no unfriendliness."

That principle should be practiced by the citizens of Christ's kingdom. When people are asked what they look for in a church, their number-one response is friendliness. Unfortunately, the reality is that many churchgoers are as distant as a star and as cold as space.

The Lord told ancient Israel that He "loves the stranger, giving him food and clothing" (Deuteronomy 10:18). He commanded them to emulate His behavior (Dt 10:19).

Friendliness is not just a wise business practice, it should be a characteristic of all who follow Christ. When you attend your church today, act in such a way that a newcomer could say, "I observe no unfriendliness." —Haddon W. Robinson (*Our Daily Bread*)

#### **Thinking It Over**

What are the key elements that help a church to be meaningful?

Read [The Church We Need](#)

**In a world where many people couldn't care less,  
Christians should be people who couldn't care more.**

### **Deuteronomy 11:12**

A land which the Lord thy God Gareth for.—Deut. 11.12.

This is an arresting description of the Holy Land, and the place it occupies in the world geographically and historically is equally remarkable. As to location, it is central. Granted the realization of completed civilization in all the other lands, with accompanying perfected means of inter-communication, it would be better suited than any other place on earth for the seat of world-wide government. Under such conditions, thither would the tribes go up easily; and in the intellectual and spiritual light of its capital city, all the nations of the earth might walk; and into it, send their glory and their honour. Its history is covered by the naming of three names. Abraham, Moses, Jesus; these three forming a sequence in the Divine movements therein. Its climate varies from Alpine cold on Hermon, to tropical heats in the region of the Dead Sea. It is a land of abounding water. Its soil is fertile, especially in Bashan and Sharon, and is capable of supporting a large population if properly cultivated. The vicissitudes of its conditions have been very varied, and have had distinct relationships with the spiritual condition of its inhabitants. In the light of Biblical reference, and of its own history interpreted by such reference, it is impossible to think of it without reverence. It is the land for which God careth. He makes it fruitful or barren. That is its story in the past. There can be no doubt in the mind of the student of these Holy Writings that it will yet be the earthly centre of the Kingdom of God. On the slopes of Olivet the feet of the King shall yet actually stand, and from the City of the great King, the law shall yet go forth, in obedience to which man shall realize the highest of life. (G Campbell Morgan - *Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible*)

### **Deuteronomy 11:13-23**

#### **The Way We Walk**



A television program that I enjoy watching has a segment called Ambush Makeover. Two women are chosen to undergo 3 hours of pampering to update their hair, makeup, and wardrobe. The change is often dramatic. When the women step from behind a curtain, the audience gasps. Friends and family members sometimes start to cry. After all of this, the person with the new look finally gets to see herself. Some are so shocked that they keep looking in the mirror as if to find proof that it's really them.

As the women walk across the set to join their companions, the former self becomes evident. Most do not know how to walk in their new shoes. Although they look chic, their clumsy walk gives them away. Their transformation is incomplete.

This is true in our Christian lives as well. God does the work in us to give us a new start, but to walk in the way of the Lord (Deut. 11:22) requires time, effort, and lots of practice. If we just stand still and smile, we can pass as being transformed. But the way we walk tells how far along we are in living out that transformation. Being changed means giving up our previous way of life and learning a new way to walk (Rom. 6:4).— by Julie Ackerman Link (Our Daily Bread)

The new life in Christ has begun—  
The past with its darkness is gone;  
Look closer to see what the Savior has done,  
For change is beginning to dawn. —Hess

### **A change in behavior begins with a change in the heart.**

#### **Deuteronomy 11:18–22; 2 Timothy 3:14–17 It Never Grows Old**

The poet Wallace Stevens was inspired to write thirty-three meditations on The Man with a Blue Guitar, each a different interpretation of the painting. General George Custer spoke in awe of the seemingly endless central plains, echoing the feelings of numerous travelers as far back as Coronado's explorations: The plains were a series of undulating hills, like stationary waves of a vast sea; they rolled in endless procession to infinity. All who study the Bible experience a similar wonder. The Word seems so simple, but it has the deceptive depth of clear water. Its apparent message to us, while very true, is soon multiplied by other messages, just as true and complementing the first. God gave us a book that has never changed since written, yet it continues to yield new insights as we mature spiritually. Even if you study all your life through every book of the Bible, when you finish you will say with Joseph Parker (after twenty-five years of preaching from every text of the Bible) that you are essentially at the first chapter, the first verse of Genesis—you have yet to begin. -Speaker's sourcebook of new illustrations

#### **Deuteronomy 11:19**

#### **LITTLE "SPONGES"**

"And ye shall teach them to your children." Deuteronomy 11:19

Sponges have always intrigued me. There is just something about their appearance, feel, and absorptive qualities that is most fascinating. It was with a great deal of interest, therefore, that my family visited Tarpon Springs, Florida, where we could see how sponges are harvested. Donning their helmets, water-proof suits, and their weighted shoes, the divers descended into the murky depths to gather their crop. Sponges are actually animals, and must be cleaned before they are useful for household purposes. All the living matter must be removed so that the skeleton which remains with its open-celled structure can soak up and absorb other elements.

Sponges remind me of children. They, too, quietly and silently soak up everything with which they come in contact. They are what they are, not only because of the inheritance of certain characteristics and traits received from their parents, but also because of their environment. We must be very careful, there-fore, of what is allowed to fill their little hearts and minds. How important it is to govern and control their surroundings.

By the way, what are your children absorbing in your home these days? What are they getting from that television set? What enters those young minds through those magazines on your reading table? In listening to your conversation, what kind of words and attitudes are being impressed upon them? Are good examples being set by your love for the Lord and concern for others? Is there a warm, spiritual emphasis in your home? Are you doing what you can to fill their hearts with God's Word? In years to come those children will "give out" only that which has been absorbed during their formative, impressionable years. Make sure those little "sponges" in your home soak up only that which is pure, wholesome, and uplifting.

Early let them seek Thy favor;  
Early let them do Thy will;  
Blessed Lord and only Savior,  
With Thy love their bosoms fill.— W. B. Bradbury

**Children seldom misquote you;  
they repeat word for word what you SHOULD NOT have said!**

**Deuteronomy 12:7**

Ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your house-holds, wherein the Lord thy God hath blessed thee.—Deut. 12:7

These words occur amid the most careful and urgent instructions on the matter of worship, as it was to be observed by these people when they came into the land. All the false places of worship which they would find in the land, were to be utterly destroyed. In that land, God would appoint them a place of worship; attendance at which was to be obligatory. That is to say, that they must go and worship at this place; and that they must not set up any other place of worship. The particular value of these words is that they reveal the Divine thought of worship. It is an exercise of rejoicing, resulting from blessedness. God blesses men, and in that blessedness they rejoice before Him. It is well that we remember this. Solemnity, reverence, awe, there must ever be, when men draw near to God in worship; but solemnity is not sadness, reverence is not cringing fear, awe is not dullness. All our worship should have the note of joy, of gladness. It should be full of song. It should be of such a glad nature that all our households, children and servants, should find happiness therein. If when we worship, we do, in special sense, come into the presence of God, then let us remember that in His presence is fulness of joy, and at His right hand are pleasures for ever-more. There is a place for sadness, for contrition, for penitence before God; but that is the place of preparation for worship. When that preparation is fulfilled, worship becomes a joy and a gladness. (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

**Deuteronomy 12:28**

**Obedience Brings Blessing** - Faith's Checkbook

“Observe and hear all these words which I command thee, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee for ever, when thou doest that which is good and right in the sight of the Lord thy God.” —**Deuteronomy 12:28**

THOUGH salvation is not by the works of the law, yet the blessings which are promised to obedience are not denied to the faithful servants of God. The curses our Lord took away when He was made a curse for us, but no clause of blessing has been abrogated.

We are to note and listen to the revealed will of the Lord, giving our attention not to portions of it, but to “all these words.” There must be no picking and choosing, but an impartial respect to all that God has commanded. This is the road of blessedness for the father and for his children. The Lord’s blessing is upon His chosen to the third and fourth generation. If they walk uprightly before Him, He will make all men know that they are a seed which the Lord has blessed.

No blessing can come to us or ours through dishonesty or double dealing. The ways of worldly conformity and unholiness cannot bring good to us or ours. It will go well with us when we go well before God. If integrity does not make us prosper, knavery will not. That which gives pleasure to God will bring pleasure to us.

**Deuteronomy 12:32**

**Test The Teachers**

READ: Proverbs 30:1-6

Revelation. To some people, it's more than just the name of the last book of the Bible. To some self-promoting preachers, revelation is something God personally gives to them. In most cases, however, what they say God has given them contradicts His teachings in the Bible.

Have you ever been exposed to those who claim to have had a special "revelation" or "word" from God? If so, be careful. Unless what a person proclaims as truth can be verified by the clear teaching of the Bible, it is personal opinion at best and heresy at worst—not divine revelation.

The Scriptures warn us not to add to nor take away from what God has revealed to us in His written Word. Deuteronomy 4:2 tells us, "You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it." Similar warnings are found in Deuteronomy 12:32, Proverbs 30:5-6, and Revelation 22:18. It is indeed a precarious position for a person to put himself in—claiming to add to God's inspired Book.

If someone attempts to teach a doctrine not found in the Bible, beware—no matter how polished and well-known the person is. Test the teachers you hear by God's Word. If they talk of receiving a revelation, make sure they aren't violating God's clear warnings. — Dave Branon (Our Daily Bread)

God's Word must verify the truth  
Of what is wrong and what is right,  
And test what seems so real to me  
Of feelings, sense, and sight.  
—D. De Haan

### **Test all teaching by the truth of God's Word.**

#### **Deuteronomy 13:1-3**

##### **This Is a Test**

It is not uncommon to read of a police department, working on a baffling case or disappearance, to consult a psychic. The "just the facts" approach to crime moves to an "I have a feeling" process of investigation. Sometimes it works! The psychic leads the police to a key piece of evidence.

How should a Christian respond to those times when the paranormal is portrayed as normal?

First, realize that sometimes they will get it right. God's Word tells us that and gives examples of prophets and magicians whose advice was taken and signs believed. Deuteronomy 13:2 says, "And if the sign or wonder of which he has spoken takes place ... "

Second, refuse to follow that path. God's specific instruction is "you must not listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer" (Dt 13:3). In other words, do not add Tarot cards to your daily reading. Skip the horoscope.

Third, recognize that it is a test. Our hearts are tested through these seemingly inexplicable happenings. But God explains them. He says they are a test to see if you love Him with all your heart.

Stay true to God. Do not let appearances deceive you.

The better we know the Word, the better we can discern truth and error. Review your commitment to read and learn the Bible. (Back to the Bible - Woodrow Kroll)

#### **Deuteronomy 13:6**

If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly... —Deut. 13.6.

The section of this discourse of Moses in which these words are found begins in the previous chapter at verse twenty-nine, and runs through this whole chapter. It consists of express warnings against idolatry. It is a very valuable chapter, because it reveals the ways by which men may be seduced from the pure worship of God to the false worship of idols. The first is that of curiosity. The people were charged not to indulge such curiosity by inquiring after false methods of worship (Deut 12.29-32). The second is that of being influenced by signs and wonders wrought by false prophets. No such sign or wonder must draw the soul away from the worship of God. Moreover, all working such signs are pronounced worthy of death (Deut 13.15). The third temptation is that referred to in the words which we have chosen for our emphasis. It is that of the enticement of human affection. It is always a powerful temptation, but it is to be sternly guarded against. However near to the heart another human being may be, the place which God occupies must be supreme, and all human affection refused when it threatens loyalty to Him (Deut 13.16). Finally there is a peril which arises from looseness of discipline. Therefore the people were charged to take drastic measures against seducers and seduced. The necessity for this severe note is recognized when we remember that worship determines character and conduct. To us also comes the emphatic word: "Little children, guard yourselves from idols." (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

#### **Deuteronomy 13:12,14**

"If thou shalt hear say...then shalt thou inquire, and make search, and ask diligently; and, behold, if it be truth, and the thing certain..." (Deut. 13:12, 14)

If a rumor circulated that the people of a city in Israel had forsaken God for idols, there had to be an intensive investigation before any punitive action could be taken.

We should be no less careful when we hear a rumor or gossip, but should apply the six tests: Is it hearsay? Have I inquired? Have I made search? Have I asked diligently? Is it true? Is it certain?

In fact, it would be a good idea if we used the same thoroughness and caution before passing on sensational news items that

appear in religious circles from time to time. Let me give some illustrations!

Some time ago the story circulated that stones for building a temple in Jerusalem were stored in a pier in New York, ready for shipment to Israel when the proper time arrived. The stones were reported to be of Indiana limestone. Christians circulated the news enthusiastically, only to be discredited when it was learned that there was no truth to the report.

At another time, the story broke that scientists had fed extensive data concerning the calendar of human history into a computer and that the results confirmed the Scriptural narrative of Joshua's long day. Anxious for any news that confirms the Bible, believers avidly spread the story in magazines and by the spoken word. Then the bubble burst. The story proved to be without foundation.

More recently a mathematical computation has been used to suggest that some unpopular public figure might be the Antichrist. Here is how it works! A numerical value is assigned to each letter of this personality's name. Then by following a certain series of additions, subtractions, multiplications and divisions, you come up with the number 666. Of course, it proves nothing at all. Mathematical computations could be devised to yield 666 for almost anyone's name.

I have a tract stating that Charles Darwin, in the closing days of his life, disavowed evolution and returned to his faith in the Bible. This may be true. I would like to believe that it is true. Maybe some day I'll find that it is true. But in the meantime I have no documentation for the story, and I dare not circulate it until I do have.

We will save ourselves a lot of embarrassment and save the Christian faith from being discredited if we apply the six tests in today's verses: Is it hearsay? Have I inquired? Have I made search? Have I asked diligently? Is it true? Is it certain? (William MacDonald-Truths to Live By-)

### **Deuteronomy 13:17**

#### **Let No Evil Remain** - Faith's Checkbook

"And there shall cleave nought of the cursed thing to thine hand: that the Lord may turn from the fierceness of his anger, and show thee mercy, and have compassion upon thee, and multiply thee, as he hath sworn unto thy fathers."—**Deuteronomy 13:17**

ISRAEL must conquer idolatrous cities and destroy all the spoil, regarding all that had been polluted by idolatry as an accursed thing to be burned with fire. Now, sin of all sorts must be treated by Christians in the same manner. We must not allow a single evil habit to remain. It is now war to the knife with sins of all sorts and sizes, whether of the body, the mind, or the spirit. We do not look upon this giving up of evil as deserving mercy, but we regard it as a fruit of the grace of God, which we would on no account miss.

When God causes us to have mercy on our sins, then He has great mercy on us. When we are angry with evil, God is no more angry with us. When we multiply our efforts against iniquity, the Lord multiplies our blessings. The way of peace, of growth, of safety, of joy in Christ Jesus will be found by following out these words: "There shall nought of the cursed thing cleave to thine hand." Lord, purify me this day. Compassion, prosperity, increase, and joy will surely be given to those who put away sin with solemn resolution.

### **Deuteronomy 14:1**

Ye are the children of the Lord your God; ye shall not cut yourselves, nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead.—  
Deut. 14.1.

This was a command not to conform to pagan customs in the presence of death. Notice that it was based upon the declaration that these people were the children of Jehovah their God. Whereas it is most probable that the Hebrew people never came to any clear certainty about personal immortality, it was given them to know that their attitude toward death, and so toward sorrow, could not be that of people whose gods were not real. They were children of the living God. Therefore there must be nothing of hopelessness or despair, in the presence of death, or in the sorrow arising from it. For Christian men and women this is far more urgent. Christ has brought life and immortality to light. Therefore we can never think of death as final, and we can never sorrow as those who have no hope. Is there not a very practical application of this, which we do well to consider? In the reflected light of Christianity, even worldly people no longer cut themselves, or mutilate themselves, in their sorrow in the presence of death. But all the heavy, somber, desolation-suggesting trappings of mourning are entirely pagan. They should never be employed by Christians. For them the sackcloth is transfigured; the departed are not lost, but gone before. They will know sorrow; but upon all of their tears there will rest the glory that creates the rainbow. Let there be flowers and brightness in the death-chamber. We are children of God, and as our Master said, He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

### **Deuteronomy 15:7**

**READ: Deuteronomy 15:7-18**

I READ about a man who had a simple solution to the problem of overcrowded prisons: Give inmates knives and guns and let them fight it out.

How heartless!

A similar insensitivity was expressed by a friend of mine who had no sympathy for poor people who live in slums. He said they are there because of their own laziness and sinfulness.

Such an uncaring attitude toward society's outcasts and the poor has no support in Scripture. That's why I was glad when both of these men changed their minds. After listening to a Prison Fellowship staff member describe a compassionate minis-try to people caught in the web of crime, the man who had suggested guns and knives realized how wrong his attitude had been. And my friend, after being challenged to produce evidence for his harsh statements about the poor, realized that he had none. He is now interested in finding ways to help these people.

Although the admonitions of Deuteronomy 15:7-8 relate to the poor, they apply to all who are outcast. If we lack compassion, we need a change of attitude. —H V Lugt

### **Deuteronomy 15:7-11**

#### **For The Poor**

The man sits on the street corner day after day, begging for money. He's poor and desperate for a little cash to spend on food.

He's not alone. More than one-half of the world's people live below the internationally defined poverty line of less than \$2.00 a day. Poverty and hunger are such a big problem in our world that it's easy for us to feel helpless or to become hard-hearted and do nothing.

But God doesn't close His eyes to the plight of the poor. When He gave His people guidelines for living, He included instructions on ways to care for the needy (Deut. 15:11). He told His people, "You shall not harden your heart, nor shut your hand, from your poor brother, [but] open your hand wide to him and willingly lend him sufficient for his need" (Deut. 15:7-8).

God also commanded His people not to glean the corners of their fields so that the less fortunate could gather food (Lev. 19:9-10). And Jesus showed His compassion for the poor by His words and actions.

As Christians, we cannot ignore the plight of the poor today. Individuals and churches can join with Christian organizations working to combat poverty as they spread the Word. God has a heart for the poor. Do we? —Anne Cetas (Our Daily Bread)

The poor and needy everywhere  
Are objects of God's love and care,  
But they will better know His care  
As we seek ways that love to share. —D. De Haan

**God gives us all we need  
so we can give to those in need.**

### **Deuteronomy 15:7-11**

#### **Open-Handed Help**

A homeless man spends time in our local library. One afternoon, while I was writing there, I took a lunch break. After I finished the first half of a turkey and Swiss cheese sandwich, an image of the man's face came to mind. A few minutes later, I offered him the untouched part of my lunch. He accepted.

This brief encounter made me realize that with all that God has given me, I needed to do more to help those who are less fortunate. Later, as I thought about this, I read Moses' instructions on providing for the poor. He told the Israelites: Do not "shut your hand from your poor brother, but ... open your hand wide to him" (Deut. 15:7-8). An open hand symbolizes the way God wanted His nation to provide for impoverished people—willingly and freely. No excuses, no holding back (v.9). God had given to them, and He wanted them to give generously enough to supply whatever was "sufficient" for the need (v.8).

When we offer open-handed help to the poor, God blesses us for our kindness (Ps. 41:1-3; Prov. 19:17). With His leading, consider how you might "extend your soul to the hungry" (Isa. 58:10) and freely give to help others in Jesus' name.— by Jennifer Benson Schuldt (Our Daily Bread)

Grant us, then, the grace for giving  
With a spirit large and free,  
That our life and all our living  
We may consecrate to Thee. —Murray

**You may give without loving,  
but you can't love without giving.**

### **Deuteronomy 15:9**

Beware that there be not a base thought in thine heart.—Deut. 15.9.

The words flash like a light into the inner places of the life. We are warned against entertaining a base conception in the region of desire. To read them apart from their context is to realize what God is ever seeking in us. It is not enough that we abstain from base deeds. The heart must be free from baseness in thought. But the words become far more searching when they are interpreted by the context. Considering them alone, we might limit their application to things counted vulgar by men—to thoughts of murder, of impurity, of fraud. Examining them in their setting, we discover that the base thought referred to is that of a man who would refuse to help a fellow-man in immediate need, because the legal year of release was near at hand. That is a word, not of light alone, but also of fire. How perpetually prone we all are to this very kind of baseness! The need is patent, we do not deny it, but relief will come presently of necessity; therefore there is no urgency laid upon us to help. That is a base thought. To the people of God, immediate need calls for immediate help. We have no right to take refuge in our selfishness, under the plea of relief which will come presently. We are to give at once, and that not with grief in our hearts. Reluctance in giving sterilizes the gift. God is ever calling us to such vital fellowship with Himself that we give gladly, generously, immediately. Happy shall we be, if this world of light and fire from the old economy shall in us (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

### **Deuteronomy 15:18**

**Gracious Dealing** - Faith's Checkbook

“And the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all that thou doest.”—**Deuteronomy 15:18**

AN Israelitish master was to give his bond-servant liberty in due time, and when he left his service he was to start him in life with a liberal portion. This was to be done heartily and cheerfully, and then the Lord promised to bless the generous act. The spirit of this precept, and, indeed, the whole law of Christ, binds us to treat work people well. We ought to remember how the Lord has dealt with us and that this renders it absolutely needful that we should deal graciously with others. It becomes those to be generous who are the children of a gracious God. How can we expect our great Master to bless us in our business if we oppress those who serve us?

What a benediction is here set before the liberal mind! To be blessed in all that we do is to be blessed indeed. The Lord will send us this partly in prosperity, partly in content of mind, and partly in a sense of His favor, which is the best of all blessings. He can make us feel that we are under His special care and are surrounded by His peculiar love. This makes this earthly life a joyous prelude to the life to come. God's blessing is more than a fortune. It maketh rich and addeth no sorrow therewith.

### **Deuteronomy 16:13-15**

#### **JOYOUS CELEBRATION**

See also Nehemiah 8:17

Joe Carter's dramatic ninth-inning home run touched off a time of joyous celebration for the Toronto Blue Jay players and fans. It turned out to be the final game of the 1993 World Series. The winners were ecstatic. Watching the game on television, I was captivated by the enthusiasm that marked the victory celebration, both on the field and in the clubhouse. I thought, why don't we see that kind of spontaneity in our worship of God?

The Lord must have delighted in His people as they celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles. Israelites by the thousands laughed and talked with one another as they trekked to Jerusalem. There they made booths from tree branches and camped out for 7 days. They presented gifts in the temple as a thanksgiving offering, and they did it with joy and singing (Dt. 16:13-15; Neh. 8:17).

First-century Christians carried this spirit into their observance of the Lord's Day. Historians tell us that those joyous meetings gave pagan persecutors an excuse to accuse believers of drunkenness. They were enthusiastic because they kept fresh in their minds the fact that every Sunday was a commemoration of Christ's resurrection. Let's make this a day of joyous celebration!- Herbert Vander Lugt (Our Daily Bread)

What a God we have to worship!

What a Son we have to praise!  
What a future lies before us --  
Everlasting love-filled days!  
-- Maynard

**Christ's resurrection is cause  
for our celebration.**

**Deuteronomy 16:16**

Burn up the dross of base desire, And make the mountains flow. They shall not appear before the Lord empty.—Deut. 16.16

This command had application to the three great feasts of the year, those, namely, of Passover, with which it opened; of Pentecost, connected with harvest; and of Tabernacles, the great feast of remembrance and of joy. The observance of each of these feasts was a recognition of what the people owed to God. At Passover, they were reminded that their national existence was the result of their deliverance by God out of Egypt's bondage. At Pentecost, they recognized that not only their existence as a nation, but their perpetual sustenance also, was dependent upon His crowning of their toil. At Tabernacles, they recalled all the way in which He had led them, especially in the wilderness, and confessed that their possession of the land was the result of His gift. Nevertheless, in every one of them, they were called upon to bring gifts to God. This is an ever-increasing wonder to the truly devout heart. It seems incredible that man can offer anything to God that can possibly be worth His acceptance. And there is a sense in which it is true that He needs nothing. But He does value the spirit of devotion and love which prompts the gift. Where the full hands of worshippers are the results of hearts full of love, however poor intrinsically our gifts may be, they are very precious to Him. It is all very wonderful in its revelation of the fact that our eternal, almighty, infinite God, is no cold impassive Deity, but a God Whose heart is a very real fact. (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

**Deuteronomy 17:18**

He shall write him a copy of this law in a book. Deut. 17.18

In this chapter, at verse fourteen, we commence a section which ends at the close of the next chapter. It deals with the threefold medium through which the will of God would be interpreted to the people, that of the king, the priest, the prophet. In this chapter the subject is that of the king. In dealing with it, Moses was speaking in the light of prophetic foresight. He foresaw what would happen after they came into the land. He knew how they would clamor for a king, and how God would grant them their request, and so teach them, ultimately, the folly of their desire. In the light of this, the principles of the appointment were declared. The king must be chosen of God, and be of their own nation. He was forbidden to multiply horses, wives, silver and gold. Perhaps the most striking requirement was this, that he, the king, should write a copy of the law in a book. Necessarily the purpose was that he should be a student of the law, but this requirement gave special emphasis to that requirement. One wonders how many of the kings carried out this wise instruction. This whole paragraph is a remarkable revelation of God's ideal of a king. It would be an interesting exercise to place the kings of all time by the side of it for measurement. Such a procedure would inevitably result in a twofold consciousness. First, we should surely discover that the measure in which kings have approximated to this ideal, is the measure in which they have contributed to national strength. Second, we should as surely find that one King only fulfils the conditions. (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

**Deuteronomy 17:19**

**PROFITABLE READING**

"and he shall read therein all the days of his life" Deuteronomy 17:19

Some of the greatest scholars in the world have stated without apology that no man's education can be complete without an acquaintance with the Bible. Not only are its contents of inestimable value, but its very literary perfection and beauty are also worthy of our special attention and admiration. If we are to know this Book, it goes without saying that we must be willing to read and study it faithfully. No man can master any subject without diligent effort, concentration, and application. Much of the criticism laid against the Scriptures has come from those who have never studied it, much less even read it through.

A certain Bible teacher, boarding a train, found a seat next to a man who was diligently reading his newspaper. Opening his briefcase the preacher took out his Bible and began to read. The gentleman with the newspaper, glancing out of the corner of his eye, saw this unusual sight and his curiosity was aroused. Finally he said, "Pardon me, Sir, are you a minister?" "Yes, I am," said the man, and began talking to his questioner about the Bible. He explained some of the mysteries of that wonderful Book and its marvelous doctrines and revelations until the other exclaimed in amazement, "How in the world did you ever learn so much about that Book?" The Bible teacher simply replied, "I certainly did not get it by reading the daily newspaper!" Now, we should know what's

going on in the world today. But I am concerned over the amount of time that is taken up in reading our news-papers, magazines, and periodicals as compared with the Bible.

By the way, how much time do you spend in spiritual meditation each day? How diligently do you study God's Word? Upon your answer will depend your knowledge of the Scriptures and the Man of the Book, the Lord Jesus Christ.

In my soul, in my soul,  
Send a great revival;  
Teach me how to watch and pray,  
And to read my Bible!—Anon.

**There are multitudes whose Bibles  
are "read" only on the edges!**

### **Deuteronomy 18:10-11**

"There shall not be found among you...any one that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer." (Deut. 18:10, 11)

God warned His people Israel against any dabbling in the world of the occult. All the activities listed in today's verses are connected with demonism and must therefore be avoided. The warning is just as applicable to believers today as it was in the Old Testament.

Divination is fortune-telling. It includes the use of the crystal ball, clairvoyance, palm reading, phrenology, reading tea cups, and every other similar effort to foretell the future.

An observer of times is an astrologer, one who uses the position of the stars and planets to project their influence on human affairs. The daily horoscope in the newspaper is connected with astrology, as is the use of the signs of the zodiac.

An enchanter is one who influences others by charms and incantations.

A witch is a woman who exercises supernatural power through contact with demons. The contacts are ultimately evil and injurious.

A charmer is one who pronounces bans or curses on others and who has demonic power to make them come to pass. (Such curses are ineffective on believers).

Consulters with familiar spirits are mediums who are able to contact the world of evil spirits. These spirits often impersonate dead relatives of those who consult the mediums.

A wizard is one who uses magical arts in the realm of spiritism. Sometimes "wizard" is the male form of the word "witch".

A necromancer is a person who professes to conjure the spirits of the dead in order to reveal the future or influence events.

Christians should avoid all these and also such modern manifestations of spiritism as yoga, transcendental meditation, Hare Krishna, seances, black magic, white magic, hypnotism, water-divining, spiritistic healing, numerology, and praying to the dead. They should also know that the following items are stock-in-trade for spiritists: mind expanding drugs, the ouija board, playing cards, Tarot cards, dice, pendants, medallions, amulets, dominos, sticks and bones (when used for mystical purposes). (William MacDonald - Truths to Live By)

### **Deuteronomy 18:14**

As for thee, the Lord thy God hath not suffered thee so to do

What a stepping-stone! We give thanks, often with a tearful, doubtful voice, for our spiritual mercies positive; but what an almost infinite field there is for mercies negative! We cannot even imagine all that God has suffered us not to do, not to be. - Frances Ridley Havergal

### **Deuteronomy 18:15**

The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken.— Deut. 18.15

In this chapter priest and prophet are dealt with. The priest was already among the people by the appointment of God. The provisions that he was to have no inheritance in the land, and that his material needs must be supplied by the people, were restated. Special provision was now made for any priest whose heart prompted him to special service. In dealing with the prophet, Moses



enjoined the people to beware of the false, and to know the true. He described the methods of false prophets. They are those of the dark arts, of dealing with the spiritual forces of evil, in a professed attempt to discover the will of God. The true prophet was then described briefly, but graphically. It is impossible to read this description without realizing that it was a prophecy which only found its fulfillment in One, and that the One Who was Himself the Word of God. All the true prophets approximated to the ideal; but in Him it was filled to the full. This section in our readings is of special interest as we realize how perfectly Moses was guided to set forth the true ideals of king, priest, and prophet; and how completely they were realized in our Lord! He was the true King; of His brethren, appointed by God, knowing, doing, and administering the law. He was the true Priest; of His brethren, without inheritance in His own land, abiding in the service of God, ministered to by the people of God. He was the true Prophet; of His brethren, uttering the Word of God in purity and in fulness. (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

### **Deuteronomy 18:15 - H A Ironside**

Christ Jesus is the prophet who, like unto Moses, is the deliverer and leader of His people, freeing from Satan's bondage and leading in triumph to the rest that remains for the people of God. He who was with the Father from all eternity, became man that He might qualify as the Mediator of our redemption. It was necessary that He partake of our nature apart from sin, that He might represent us before God and pay the penalty that we deserved. Now He is exalted as Prince and Savior, and we are to heed His voice, following Him as we journey on to the land of promise—to the inheritance laid up for us in Heaven.

Great Prophet of our God,  
Our tongues shall bless Thy name,  
Through whom the joyful news  
Of free salvation came,  
The joyful news of sins forgiven,  
Of fears removed and peace with heaven.  
—Isaac Watts

### **Deuteronomy 18:18; John 8:24 - Good or Bad Information**

Around 200 B.C. Eratosthenes measured the circumference of the world to within a 5 percent error. Ptolemy, A.D. 120–150, reduced that measurement by one-third. Columbus appropriated Ptolemy's figures when he studied maps for his voyage. As it turned out, God had placed the American land mass the distance from Europe that Columbus thought Cathay would be. Columbus was fortunate, even though he followed the wrong authority. Not every traveler or pilgrim would be. In 1846, the Donner party accepted the word of Landsford Hastings, who promised a shortcut to California over his Cutoff. Having traveled the Hastings Cutoff himself on his way east, veteran mountain man Jim Clymer urged the Donners to stay on the regular route when they consulted with him at Fort Laramie that summer. Choosing to ignore his advice, they followed Hastings and became casualties of horrendous misdirection in the mountains and massive snows in the Sierra. Half the ninety people in their camp died by following the wrong authority. How this challenges those who seek a way to heaven but accept the promise of someone other than Jesus to get there. Jesus said that he is the only way anyone can get to heaven. By the mere process of elimination, how many of the other purported ways can be true? If you follow the wrong directions on a trip, you may get lost but you will likely be safe. If you take the wrong direction through life, however, you will be lost forever—you will forfeit heaven. -Speaker's sourcebook of new illustrations

### **Deuteronomy 18:20–22: Threefold Test of a Prophet**

1. He must speak in the name of the Lord, not some other god.
2. His message must be in accord with God's revealed truth in Scripture.
3. His predictions of future events must come true exactly as predicted

### **Deuteronomy 19:15**

One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity.—Deut. 19.15

This chapter contains certain applications of laws already given. It deals with the sacredness of life, the importance of the land, the necessity for truth, the obligation of justice in all human inter-relationships. The particular words which we have taken set up a principle which has been recognized and acted upon wherever laws have been based upon a passion for justice. They provided that no man could be condemned upon the testimony of one witness. There must be corroboration at the mouth of another. Moreover, every witness must be put to inquisition by the judges. If in the course of that investigation a man was found guilty of bearing false witness, he was to be severely punished. This spirit of strict and impartial justice breathes through all these laws, and helps us to understand God's ways of dealing with men. Only, we are safer in the hands of God than we can ever be in the hands of man. In spite of all precautions, justice does miscarry at times, in the best human courts; and that because there are things which the eye

cannot see, or the ear hear, and it is only upon these evidences that man can bear witness. Our final judgments are with Him Who judgeth, not by the seeing of the eye, or the hearing of the ear, but with righteous judgment, which is based upon perfect knowledge of all the facts. That is a truth which comforts and warns W. With men we may be punished, or we may escape punishment, because all the facts are not known. It is never so with God. (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

## **Deuteronomy 19:16-21**

### **Alternatives to Revenge**

One Sunday while preaching, a pastor was accosted and punched by a man. He continued preaching, and the man was arrested. The pastor prayed for him and even visited him in jail a few days later. What an example of the way to respond to insult and injury!

While there is a place for self-defense, personal revenge was forbidden in the Old Testament: "You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Lev. 19:18; see also Deut. 32:35). It was also forbidden by Jesus and the apostles (Matt. 5:38-45; Rom. 12:17; 1 Peter 3:9).

The Old Testament law exacted like for like (Ex. 21:23-25; Deut. 19:21), which ensured that judicial punishment was not unjust or malicious. But there was a larger principle looming when it came to personal revenge: Justice must be done, but it must be left in the hands of God or the authorities ordained by God.

Instead of returning injury and insult, may we live by Christ-honoring and Spirit-empowered alternatives: Live at peace with everyone (Rom. 12:18), submit to a spiritual mediator (1 Cor. 6:1-6), and leave it in the hands of authorities and, most of all, in God's hands.—by Marvin Williams (Our Daily Bread)

Lord, when I'm troubled by the insult of another,  
help me to let go of my desire for revenge. May I seek  
justice but also realize that it will happen in Your  
time. I want to learn to overcome evil with good. Amen.

**Leave final justice in the hands of a just God.**

## **Deuteronomy 20:4**

### **Our Field of Battle** - Faith's Checkbook

"For the Lord your God is he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you."—**Deuteronomy 20:4**

WE have no enemies but the enemies of God. Our fights are not against men, but against spiritual wickednesses. We war with the devil and the blasphemy, error, and despair which he brings into the field of battle. We fight with all the armies of sin—impurity, drunkenness, oppression, infidelity, and ungodliness. With these we contend earnestly, but not with sword or spear; the weapons of our warfare are not carnal.

Jehovah, our God, abhors everything which is evil, and, therefore, He goeth with us to fight for us in this crusade. He will save us, and He will give us grace to war a good warfare, and win the victory. We may depend upon it that if we are on God's side God is on our side. With such an august ally the conflict is never in the least degree doubtful. It is not that truth is mighty and must prevail, but that might lies with the Father who is Almighty, with Jesus who has all power in heaven and in earth, and with the Holy Spirit who worketh His will among men.

Soldiers of Christ, gird on your armor. Strike home in the name of the God of holiness, and by faith grasp His salvation. Let not this day pass without striking a blow for Jesus and holiness.

## **Deuteronomy 20:5**

The officers shall speak unto the people saying ... Deut 20.5

These words introduce a paragraph, and they are chosen to draw attention to it. Let us first note the whole chapter. It contains that section of this discourse of Moses in which most particular instructions were given for the guidance of the people in the wars which they must inevitably be engaged in. They were being led, not merely to find a land for their own possession, but as a scourge of God against a corrupt and corrupting people. They were charged, first, that in the day of battle they must keep before them the vision of God, for that alone would free them from fear in the presence of the foe. Before actual conflict the priest was authoritatively to announce the fact of the presence, and authority, and power of God. Then we read our words, and the connected paragraph. It has to do with the grounds upon which men were to be exempt from military service. First, men who had duties and obligations, the fulfillment of which were necessary to the home-life of the nation were not to go to war. Men who had unfinished houses, ungathered

vineyards, and men newly married, were to remain at home, at least until such times as they had discharged their obligations. Then also, men who lacked courage were to remain behind, because fear is contagious. It is impossible to read all this in view of much modern history without furious thinking! At least, we are driven to the conclusion that armies thus sifted would have a quality that is lacking entirely when they are made up of all sorts and conditions. (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

### **Deuteronomy 21:23**

He that is hanged is accursed of God. Deut. 21.23

The reference was to a man who for sin had been put to death, and whose body had been impaled on a tree or a stake, and thus exposed as a warning to other evil-doers. The command was that such exposure was not to outlast the day. By night the body must be buried, and so the whole fact of his sin, now expiated as to human society, put completely away. This parenthetical statement—for such it is—gives the reason for the burial. The man was not accursed of God because he was hanged on a tree. He was hanged on the tree because he was accursed of God. The hanging was the outward sign of the curse upon him, the curse of death for sin. When that curse was accomplished and witnessed, the sign was to cease ; then let the man be buried, and that burial be the sign that the curse was sufficient. The understanding of this helps us when the mind travels on in solemn thought to the One Who hung upon the Tree on Calvary. He was there because He was "made sin," and so accursed of God. Such blunt statement gives the soul a shock; but it is the very shock we need, if we are ever to come to anything like a true apprehension of the way of our saving. In His case this law was fulfilled. He did not remain on the Tree through the night. The curse on sin was borne, and witnessed; the sin was expiated before God, because the One Who suffered its penalty was sinless. His burial was the sign that sin was put away. His resurrection was the beginning of a new life for Himself, as Redeemer; and for us, as redeemed. (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

### **Deuteronomy 22:1**

Thou shalt not see thy brother's ox or his sheep go astray, and hide thyself from them.—Deut. 22.1

In these words we discover an element of responsibility which outruns all ordinary standards of righteousness. According to it, we are not only responsible that we do no harm to our fellow-men; we are also responsible to prevent harm being done to them when it is in our power to do so. The very simplicity of the illustration makes it all the more powerful. If I should see an animal belonging to my neighbor straying away, it would be in perfect keeping with human ideas of justice if I should say that it was no business of mine. Indeed, I might even argue that if he should lose that animal, it would be a just punishment for his carelessness concerning his own property. He certainly would have no claim on me that could be enforced in any human court of law. But in the court of Eternal Justice, I am counted as violating justice when I claim exemption from responsibility on such grounds. The reason for this is that, in the righteousness of God, there is always the element of compassion, and such concern for absolute right, that it must be maintained at all costs:—Because my neighbor is impoverished by the straying of his animal, whether through his own fault or no, I must intervene to save him from such impoverishment if it be in my power to do so. What a wonderful world this will be when that is the law of life! And it will come, because God has anointed as King the One Who, to fulfil all righteousness, took the sinner's place in the baptism of death. (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

### **Deuteronomy 22:1 A Temptation to Resist**

Among the instructions God gave His people were ones regarding the possessions of others. Straying animals were not to be ignored but returned. At times wandering livestock was to be kept until the owner came to claim it. Even fallen animals were to be assisted. "Do not ignore it" is a twice-repeated instruction in the opening verses of Deuteronomy 22.

It is easier to ignore than get involved. These instructions, though, remind us that God is not concerned just with issues of wrongdoing but with relationships. His people are not to just look out for self, the proverbial "number one" of our lives, but also for the needs and well-being of others. That extends to helping with their livestock. In essence, this instruction aims to involve us in the plights other people face.

Perhaps your neighbor will not have cows loose in your pasture, unless you live in a rural area. If that does happen, you should help. But some other adversity may come into your neighbor's life. When it does, you should help.

Resist the temptation not to be involved with someone else's needs. Read James 2:15-17 and 1 John 3:17-18. Remind yourself that God is concerned that His people help others.

Is there someone you should help today? If no one comes to mind then start looking. Always be ready to help. (Back to the Bible - Woodrow Kroll)

### **Deuteronomy 22:9–11 Ox and Ass**

Principle - What God has joined, we must not separate. What God has separated, we must not join.

Unequal yoking is:

1. Unfitting - Different in size, temperament, strength. Ox clean, Ass unclean.
2. Unfair - Both would suffer pain, discomfort.

A poor working combination.

Source unknown

### **Deuteronomy 23:7**

Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite; for he is thy brother; thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian; because thou wast a stranger in his land.—  
Deut. 23.7

Here, again we are brought face to face with this same element of compassion and mercy in the righteousness of God. It is wonderful how constantly it emerges in these laws. We are sometimes in danger of thinking of them as characterized by a cold negative justice, which fills the soul with fear. Nothing can be further from the truth. Here are two illustrations of the one principle. The first is that of the command that these people were not to abhor an Edomite. The Edomite was the descend-ant of Esau, as the Israelite was of Jacob. There were reasons why there should be separation from them, but there was to be no hatred, no contempt. The second is that of the Egyptian, with whom the Israelite had no race relationship. But Israel had been a stranger in the land of Egypt, and at one time had. been given real hospitality there. This was never to be forgotten. Again, there were the most cogent reasons why Israel should make no political affinity with Egypt, but she was not to harbor abhorrence in her heart against the Egyptian people. Again, in these commandments to His people, what a revelation we have of God! There are evils with which He will make no compromise, there are peoples with whom He can have no communion; but in His heart there is nothing of hatred or contempt, even though there may be holy wrath. To be like Him is to be devoid of all bitterness, which is the outcome of selfishness. (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

### **Deuteronomy 23:9 H A Ironside**

God's host of old was invincible so long as they walked in obedience to His Word. But sin tolerated rendered them weak and powerless against the enemy. We who wrestle not with flesh and blood but with wicked spirits in heavenly places, must deal unsparingly with every evil tendency in ourselves if we would triumph in the hour of conflict. Hidden sin, unjudged and unconfessed, will be our undoing when we attempt to meet the enemy. A bad conscience will nullify all our holy weapons and result in utter defeat. But if we deal unsparingly with the evil we can count on God to work in us and to fight for us.

Search out in me all hidden sin,

And may Thy purity within  
So cleanse my life, that it may be  
A temple wholly fit for Thee.  
Oh, search my life, my will, my all.  
As now on Thee, my Lord, I call;  
Purge me from self, and sanctify  
My life, while Thee I glorify

### **Deuteronomy 24:22**

And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt: therefore I command thee to do this thing.—Deut. 24.22

The thing immediately commanded was that at harvest-time the people should remember the stranger, the fatherless, the widow. In their reaping of their corn, their beating of their olive-trees, their gathering of their grapes, they were to remember those less privileged than themselves; and remembering, they were to relax the strict measure of their own rights, as they left something behind them for others. The argument used was that they were to remember the days of their own adversity. That such an argument should be necessary seems at first to be strange, and yet a stranger fact is that people do so easily forget their own adversity in days of prosperity. Over and over again one sees a man, who in early life knew the pinch of poverty, having come to ease and comfort of circumstance, hard and callous in the presence of the trials of others. It is not always so, but it should never be so; and to those who live according to this law of God, it will never be so. Again, through this law of God for man, we have an unveiling of God Himself. In all His unsearchable riches, He thinks of the poor, and not only arranges that they may glean, but places all His wealth at their disposal. When then we yield up some gleanings of our possession for the relief of the needy, we have nothing of which to be

proud. It is poor action as compared with the Divine. Verily there is only room for humility in the life of those who know God. (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

#### **Deuteronomy 25:4**

Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn.—Deut. 25.4

Twice Paul quoted these words in his letters; once to the Corinthians (1 Cor 9. 9, 10), and once to Timothy (1 Tim. 5. r8); and in both cases with reference to the duty of those who receive ministry in spiritual things to care for the material needs of those who minister. In the former case, he asked: "Is it for the oxen that God cares, or says He it assuredly for our sake?" To his question, he replied: "Yea, for our sake it was written." Undoubtedly he was right. When this command was laid upon the people of God, it was in order that in all their life there might be the recognition of a principle. That, however, does not mean that God does not care for oxen. It does mean that if He cares for oxen, His care for men is necessarily greater. The principle had clear statement in the words of Jesus when He said of the birds: "Your heavenly Father feeds them. Are not ye of much more value than they?" (Matt. 6.26). In God, love acts toward all. Nothing He has made is outside that love. His provisions for all are perfect. His children are to be like Him in this. We do not minimize the application of this command to men, when we insist upon its application to animals. The Wise Man uttered a great truth when he said: "A righteous man regards the life of his beast" (Pr 12.10). If I see a man ill-treat a horse or a dog, I know he is capable of being brutal to a man. I would trust no child to a human being who showed cruelty to any dumb animal. If that is recognized, the applications in higher realms is patent. (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

#### **Deuteronomy 26:10**

I have brought the first of the fruit of the ground, which Thou, O Lord, hast given me.—Deut. 26.10

In this chapter we read the end of the second discourse of Moses. The great leader lifts his eyes, and looks out over the land to be possessed; and he proceeds to charge the people as to their worship therein, as it will have special regard to that fact of possession. The first act of worship is to be that of a recognition of their rights as vested in God. The people were to go up to the appointed place of worship, and there a formal confession was to be made. This was to be threefold: first, the fact of possession was to be stated; second, the origin of the nation was to be remembered, "A Syrian ready to perish was my father"; and finally, the fact that their possession was due to the act of Jehovah was to be acknowledged. With such confessions, offerings were to be presented to Jehovah, and then the people were to rejoice together. The true method of giving is that of bringing Him the first-fruits. We are ever in danger of thinking of Him last. When we are planning the expenditure of income, how often we arrange for things, perfectly proper and necessary, but purely personal, first; and then, when our list is completed, we begin to consider what we have left to offer to our Lord! If such lists are to be made, the first expenditure should be our giving to Him. The true principle of life for the Christian should be that of first recognizing that, not a tenth, but ten-tenths of our incomes belong to Him. Then every part should be expended for His glory. Even in that case, the first gifts should be His, specifically devoted to His work. (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

#### **Deuteronomy 27:9**

Keep silence, and hearken, O Israel; this day thou art become the people of the Lord thy God. Deut. 27.9

This chapter consists of a historic interlude, and the commencement of Moses' third discourse. Immediately upon the conclusion of the second discourse, Moses and the elders of the people commanded them concerning the erection of great stones and an altar on Mount Ebal. On the stones were to be inscribed the words of the Law. The action was to be suggestive. The law thus inscribed and exhibited indicated the necessity for obedience, while the altar spoke of the provided method of approach to God because of disobedience. Upon entrance to the land there was to be a formal pronouncement of blessing and cursing. The blessings were to be pronounced from Mount Gerizim by the children of Leah and Rachel; Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, Benjamin; the cursings from Mount Ebal by two sons of Leah, Reuben and Zebulun, and the children of the bond-women, Gad, Asher, Dan, Naphtali. These arrangements having been made, Moses uttered his third discourse, the dominant note of which was that of warning. It consisted of the cursings and the blessings, together with appeal. He first called upon them to keep silence and hearken because they had become the people of Jehovah. The people of Jehovah have a law and an altar. Their cursing or their blessing results from their attitude to that law and that altar. Because of disobedience, the law can only curse. Because of the altar, there may be obedience. Thus the people of Jehovah ever live between their own failure and the Divine Grace. Grace is no excuse for failure, but in failure there is no reason for despair. (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

#### **Deuteronomy 28:1**

The Lord thy God will set thee on high above all the nations of the earth. —Deut. 28.1

That was the purpose of God for His people. Its fulfilment was conditional upon their obedience. They were to act above the nations

of the earth; "If thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of Jehovah thy God, to observe to do all His commandments." Having made this general declaration. Moses proceeded to describe the blessings which would follow obedience; and then to declare the evils which would overtake them, if the law of God should be disregarded. In the light of the subsequent history of these people we see how literally all these things were fulfilled. How solemn and searching all this old-time story is for us. In Christ the law as given to Moses is done away, because He has given us a higher law, which far transcends the former in its standards of purity. In Christ the prophetic altar has been superseded by the one altar, by which men may draw near to God, and appropriate all the resources of His grace for the keeping of this higher law. The principles abide. Disobedience still issues in disaster; and obedience, in realization of Divine purpose. We blaspheme the name of God, and desecrate the final altar, when we become careless about the will of God as it has been revealed to us in the perfections of the Son of Man. It is still when we hearken diligently unto the voice of God, to observe to do His commandments, that we are set above the nations of the earth. With us, also, as with the people of Israel, the Divine intention of our exaltation is not that we should tyrannize over the nations of the earth, and hold them in contempt; but that we should serve them, and lead them into blessedness. (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

## **Deuteronomy 28:2**

### **Blessing in the City** - Faith's Checkbook

"If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, blessed shalt thou be in the city."—Deuteronomy 28:2, Deuteronomy 28:3

THE city is full of care, and he who has to go there from day to day finds it to be a place of great wear and tear. It is full of noise, and stir, and bustle, and sore travail: many are its temptations, losses, and worries. But to go there with the divine blessing takes off the edge of its difficulty; to remain there with that blessing is to find pleasure in its duties, and strength equal to its demands.

A blessing in the city may not make us great, but it will keep us good; it may not make us rich, but it will preserve us honest. Whether we are porters, or clerks, or managers, or merchants, or magistrates, the city will afford us opportunities for usefulness. It is good fishing where there are shoals of fish, and it is hopeful to work for our Lord amid the thronging crowds. We might prefer the quiet of a country life; but if called to town, we may certainly prefer it because there is room for our energies.

Today let us expect good things because of this promise, and let our care be to have an open ear to the voice of the Lord, and a ready hand to execute His bidding. Obedience brings the blessing. "In keeping his commandments there is great reward."

## **Deuteronomy 28:3**

### **Blessed in the Field** - Faith's Checkbook

"Blessed shalt thou be in the field."—Deuteronomy 28:3

SO was Isaac blessed when he walked therein at eventide to meditate. How often has the Lord met us when we have been alone! The hedges and the trees can bear witness to our joy. We look for such blessedness again.

So was Boaz blessed when he reaped his harvest, and his workmen met him with benedictions. May the Lord prosper all who drive the plough! Every farmer may urge this promise with God, if indeed he obeys the voice of the Lord God.

We go to the field to labor as father Adam did; and since the curse fell on the soil through the sin of Adam the first, it is a great comfort to find a blessing through Adam the second.

We go to the field for exercise, and we are happy in the belief that the Lord will bless that exercise, and give us health, which we will use to His glory.

We go to the field to study nature, and there is nothing in a knowledge of the visible creation which may not be sanctified to the highest uses by the divine benediction.

We have at last to go to the field to bury our dead; yea, others will in their turn take us to God's acre in the field: but we are blessed, whether weeping at the tomb, or sleeping in it.

## **Deuteronomy 28:5**

### **Our Substance Blessed** - Faith's Checkbook

"Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store."—Deuteronomy 28:5

OBEDIENCE brings a blessing on all the provisions which our industry earns for us. That which comes in and goes out at once, like fruit in the basket which is for immediate use, shall be blessed; and that which is laid by with us for a longer season shall equally receive a blessing. Perhaps ours is a hand-basket portion. We have a little for breakfast and a scanty bite for dinner in a basket

when we go out to do our work in the morning. This is well, for the blessing of God is promised to the basket. If we live from hand to mouth, getting each day's supply in the day, we are as well off as Israel; for when the Lord entertained His favored people, He only gave them a day's manna at a time. What more did they need? What more do we need?

But if we have a store, how much we need the Lord to bless it! For there is the care of getting, the care of keeping, the care of managing, the care of using; and, unless the Lord bless it, these cares will eat into our hearts till our goods become our gods and our cares prove cankers.

O Lord, bless our substance. Enable us to use it for thy glory. Help us to keep worldly things in their proper places, and never may our savings endanger the saving of our souls.

### **Deuteronomy 28:6**

#### **Coming In, Going Out - Faith's Checkbook**

"Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out."—Deuteronomy 28:6

THE blessings of the law are not cancelled. Jesus confirmed the promise when He bore the penalty. If I keep the commands of my Lord, I may appropriate this promise without question.

This day I will come into my house without fear of evil tidings, and I will come into my closet expecting to hear good news from my Lord. I will not be afraid to come in unto myself by self-examination, nor to come into my affairs by a diligent inspection of my business. I have a good deal of work to do indoors within my own soul; oh, for a blessing upon it all, the blessing of the Lord Jesus, who has promised to abide with me.

I must also go out. Timidity makes me wish that I could stay within doors and never go into the sinful world again. But I must go out in my calling, and I must go out that I may be helpful to my brethren and useful to the ungodly. I must be a defender of the faith and an assailant of evil. Oh, for a blessing upon my going out this day! Lord, let me go where Thou leadest, on Thy errands, under Thy command, and in the power of Thy Spirit.

Lord Jesus, turn in with me and be my guest; and then walk out with me, and cause my heart to burn while You speak with me by the way.

### **Deuteronomy 28:8**

#### **Doing What God Can Bless - Faith's Checkbook**

"The Lord shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto."—Deuteronomy 28:8

IF we obey the Lord our God, He will bless that which He gives us. Riches are no curse when blessed of the Lord. When men have more than they require for their immediate need and begin to lay up in storehouses, the dry rot of covetousness or the blight of hard-heartedness is apt to follow the accumulation; but with God's blessing, it is not so. Prudence arranges the saving, liberality directs the spending, gratitude maintains consecration, and praise sweetens enjoyment. It is a great mercy to have God's blessing in one's iron safe and on one's banking account.

What a favor is made ours by the last clause! "The Lord shall bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand unto." We would not put our hand to anything upon which we dare not ask God's blessing, neither would we go about it without prayer and faith. But what a privilege to be able to look for the Lord's help in every enterprise! Some talk of a lucky man: the blessing of the Lord is better than luck. The patronage of the great is nothing to the favor of God. Self-reliance is all very well; but the Lord's blessing is infinitely more than all the fruit of talent, genius, or tact.

### **Deuteronomy 28:10**

#### **Without Fear of Man - Faith's Checkbook**

"And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord; and they shall be afraid of thee."—Deuteronomy 28:10

THEN we can have no reason to be afraid of them. This would show a mean spirit and be a token of unbelief rather than of faith. God can make us so like Himself that men shall be forced to see that we rightly bear His name and truly belong to the Holy Jehovah. Oh, that we may obtain this grace which the Lord waits to bestow!

Be assured that ungodly men have a fear of true saints. They hate them, but they also fear them. Haman trembled because of

Mordecai, even when he sought the good man's destruction. In fact, their hate often arises out of a dread which they are too proud to confess. Let us pursue the path of truth and uprightness without the slightest tremor. Fear is not for us, but for those who do ill and fight against the Lord of hosts. If indeed the name of the Eternal God is named upon us, we are secure; for, as of old, a Roman had but to say "Romanus sum," I am a Roman, and he could claim the protection of all the legions of the vast empire; so everyone who is a man of God has omnipotence as his guardian, and God will sooner empty heaven of angels than leave a saint without defense. Be braver than lions for the right, for God is with you.

### **Deuteronomy 28:12**

#### **God's Treasury - Faith's Checkbook**

"The Lord shall open unto thee his good treasure."—Deuteronomy 28:12

THIS refers first to the rain. The Lord will give this in its season. Rain is the emblem of all those celestial refreshings which the Lord is ready to bestow upon His people. Oh, for a copious shower to refresh the Lord's heritage!

We seem to think that God's treasury can only be opened by a great prophet like Elijah, but it is not so, for this promise is to all the faithful in Israel and, indeed, to each one of them. O believing friend, "the Lord shall open unto thee his good treasure." Thou, too, mayest see heaven opened, and thrust in thy hand, and take out thy portion—yea, and a portion for all thy brethren round about thee. Ask what thou wilt and thou shalt not be denied, if thou abidest in Christ and His words abide in thee.

As yet thou hast not known all thy Lord's treasures, but He shall open them up to thine understanding. Certainly thou hast not yet enjoyed the fullness of His covenant riches, but He will direct thine heart into His love and reveal Jesus in thee. Only the Lord himself can do this for thee, but here is His promise. And if thou wilt hearken diligently unto His voice and obey His will, His riches in glory by Christ Jesus shall be thine.

### **Deuteronomy 28:13**

#### **Lead the Way - Faith's Checkbook**

"The Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail."—Deuteronomy 28:13

IF we obey the Lord, He will compel our adversaries to see that His blessing rests upon us. Though this be a promise of the law, yet it stands good to the people of God; for Jesus has removed the curse, but He has established the blessing.

It is for saints to lead the way among men by holy influence: they are not to be the tail, to be dragged hither and thither by others. We must not yield to the spirit of the age, but compel the age to do homage to Christ. If the Lord be with us, we shall not crave toleration for religion, but we shall seek to seat it on the throne of society. Has not the Lord Jesus made His people priests? Surely they are to teach and must not be learners from the philosophies of unbelievers. Are we not in Christ made kings to reign upon the earth? How, then, can we be the servants of custom, the slaves of human opinion?

Have you, dear friend, taken up your true position for Jesus? Too many are silent because diffident, if not cowardly. Should we allow the name of the Lord Jesus to be kept in the background? Should our religion drag along as a tail? Should it not rather lead the way and be the ruling force with ourselves and others?

### **Deuteronomy 28:45–48; Luke 21:5–6 The Mighty Fall**

As the great liner Titanic was being loaded at Southampton, England, a lady passenger stopped a deckhand who was carrying luggage aboard and asked if the ship really was unsinkable. Yes, he assured her, it was. God himself couldn't sink the great ship. Yet, an instant's brush against a North Atlantic iceberg buckled the ship's massive steel plates and ripped open her starboard side to tons of ocean water. In just two hours and forty minutes she plunged to the ocean depths with 1,500 people still aboard. We invariably make mistakes—we certainly fail, and we will surely die. Everything on earth comes to an end: prosperity, health, life. When it all ends, only those whose boast has been in the cross of Christ will have anything to boast about. - Speaker's sourcebook of new illustrations

### **Deuteronomy 29:14-29**

#### **Have You Turned?**

In May of 1998, the failure of a control processor on board the Galaxy IV communications satellite caused it to rotate out of position and turn away from the earth. In an instant, 40 million pagers became useless pieces of plastic. Hundreds of retail stores and scores of radio and TV stations were also affected—all because one satellite turned the wrong way.

How many people would be affected if you or I turned away from God? Few of us realize the extent of our influence, but our



obedience to God is vital because of our role in the church (1 Cor. 12:12-17) and the world (1 Pet. 2:9-12).

God charged His Old Testament people to be faithful to His covenant "so that there may not be among you man or woman or family or tribe, whose heart turns away today from the Lord our God, ... and that there may not be among you a root bearing bitterness or wormwood" (Dt. 29:18). A New Testament writer recalled this when he said we should be careful "lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled" (Heb. 12:15).

Are you out of position today? Turn back to God. Stay in contact with Him. You never know how many lives will be influenced by your decision. — by David C. McCasland (Our Daily Bread)

#### THINKING IT OVER

What might cause me to turn away from God?  
Is there any "root of bitterness" in my life?  
Is there anything I need to confess to God right now?

**True repentance turns from the wrong and returns to the right.**

#### **Deuteronomy 29:29**

##### **On the Brink**

The Book of Deuteronomy is a covenant-treaty with stipulations, blessings and curses for the Israelites as they stood on the brink of entering the Promised Land. It describes the way God's people were to live in their new land. They had the promises of God's help, but the future still was unknown to them.

In Deuteronomy 29:29, Moses told them that the future was unknown to them but known to God. What they knew is what He had revealed. They had His Word. God had told them what they needed to know. Now they needed to follow His instructions.

We are so much like Israel. The future is as unknown to us as it was to them. We have God's Word and it tells us how we are to live. Our responsibility is to follow His instructions. This requires us to trust and obey. Demanding to know is not an option because "the secret things belong to the LORD our God" (Dt 29:29).

Life is always lived on the brink of the future. Our knowledge is severely limited, but we do have the revelation of God in His Word. So give obedient attention to it as you, like Israel, live on the brink.

As the saying goes, we may not know what the future holds but we know who holds the future. Ask God for peace in your heart as you look ahead. (**Back to the Bible - Woodrow Kroll**)

#### **Deuteronomy 29:29**

##### **SUFFICIENT TRUTH**

"The secret things belong to the LORD but those things which are revealed belong to us" (Deuteronomy 29:29)

At lunch one day, W. Wilbert Welch, chancellor of the Grand Rapids Baptist College and Seminary, told a story about one of his professors, Dr. Brokenshire, a godly and gifted scholar with a thorough knowledge of Scripture. Welch recalled...

"I remember our first day in class. The professor didn't know us by name yet, so he referred to some cards in his hand. Looking up, he said, 'Mr. Green?' The student identified himself. 'Mr. Green, do you have any problems with the Bible?' 'No, sir,' replied the confident new student. Brokenshire replied, 'Then why don't you read it? You will.'"

A thoughtful reading of the Bible will raise questions. Peter said that Paul's writings contained "some things hard to understand" (2 Pet. 3:16). Sometimes we see only one side of a truth, or we come across what seems like a contradiction. Then there are the bigger problems—divine election and human freedom, the origin of evil, the reason for pain and suffering. But these perplexities need not undermine our confidence in the Bible.

God wants us to study the Bible, and a questioning mind is fertile soil for learning. Some things, however, will remain a mystery, and we must humbly accept God's right to withhold knowledge from us. No matter what problems we have in understanding the Bible, we can thank Him that He has revealed sufficient truth to win our hearts, guide our steps, and bring us to heaven. —D. J. De Haan (Our Daily Bread)

**Our difficulties in understanding the Bible  
are not due to divine error but to human ignorance**

## Deuteronomy 29:29

### Secrets

After reading a short passage of Scripture, a preacher took off his glasses, slammed his Bible shut, and said, "This morning I intend to explain the unexplainable, find out the undefinable, ponder over the imponderable, and unscrew the inscrutable."

That's a rather bold claim, for we read in Deuteronomy 29:29 that God has secrets He keeps to Himself. One of them is our future. Moses was reminding a new generation of Israelites of God's covenant to establish them as His people in the Promised Land (29:13). Moses also warned that they would be uprooted if they disobeyed (vv.25-28). They were not to speculate about how their future would unfold; rather they were to concentrate on living in obedience to God's revealed law.

There is a broader purpose, however, for the "secret things" that belong to God. He is infinite and we are not. Therefore, He doesn't give us answers to all the "whys" of His ways. He has revealed, though, how we today can know Him personally by trusting Jesus as our Savior, and how we can live wisely by entrusting our future to Him as Lord.

Although we will still have many questions, we can be sure that God's secrets are always designed for our good (Romans 8:28). — by Dennis J. De Haan (Our Daily Bread)

When the future is dark and we can't see what's next,  
Of the Lord we make childish demands;  
We cannot know all, our minds are too small,  
We must leave all our "whys" in His hands. —Carbaugh

**We can trust our all-knowing God for the unknown future.**

## Deuteronomy 29:29

The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but the things that are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.—Deut. 29.29

The fourth discourse of Moses was concerned with the covenant, and urged the nation to be true to it. Here we should notice that the first verse of Deut 29 in our version is the last verse of Deut 28 in the Hebrew Bible. The statement "These are the words of the covenant," refers to what has already been uttered. Moses based his appeal on Jehovah's deliverances, from Egypt, through the wilderness, and in the day of battle. The appeal was made to all classes of the community; to the rulers, and the people; to men, women, and children; and also to servants. In graphic and burning words he again described the results of breaking the covenant. Then, recognizing the limitations of the people, and their inability to understand all the ways of God, he enunciated this great principle of life. It is of far-reaching application and of perpetual importance. To the mind of man, in all life there are secret things, things veiled, things which cannot be explained. These things are not veiled to God. He knows them. To the mind of man there are things revealed, that is unveiled, things which are known. If man will obey them, he will be brought into right relation with the secret things, and progressively pass to apprehension of them, while all the time they, the secret things, co-operate with him for his perfecting. In the apprehension and practice of this law of life, man finds his way into strength. (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

## Deuteronomy 29:29 H A Ironside

Much that was secret in Moses' day has been revealed now. Jesus said, "I will utter things kept secret from the foundation of the world" (Matthew 13:35). All that has been revealed is for us, and should challenge our hearts to enter into and enjoy. There are still mysteries that we cannot solve and that God has not been pleased, as yet, to reveal, but some day all will be made plain. "In the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished" (Revelation 10:7). Till then we are to appropriate in faith all that has been unfolded, as we study the Word in dependence on the Holy Spirit.

O teach me, Lord, that I may teach  
The precious things Thou dost impart;  
And wing my words, that they may reach  
The hidden depths of many a heart.  
O give Thine own sweet rest to me,  
That I may speak with soothing power  
A word in season, as from Thee,  
To weary ones in needful hour.

—F. R. Havergal

## Deuteronomy 30:11

This commandment which I command thee this day, it is not too hard for thee, neither is it far off. Deut. 30:11

Continuing his discourse concerning the covenant, Moses uttered words thrilling with tenderness, and urgent in their appeal. In the first ten verses of this chapter we have the long look ahead of love. He seems to have seen the people in the conditions which he had told them would result from their disobedience. He looked on, and saw them scattered, far off from the land which they were then about to enter. Yet he saw them returning to God as the result of the sore discipline through which they would pass. But, best of all, he saw God ready to receive and pardon them. It was a great prophetic evangel, the value of which Israel has even yet not learned, but the message of which is true for her to-day. Then, renewing his appeal, he uttered these particular words. They constitute a statement of the reasonableness of the commandments of God. His law is never too hard for man. It is based upon God's knowledge of human nature. He asks of man nothing other than the true realization of his own nature. Every word of the Divine law is an interpretation of human life. When a man breaks the law of God, he is not sinning against a requirement superimposed upon him, and for the doing of which he is not fitted. He is sinning against his own life. Moreover, the law of God is easy because it is made known. Man is not left to grope in the dark mysteries of his own being, seeking for it. Over against those mysteries, God has made the light of His revealed will to shine. As a man walks in that light, he is walking according to his deepest powers and possibilities. (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

## Deuteronomy 30:1

### Do Angels Sleep?

The word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it. —Deuteronomy 30:14

A friend of mine has a 5-year-old daughter who is on her way to becoming a theologian. One day she asked her father, "Do angels sleep?" After pondering the theological dimensions of her question, he answered, "Yes, I think they might." His daughter moved in with a follow-up question, "Well, then, how do they get their pajamas on over their wings?"

We may be more like that little girl than we think. We never seem to outgrow asking interesting questions that do not need to be answered. It's healthy to be inquisitive, but it isn't healthy to obsess over matters that don't really matter. Such questions may sidetrack us from our faith.

What we need to know about God and His will for us is clearly spelled out in Scripture. The words He spoke through Moses to His people are true for us today. "For this commandment which I command you today is not too mysterious for you, nor is it far off... But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it" (Deuteronomy 30:11,14).

The Bible isn't a riddle; it's a revelation. It tells us all we need to know to be all that God wants us to be in every situation in life. —Haddon Robinson (Our Daily Bread)

God's Word reveals what we should know  
To live for Him each day;  
His principles we must commit  
To study and obey. —Sper

**The Bible is as wise in what it leaves unsaid  
as in what it says.**

## Deuteronomy 30:11-20 | Choose Life

What is God's will for my life? The question haunted me when I was growing up. What if I couldn't find it? What if I didn't recognize it? God's will seemed like a needle in a haystack. Hidden. Obscured by lookalikes. Outnumbered by counterfeits.

But my view of God's will was wrong because my view of God was wrong. God takes no pleasure in seeing us lost, wandering, searching. He wants us to know His will. He makes it clear, and He makes it simple. He doesn't even make it multiple-choice. He gives just two choices: "life and good" or "death and evil" (Deut. 30:15). In case the best choice isn't obvious, He even says which one to choose: "Choose life" (v.19). To choose life is to choose God Himself and obey His Word.

When Moses addressed the Israelites for the last time, he pleaded with them to make the right choice by observing "all the words of this law... Because it is your life" (32:46-47). God's will for us is life. His Word is life. And Jesus is the Word. God may not give a prescription for every decision, but He gave us a perfect example to follow—Jesus. The right choice may not be easy, but when the Word is our guide and worship is our goal, God will grant us the wisdom to make life-affirming choices.

Lord Jesus, we know that true wisdom comes  
from leaning on You. Help us to trust in  
You and to seek Your face and Your will  
that we find in Your life-giving Word.

**The evidence of God's guidance can be seen more clearly by looking back than by looking forward.**

### **Deuteronomy 30:15-20**

#### **The Choice**

You've heard the infamous name of John Wilkes Booth. He assassinated President Abraham Lincoln in 1865. But have you heard about Edwin Booth, John's eldest brother? Edwin, a well-known actor, was waiting at a Jersey City train station when he saw someone slip and fall off the platform. Edwin quickly grabbed the man's collar and pulled him to safety—rescuing him from serious injury or death. Who was the man he saved? Abraham Lincoln's son Robert, a soldier in the Civil War.

How ironic that the man who saved Lincoln's son had a brother who would soon kill the president. One saved a life; one took a life. One chose life; the other chose death.

The Lord gave His people a choice between life and death: They could love Him and obey His commands (Deut. 30:16), or they could worship and serve other gods (Dt 30:17). He told them, "I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life" (Dt 30:19).

We too have a choice between life and death. We can receive Jesus as our Savior and live with Him forever, or we can reject Jesus and be in darkness forever without Him. The best choice is clear. Receive God's gift of His Son Jesus. Choose life! —Anne Cetas (Our Daily Bread)

The choice we make determines our  
Eternal destination;  
One leads to everlasting life;  
The other, condemnation. —Sper

**The choices you make today  
will determine your tomorrows**

### **Deuteronomy 30:3**

#### **Why Remain Captive** - Faith's Checkbook

"The Lord thy God will turn thy captivity."—Deuteronomy 30:3

GOD'S own people may sell themselves into captivity by sin. A very bitter fruit is this of an exceeding bitter root. What a bondage it is when the child of God is sold under sin, held in chains by Satan, deprived of his liberty, robbed of his power in prayer and his delight in the Lord! Let us watch that we come not into such bondage; but if this has already happened to us, let us by no means despair.

But we cannot be held in slavery forever. The Lord Jesus has paid too high a price for our redemption to leave us in the enemy's hand. The way to freedom is, "Return unto the Lord thy God." Where we first found salvation, we shall find it again. At the foot of Christ's cross confessing sin, we shall find pardon and deliverance. Moreover, the Lord will have us obey His voice according to all that He has commanded us, and we must do this with all our heart and all our soul, and then our captivity shall end.

Often depression of spirit and great misery of soul are removed as soon as we quit our idols and bow ourselves in obedience before the living God. We need not be captives. We may return to Zion's citizenship, and that speedily. Lord, turn our captivity!

### **Deuteronomy 30:6**

#### **Mark of Covenant Grace** - Faith's Checkbook

"And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live."—Deuteronomy 30:6

HERE we read of the true circumcision.

Note the author of it: "The Lord thy God." He alone can deal effectually with our hearts and take away their carnality and pollution. To make us love God with all our hearts and souls is a miracle of grace which only the Holy Ghost can work. We must look to the Lord alone for this and never be satisfied with anything short of it.

Note where this circumcision is wrought: it is not of the flesh, but of the spirit. It is the essential mark of the covenant of grace. Love to God is the indelible token of the chosen seed; by this secret seal, the election of grace is certified to the believer. We must see to it that we trust in no outward ritual, but are sealed in heart by the operation of the Holy Ghost.

Note what the result is: "that thou mayest live." To be carnally minded is death. In the overcoming of the flesh we find life and peace. If we mind the things of the Spirit, we shall live. Oh, that Jehovah, our God, may complete His gracious work upon our inner natures, that in the fullest and highest sense we may live unto the Lord.

### **Deuteronomy 30:11-20 Choose Life**

Choose life, that both you and your descendants may live; that you may love the Lord your God, that you may obey His voice. — Deuteronomy 30:19-20

What is God's will for my life? The question haunted me when I was growing up. What if I couldn't find it? What if I didn't recognize it? God's will seemed like a needle in a haystack. Hidden. Obscured by look-a-likes. Outnumbered by counterfeits.

But my view of God's will was wrong because my view of God was wrong. God takes no pleasure in seeing us lost, wandering, searching. He wants us to know His will. He makes it clear, and He makes it simple. He doesn't even make it multiple-choice. He gives just two choices: "life and good" or "death and evil" (Deut. 30:15). In case the best choice isn't obvious, He even says which one to choose: "Choose life" (Deut. 30:19). To choose life is to choose God Himself and obey His Word.

When Moses addressed the Israelites for the last time, he pleaded with them to make the right choice by observing "all the words of this law... Because it is your life" (32:46-47). God's will for us is life. His Word is life. And Jesus is the Word. God may not give a prescription for every decision, but He gave us a perfect example to follow—Jesus. The right choice may not be easy, but when the Word is our guide and worship is our goal, God will grant us the wisdom to make life-affirming choices.

Lord Jesus, we know that true wisdom comes

from leaning on You. Help us to trust in

You and to seek Your face and Your will

that we find in Your life-giving Word.

The evidence of God's guidance can be seen more clearly by looking back than by looking forward.

INSIGHT: Today's passage begins with a beautiful statement of how intimately God wants us to know Him. He has not given us commandments that are "too mysterious" or "far off" (Deut. 30:11). This passage ends with the reason His commands are "very near"—that we may love and obey God and enjoy life in Him (Deut. 30:20).

### **Deuteronomy 30:11**

#### **No Fine Print**

Writing in the Wall Street Journal, Missy Sullivan noted that many user agreements, warranties, and disclaimers that come with products are nearly unreadable. Intentionally set in very small type, they actually discourage people from understanding them. Because of this, many people don't read all the terms of contracts before signing them. A university professor of graphic communication pointed to a 32-page user agreement that came with his new smart phone, and said of the company, "They don't want you to read it."

In contrast, the Lord is always seeking to communicate with His people in clear and compelling ways, with no attempt to confuse or deceive. When Moses spoke to the Israelites just before they entered the Promised Land, he said, "For this commandment which I command you today is not too mysterious for you, nor is it far off... I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live" (Deut. 30:11,19).

The Lord wants us to understand His plan and purpose clearly, so that we may love, obey, and cling to Him—for He is our "life and the length of [our] days" (v.20). That's plain to see. — by David C. McCasland (Our Daily Bread)

Father, we want to learn and experience more of who  
You are in our relationship with You. Teach us so that  
we will grow in our understanding of You and  
Your plan for our lives.

**There is no fine print in God's communication with us.**

### **Deuteronomy 30:11–14; 2 Corinthians 4:1–2 No Secret Codes Here**

The Voynich Manuscript is a 204-page volume in an unknown alphabet. It was purchased in 1912 by a British book dealer, who gave copies to anyone wanting to decipher it. Many tried and as many failed. Finally, in 1921, a professor from the University of Pennsylvania said he had broken the manuscript's code: it was the work of Roger Bacon, the thirteenth-century inventor. Though his findings made him a celebrity among scholars at the time, later evidence discredited his theory. In 1969 the manuscript was given to Yale University, where it remains, an enigma to all who view it. God revealed himself with unmistakable clarity, so anyone could understand him. No one can complain that we do not know what is true, right, or moral. The Bible has made itself much too plain for anyone to claim ignorance. It speaks powerfully of judgment against sin but just as forcefully promises forgiveness of sin. No, spiritual ignorance cannot be excused, nor can it be explained on the basis of the Bible's difficulty. The problem is that while the Bible remains a yearly best-seller, it goes largely unread! God has purposely written his book to enchant all levels of intelligence and spiritual growth—what he has written demands to be read. -Speaker's sourcebook of new illustrations

### **Deuteronomy 30:15-20**

#### **The High Cost of Living**

When I was young, I thought the cost of living in my parents' home was too high. Looking back, I laugh at how ridiculous it was to complain. My parents never charged me a cent for living at home. The only "cost" was obedience. I simply had to obey rules like clean up after myself, be polite, tell the truth, and go to church. The rules weren't difficult, but I still had trouble obeying them. My parents didn't kick me out for my disobedience, however. They just kept reminding me that the rules were to protect me, not harm me, and sometimes they made the rules stricter to protect me from myself.

The cost of living in the Promised Land was the same: obedience. In his final address to the nation, Moses reminded the people that the blessings God wanted to give them depended on their obedience (Deut. 30:16). Earlier he had told them that a good life would be determined by obedience: "Observe and obey ... that it may go well with you" (Dt 12:28).

Some people think the Bible has too many rules. I wish they could see that God's commands are for our good; they allow us to live in peace with one another. Obedience is simply the "cost" of being part of God's family on this glorious globe He created and allows us to call home. — by Julie Ackerman Link (Our Daily Bread)

Heavenly Father, may we not see obedience as a  
burden but as a privilege. Help us to be grateful  
for Jesus, who shows us how to live, and for  
the Holy Spirit, who empowers us to obey.

**The Bible is not a burden but a guide to joy-filled living.**

### **Deuteronomy 30:19–20; Acts 16:6–7 On the Turn of a Mere Choice**

On Christmas Day, 1849, a party of twenty-seven wagons broke over a barren ridge and skidded downhill into the desolation southeast of Mt. Whitney. A scorched, tormented land burned before the pioneers. Their caravan decided to split up. One group of bachelors called Jayhawkers went north, and two families and a few single men moved south. In two or three days the Jayhawkers found their way out of the desolate valley. The other group found themselves trapped, trudging through misery day after day only to reach impassable mountains. Two of the men went for help in California. Three hundred miles later, at the nearest store, they acquired supplies and returned for the families. When the survivors finally left the valley, they looked back and muttered, "Good-bye, Death Valley"—an appropriate and lasting name. We need to make our choices carefully, especially those that affect our moral and spiritual lives. God has determined the limits of acceptable behavior, but he gives us the freedom to accept or defy those limits. He gives us the privilege of accepting him freely or rejecting him. And while wisdom would dictate that we exercise our privilege—not our right—the choice is ours. What will it be for us: escape by grace into life or entanglement by self-will in spiritual death? - Speaker's sourcebook of new illustrations

### **Deuteronomy 31:14-30**

## MUSIC'S POWER

Moses wrote this song the same day, and taught it to the children of Israel. Deuteronomy 31:22

A college student was troubled by sinful thoughts. Even though he regularly read his Bible and prayed, he continued to struggle, so he sought help from a Christian counselor.

"What kind of music do you listen to?" asked the counselor. The student said it was secular rock. The counselor then commented, "Think of your mind as a big sheet of paper. Each song you hear is a match burning the edges. You ask God to heal the burn, and He begins applying the salve of His Word. But you keep adding matches. Listen to Christian music and see what happens." The student did, and the truth set to music began to heal his mind.

God combines music's power with truth to draw His people closer to Himself. In Deuteronomy 32, Moses taught a new generation of Israelites a long song of 43 verses. It proclaimed God's faithfulness, but it would also become a witness against them when they settled in the Promised Land and forsook Him. The song's purpose was twofold: It would show the Israelites that God had a right to their love, and it would call them back to

Himself when they had come to the end of their own strength (Dt 30:36-39).

Never underestimate music's power. It can either hinder the Spirit's work or increase your love for Christ. -D J De Haan (Our Daily Bread)

There is a music from above  
That takes away our tears;  
It is God's melody of love--  
It quiets all our fears.  
DJD

**If there's no harmony in your life,  
try changing your tune.**

### Deuteronomy 31:8

#### Lifetime Guarantee

Three years ago I bought a suitcase with a lifetime guarantee. "We don't care who breaks it," the manufacturer said, "we'll repair or replace it free—forever." To its credit, the company repaired it twice, just as promised. But a few weeks ago I learned that the business had filed for bankruptcy and its future was in doubt. If the company goes under, so does the guarantee.

In a world where we can't always depend on guarantees, there is one promise we can trust. Throughout Scripture we find the Lord's pledge to be with His people. In Deuteronomy 31 we read Moses' assuring words to Joshua: "The Lord ... will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed" (v.8).

This promise is repeated in the New Testament: "He Himself has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.' So we may boldly say: 'The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?'" (Hebrews 13:5-6). The promise of God's unfailing presence with us is the key to living with confidence and contentment.

No matter how many pledges are broken by people, God's promises will last through all time and eternity. Because He is eternal, He can give us an eternal guarantee. — by David C. McCasland (Our Daily Bread)

Sweetest of all life's blessings,  
Communion with Christ above,  
Assurance of His presence,  
His matchless, eternal love. —Anon.

**Every promise of God comes with an eternal guarantee.**

### Deuteronomy 31:8

#### God Is in the Front Line - Faith's Checkbook

"The Lord, he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not neither be dismayed."—Deuteronomy 31:8

IN the presence of a great work or a great warfare, here is a text which should help us to buckle on our harness. If Jehovah Himself goes before us, it must be safe to follow. Who can obstruct our progress if the Lord Himself is in the van? Come, brother soldiers, let us make a prompt advance! Why do we hesitate to pass on to victory?

Nor is the Lord before us only; He is with us. Above, beneath, around, within is the omnipotent, omnipresent One. In all time, even to eternity, He will be with us even as He has been. How this should nerve our arm! Dash at it boldly, ye soldiers of the cross, for the Lord of hosts is with us!

Being before us and with us, He will never withdraw His help. He cannot fail in Himself, and He will not fail toward us. He will continue to help us according to our need, even to the end. As He cannot fail us, so He will not forsake us. He will always be both able and willing to grant us strength and succor till fighting days are gone.

Let us not fear nor be dismayed; for the Lord of hosts will go down to the battle with us, will bear the brunt of the fight, and give us the victory.

**Deuteronomy 31:11** (Deuteronomy 17:19)

### **Send Me a Man Who Reads!**

Recently the International Paper Company ran an ad which read in part as follows: "We asked 100 company officers, 'How many magazines, books, and newspapers have you read in the past week?' The total of their answers: magazines, 338; books, 53; newspapers, 1,490. Then we asked 100 men in the same age group whose salaries had never reached \$7,500 a year: 229 magazines for them, and 28 books — about a quarter of a book each. The conclusion is as clear as print: Men who read more achieve more!" Even if their income had failed to rise, their interests had been stretched to new dimensions!

Yes, "send me a man who reads" — and especially one who rates the Bible as the most treasured Book in his library. Secular volumes are valuable, but how sadly lacking is the person who neglects the world's greatest Book — the one that helps us in this life and prepares us for the next.

It is said of Charles Haddon Spurgeon that one Sunday when the time for reading Scripture came, he left the Bible closed. "Some have found fault with me," he said, "contending that I'm too old-fashioned. I am always quoting the Bible and do not say enough about science. Well, there's a poor widow here who has lost her only son. She wants to know if she will ever see him again. Let's turn to science for the answer: Will she see him? Where is he? Does death end all?" There was a long pause. "We are waiting for an answer," he said. "This woman is anxious." Another long pause. "Nothing to say? Then we'll turn to the Book!" Spurgeon clinched his point by reading the wonderful promises concerning Heaven and eternal life. Are you a man who reads? Do you include the most important of all Books? I hope so! Oh, open your heart to His precious Word; Drink deeply its treasures rare. Your soul will be cleansed and your life transformed, By meeting the Savior there! —G. R.

**In all literature there is nothing that compares with the Bible!**

—John Milton

### **Deuteronomy 31:19**

Write ye this song—Deut. 31.19

For forty years Moses had led the people. During that time he had constantly communed with God, and in the course of that communion had received many changes. This was one of the last things he was told to do. He was to write a song, and the purpose of it was distinctly stated. A great song once embodied in the life of a people will remain from generation to generation. In days of disaster it will be a haunting memory testifying to truth concerning God. In days of difficulty it will be a messenger of new courage. In days of victory it will be a means of expression. Songs often remain after commandments are forgotten. Therefore Moses was commanded to write a song and teach it to the people. The song itself is found in our next chapter. This is a very suggestive story, bringing to our hearts anew a sense of the value of poetic expression, and showing that it is also a gift of God. There are people who seem to imagine that if we speak of poetry, we are referring to some-thing speculative, imaginative, probably untrue. As a matter of fact, poetry is the highest method of human language, giving expression, as prose never can, to the deepest and truest things of the soul. The Church is more enriched in her catholic songs, than in all her systematic theologies. In the former she realizes her unity, where-as in the latter she too often creates her divisions. The Wesleys did more for experimental Christianity in their hymns, than in all their printed explanations. A great song is a great possession, and not for Israel only, but for us also this song of Moses is among the most beautiful and most strong. (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

### **Deuteronomy 32:1-14**



## FREE-FALLING

"The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." - Deuteronomy 33:27

In the tender song of Moses found in today's Bible reading, God is portrayed as a dedicated mother eagle who can be trusted by her young, even in the scary experience of learning to fly (Deuteronomy 32:11).

A mother eagle builds a comfortable nest for her young, padding it with feathers from her own breast.

But God-given instinct that builds that secure nest also forces the eaglets out of it before long. Eagles are made to fly, and love will not fail to teach them. Only then will they become what they are meant to be.

So one day the mother eagle will disturb the twigs of the nest, making it an uncomfortable place to stay. Then she will pick up a perplexed eaglet, soar into the sky, and drop it. The little bird will begin to free-fall. Where is Mama now? She is not far away. Quickly she will swoop under and catch the fledgling on one strong wing. She will repeat this exercise until each eaglet is capable of flying on its own.

Are you afraid of free-falling? Remember, God will fly to your rescue and spread His everlasting arms beneath you. He will also teach you something new and wonderful through it. Falling into God's arms is nothing to be afraid of. - J E Yoder (Our Daily Bread)

He will ever keep your soul,  
What would harm, He will control:  
In the home and by the way  
He will keep you day by day.

**God's love does not always keep us from trials  
but always sees us through them.**

### Deuteronomy 32:3-4

#### A Song to Remember

I was delighted when I received a free gift in the mail—a CD of Scripture set to music. After listening to it several times, some of the melodies took root in my mind. Before long, I could sing the words to a couple of verses in the book of Psalms without the help of the recording.

Music can help us recall words and ideas we might otherwise forget. God knew that the Israelites would forget Him when they entered the Promised Land (Deut. 31:20). They would forsake Him, turn to idols, and trouble would follow (vv.16-18). Because of this, He asked Moses to compose a song and teach it to the Israelites so they could remember their past closeness with Him and the sin that hurt their relationship (31:19-22). Perhaps most important, God wanted His nation to recall His character: "[God] is the Rock, His work is perfect; for all His ways are justice, a God of truth and without injustice; righteous and upright is He" (32:4).

Consider what God might want you to remember about Him today. Is it His power, His holiness, His love, or His faithfulness? Can you think of a song that celebrates God's character? Sing it in your heart to the Lord (Eph. 5:19).— by Jennifer Benson Schuldt (Our Daily Bread)

Give me a spirit of praise, dear Lord,  
That I may adore Your name,  
Sing praises from the depths of a grateful heart  
To the One who is always the same. —Dawe

**Remembering God's goodness puts a song in your heart.**

### Deuteronomy 32:4

#### Is God Unfair?

A couple I knew some years ago questioned God's fairness after both of their school-aged children were killed in auto accidents within a period of 3 years. Like most parents, they had anticipated much happiness with their son and daughter. Their friends saw their own children graduate from high school, but these parents were deprived of that joy.

I wonder if the family of the apostle James may have questioned God's fairness too. He was executed, but Peter was miraculously rescued from the same fate (Acts 12:2,5-11).

It's true that life is often unfair. Some seem to be blessed with far more opportunities than others, but let's not blame God. These injustices are here because mankind's sin has invaded God's creation. The Lord allows them, but He has not caused them. He grieves over them more than we do, loves us equally, has made eternal salvation available to all, and will judge everyone by the principle: "To whom much is given, from him much will be required" (Luke 12:48).

At the end of time, the Lord will right all the wrongs of the ages, and even the people most deprived and mistreated in this life will be satisfied with God's justice. Ultimately, no one will have reason to accuse Him of being unfair. — by Herbert Vander Lugt (Our Daily Bread)

Life can be lived with joy and song  
Amid its heartache and its pain,  
For one day God will right each wrong—  
With peace and justice He will reign. —D. De Haan

**We can endure life's wrongs, knowing that God will make all things right.**

#### **Deuteronomy 32:4**

##### **Not Fair**

When I was coaching high school freshman girls basketball in the fall of 2005, I was surprised at how many times I heard, "That's not fair!"

The girls' motivation seemed to depend on whether or not they thought what I asked them to do was fair. If I asked some girls to do a defensive drill while others shot free throws, I heard, "Not fair." If I allowed one group to play offense longer than another group, I heard, "Not fair."

So many situations in life shout, "Not fair!" I observe Christian couples who struggle to have babies while others are blessed with children and then abuse them. I look at families whose children are all alive and well, while I go through life without one of mine. I see friends who long to serve God but can't because of health issues.

It's then that I must go back to a basic truth. We are not the arbiters of fairness. God is, and He knows far more than we do about His plans and purposes. The question isn't about fairness. In the end, it's about trust in a faithful God who knows what He is doing. "He is the Rock, His work is perfect; for all His ways are justice" (Deut. 32:4).

Life will never look fair. But when we trust God, we always know that He is faithful. —Dave Branon (Our Daily Bread)

If you feel that blessings pass you by,  
And for you life seems a bit unfair,  
Just remember, Christ was born to die,  
And in His great salvation you can share. —Hess

**Life is not always fair,  
but God is always faithful.**

#### **Deuteronomy 32:5**

**"The spot of his children."** — Deuteronomy 32:5 (Morning and Evening)

What is the secret spot which infallibly betokens the child of God? It were vain presumption to decide this upon our own judgment; but God's word reveals it to us, and we may tread surely where we have revelation to be our guide. Now, we are told concerning our Lord, "to as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to as many as believed on his name." Then, if I have received Christ Jesus into my heart, I am a child of God. That reception is described in the same verse as believing on the name of Jesus Christ. If, then, I believe on Jesus Christ's name—that is, simply from my heart trust myself with the crucified, but now exalted, Redeemer, I am a member of the family of the Most High. Whatever else I may not have, if I have this, I have the privilege to become a child of God. Our Lord Jesus puts it in another shape. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." Here is the matter in a nutshell. Christ appears as a shepherd to his own sheep, not to others. As soon as he appears, his own sheep perceive him—they trust him, they are prepared to follow him; he knows them, and they know him—there is a mutual knowledge—there is a constant connection between them. Thus the one mark, the sure mark, the infallible mark of regeneration and adoption is a hearty faith in the appointed Redeemer. Reader, are you in doubt, are you uncertain whether you bear the secret mark of God's children? Then let not an hour pass over your head till you have said, "Search me, O God, and know my heart." Trifle not here, I adjure you! If you must trifle anywhere, let it be about some secondary matter: your health, if you will, or the title deeds of

your estate; but about your soul, your never-dying soul and its eternal destinies, I beseech you to be in earnest. Make sure work for eternity.

### **Deuteronomy 32:7-12 Reframing The Picture**

As an eagle stirs up its nest, ... spreading out its wings, ... so the Lord alone led [Jacob]. —Deuteronomy 32:11-12

For 3 months I had a ringside seat— or should I say a bird’s-eye view—of God’s amazing handiwork. Ninety feet above the floor of Norfolk Botanical Garden, workers installed a webcam focused on the nest of a family of bald eagles, and online viewers were allowed to watch.

When the eggs hatched, Mama and Papa Eagle were attentive to their offspring, taking turns hunting for food and guarding the nest. But one day when the eaglets still looked like fuzzballs with beaks, both parents disappeared. I worried that harm had come to them.

My concern was unfounded. The webcam operator enlarged the camera angle, and there was Mama Eagle perched on a nearby branch.

As I pondered this “reframed” picture, I thought of times when I have feared that God had abandoned me. The view in the forest heights of Virginia reminded me that my vision is limited. I see only a small part of the entire scene.

Moses used eagle imagery to describe God. As eagles carry their young, God carries His people (Deut. 32:11-12). Despite how it may seem, the Lord “is not far from each one of us” (Acts 17:27). This is true even when we feel abandoned.

Under His wings I am safely abiding;

Though the night deepens and tempests are wild,

Still I can trust Him—I know He will keep me;

He has redeemed me and I am His child. —Cushing

Because the Lord is watching over us, we don’t have to fear the dangers around us.

INSIGHT: Today’s reading provides us with a wonderful template for instructing the next generation in the provision of God. The entire “Song of Moses” extends from Deuteronomy 31:30–32:43. In it we see praise given for the God of Israel in spite of the nation’s periodic lapse into disobedience. In His good providence, God created for Himself a chosen people whom He has both redeemed and preserves. This theme of divine love that will not let go is to be reiterated to each new generation so that God’s covenant people may continue in relationship with their Creator and Sustainer. We learn from the New Testament that through Christ’s atoning work on the cross, this covenant has been extended to all who believe (Rom. 5:6-11).

### **Deuteronomy 32:9**

**“The Lord’s portion is his people.”** — Deuteronomy 32:9 (Morning and Evening)

How are they his? By his own sovereign choice. He chose them, and set his love upon them. This he did altogether apart from any goodness in them at the time, or any goodness which he foresaw in them. He had mercy on whom he would have mercy, and ordained a chosen company unto eternal life; thus, therefore, are they his by his unconstrained election.

They are not only his by choice, but by purchase. He has bought and paid for them to the utmost farthing, hence about his title there can be no dispute. Not with corruptible things, as with silver and gold, but with the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord’s portion has been fully redeemed. There is no mortgage on his estate; no suits can be raised by opposing claimants, the price was paid in open court, and the Church is the Lord’s freehold for ever. See the blood-mark upon all the chosen, invisible to human eye, but known to Christ, for “the Lord knoweth them that are his”; he forgetteth none of those whom he has redeemed from among men; he counts the sheep for whom he laid down his life, and remembers well the Church for which he gave himself.

They are also his by conquest. What a battle he had in us before we would be won! How long he laid siege to our hearts! How often he sent us terms of capitulation! but we barred our gates, and fenced our walls against him. Do we not remember that glorious hour when he carried our hearts by storm? When he placed his cross against the wall, and scaled our ramparts, planting on our strongholds the blood-red flag of his omnipotent mercy? Yes, we are, indeed, the conquered captives of his omnipotent love. Thus chosen, purchased, and subdued, the rights of our divine possessor are inalienable: we rejoice that we never can be our own; and we desire, day by day, to do his will, and to show forth his glory.

### **Deuteronomy 32:9a**

April 13 - F B Meyer - Our Daily Walk

## GOD'S HERITAGE IN HUMANITY

"The Lord's portion is His people."-- **Deuteronomy 32:9.**

"According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love."-- Eph1:4.

WE DO not become God's property when we consecrate ourselves to Him, but only awake to see that we are already His, and assume that manner of life which they should live who are not their own, but have been bought with a price (1Co6:19-20). The three symbols of God's care of His own, as enumerated by Moses in his Song, are exquisitely beautiful.

"He kept him as the apple of his eye" (Deuteronomy 32:10). Almost instinctively we raise our hand to protect the eyes if anything threatens us, and it is thus with God's care to us. How carefully the eye is preserved from impurity and evil by the strong bony socket in which it is set, by the eyebrows and lashes which catch the dust and grit, by the eyelid closing over, and the tear-water washing it. Thus the soul which God loves may pass through the evil of the world without taint or soil, because of His gracious keeping power.

"As an eagle" (Deuteronomy 32:11). When the young eaglets are able to fly, but hover about their nest, unwilling to venture from the cliff, the mother-bird breaks up their eerie home, drives the fledglings forth on to the air, compels them to use their wings, flutters beneath to catch them if they are inclined to fall, and bears them up on her strong wings until they can fly alone. So it is in life that sometimes God has to break up the happy conditions to which we have been accustomed from our birth, and drive us forth. But it is for our good since only so can we acquire the glorious powers of sustained flight on the wings of the wind.

Divine leading (Deuteronomy 32:12). God teaches us to go as a mother her little child; His hand leads and guides our tottering steps (Hos11:3-4).

The Epistle to the Ephesians gives us a list of the blessings, like a string of pearls, which God our Father, the Owner and Lover of our souls, heaps upon us, and is waiting for us to appropriate and use (Deuteronomy 1:3). His love to us is no passing fancy, but the carrying out of an eternal purpose. He redeems us from the love and power of sin; He abounds towards us with the riches of His grace; we are kept and sealed by the Holy Spirit; and ultimately shall be presented before Him, without blemish, to the praise of His glory.

PRAYER: What can I lack if I have Thee, Who art all Good? Verily, the heart is restless, until it rest in Thee alone. AMEN.

### **Deuteronomy 32:11-12**

A farmer noticed a bird busily building a nest. Unfortunately, the spot was in a heap of dead branches recently pruned from some trees. Realizing that this was a dangerous place for hatching a brood, the farmer destroyed the nest. The next day, the persistent mother-to-be tried again, and for a second time the farmer thwarted her efforts. On the third day the bird finally began constructing her nest on a limb near the man's kitchen door. This time he let it remain. The unsafe pile of branches from which he had twice driven her was burned long before the bird's eggs were hatched. We too find that at times our plans are thwarted. We wonder why God would break up the earthly nests we have struggled and worked so hard to build. But were we able to see as He sees, we would know that He seeks for us a higher destiny, a place of greater security and provision for our needs. —H. G. Bosch (Our Daily Bread)

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Because the Lord is watching over us, we don't have to fear the dangers around us.

### **Deuteronomy 32:29**

#### **Plan Your Departure!**

Oh, that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end! Deuteronomy 32:29

All of us need to make specific plans for our departure from this life. If we don't, we can be left in a predicament similar to that of a young man who became stranded in an Alaskan wilderness. His adventure began in the spring of 1981 when he was flown into the desolate north country to photograph the natural beauty and mysteries of the tundra. He had photo equipment, 500 rolls of film, several firearms, and 1400 pounds of provisions. As the months passed, the entries in his diary, which at first detailed his wonder and fascination with the wildlife around him, turned into a pathetic record of a nightmare. In August he wrote,

“I think I should have used more foresight about arranging my departure. I'll soon find out.”

He waited and waited, but no one came to his rescue. In November he died in a nameless valley, by a nameless lake, 225 miles northeast of Fairbanks. An investigation revealed that he had carefully mapped out his venture, but had made no provision to be flown out of the area.

In Deuteronomy 32 we read that the Israelites made a similar mistake. For a while they had all they needed, but it soon became obvious that they had given no thought to the outcome of worshipping false gods and living for their own enjoyment. They failed to consider “their latter end.”

Have you thought about your exit from life? Trusting Christ as Savior and living for Him each day is the only way to be sure we have prepared for our departure. -M. R. De Haan II (Our Daily Bread)

O Lord, You'd have us ponder this,  
One truth You'd have us see—  
It's in this life we chart our course  
For all eternity.-D.J.D.

**You can't repent too soon,  
for you know not how soon it may be too late.**

### **Deuteronomy 32:35**

#### **AWAKENED BY VISIONS OF HELL**

America's greatest theologian is often identified as Jonathan Edwards, a New England pastor of the 1700s. Edwards was brilliant. At age six he studied Latin. He entered Yale when not quite thirteen and graduated when barely fifteen. He was ordained at age nineteen, taught at Yale by twenty, and later became president of Princeton. Harvard granted him both a bachelor's and a master's degree on the same day.

But he is best known for Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God—the most famous sermon in American history.

He preached it on Sunday, July 8, 1741, while ministering in tiny Enfield, Connecticut. A group of women had spent the previous night praying for revival. When Edwards rose to speak, he quietly announced that his text was Deuteronomy 32:35, “... their foot shall slide in due time.” This “hellfire and brimstone” approach was somewhat a departure for Edwards. Of his one thousand written sermons, less than a dozen are of this type.

Edwards neither gestured nor raised his voice. He spoke softly and simply, warning the unconverted that they were dangling over hell like a spider over the fire. O sinner! consider the fearful danger. The unconverted are now walking over the pit of hell on a rotten

covering, and there are innumerable places in this covering so weak that it will not bear their weight, and these places are not seen.

Edwards' voice was suddenly lost amid cries and commotion from the crowd. He paused, appealing for calm. Then he concluded: Let everyone that is out of Christ, now awake and fly from the wrath to come. The wrath of Almighty God is now undoubtedly hanging over a great part of this congregation. Let every one fly out of Sodom.

Strong men held to pews and posts, feeling they were sliding into hell. Others shook uncontrollably and rolled on the floor. Throughout the night cries of men and women were heard throughout the village, begging God to save them. Five hundred were converted that evening, sparking a revival that swept thousands into the kingdom.

### **The Great Awakening had come.**

[\(Nelson's Complete Book of Stories, Illustrations, and Quotes. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers\)](#)

#### **Deuteronomy 32:44-52**

##### **A Bitter Attitude**

Great emphasis is being placed on living longer and better. Advances in medical science are making it possible for more and more people. Yet in spite of this, none of us can avoid growing old. One day aging will overtake all of us, and our bodies will shut down.

What is preventable, however, is an attitude of bitterness and regret as we grow older. Look at the life of Moses. When he was 120 years old, he stood with the Israelites before they crossed the Jordan River and entered the Promised Land. He could not go with them because he had disobeyed the Lord when in anger he struck the rock in the wilderness (Numbers 20:12,24).

How easily Moses could have slipped into a self-pitying and resentful frame of mind! Had he not borne the burden of a stubborn and stiff-necked people for 40 years? Had he not interceded for them time after time? Yet at the end of his life he praised the Lord and urged a new generation of Israelites to obey Him (Deuteronomy 32:1-4,45-47).

As we grow older, we can dwell on the failures and hardships of our past, or we can remember God's faithfulness, accept His discipline, and keep looking to the future in faith. It's the only way to avoid a bitter attitude.

—Dennis J. De Haan (Our Daily Bread)

Though wrinkles and weakness come with age  
And life with its stress takes its toll,  
Yet beauty and vigor can still be seen  
When Jesus gives peace to our soul. —D. De Haan

**We cannot avoid growing old;  
but we can avoid growing cold.**

#### **Deuteronomy 32:47**

It is no vain thing for you: because it is your life—Deut. 32:47

These words were addressed by Moses to the people after he had repeated the song to them. He referred to the law as it was interpreted by the song. Let us then glance at the song. It opens with a call to attention and a statement concerning its nature. It is a song concerning the name of Jehovah (verses Dt 32:1-3a). Then, in brief but pregnant sentences, the song sets forth the glories of the name as it celebrates the greatness, the perfection, the justice, the faithfulness of God (Dt 32:3b, Dt 32:4). Then in sudden contrast, and in short, sharp fashion, it describes the people in their unworthiness (Dt 32:5). It then becomes an appeal, calling upon the people to remember, and merges into a description, full of beauty, of the tender government of God. It is a wonderful revelation of the fact that love is the inspiration of law (Dt 32:6-14). In strange contrast again the song becomes a wail as the unfaithfulness of the people is described, beginning with the words, "But Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked" (Dt 32:15-18). Such unfaithfulness had resulted in discipline which the song describes (Dt 32:19-28). Then it breaks out into lament. "Oh, that they were wise," and describes the blessings which follow obedience (Dt 32:29-43). That is merely an analysis. Let the song be studied by its simple aid, and it will be found how wonderfully it was calculated to teach men that the will of God for them is indeed no vain thing, but their very life. (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

#### **Deuteronomy 33:3 - H A Ironside**

Here God's saints are seen in three places. They are in His heart: "He loves the people!" How precious to dwell in the bosom of infinite love! What rest in the hour of strife and in the day of distress! They are also in His hand—the place of security as our Lord

tells us in John 10:27–30, whence none can pluck them. Last of all, they are at His feet—the place of discipleship, learning His mind and will that they may walk in His ways. How abundant the provision which He has made for the comfort, security and instruction of all His redeemed ones!

Low at Thy feet, Lord Jesus,  
This is the place for me;  
There I have learned sweet lessons,  
Truth that has set me free.  
Free from myself, Lord Jesus,  
Free from the ways of men,  
Chains of thought that once bound me  
Never shall bind again.  
None but Thyself, Lord Jesus,  
Conquered my wayward will;  
But for Thy grace, my Saviour  
I had been wayward still.

## **In His Hands**

### **Deuteronomy 33:3**

"All His saints are in Your hand". --Deuteronomy 33:3

On his deathbed, British preacher Charles Simeon smiled brightly and asked the people gathered in his room, "What do you think especially gives me comfort at this time?"

When they all remained silent, he exclaimed, "The creation! I ask myself, 'Did Jehovah create the world or did I?' He did! Now if He made the world and all the rolling spheres of the universe, He certainly can take care of me. Into Jesus' hands I can safely commit my spirit!"

Hudson Taylor, founder of China Inland Mission, in the closing months of his life said to a friend, "I am so weak. I can't read my Bible. I can't even pray. I can only lie still in God's arms like a little child and trust."

Both Simeon and Taylor knew that the almighty God who created the universe was holding them in His hands. Moses had the same assurance when he blessed the children of Israel before he died (Deut. 33). They could face the future with confidence because the God who had delivered them would also preserve them.

We certainly need not be fearful, then, as we enter a new year. God will never forsake His redeemed children. We can rejoice that our great Creator holds us in His hands. And that's true for every child of God. --H G Bosch (Our Daily Bread)

The God who made the firmament,  
Who made the deepest sea,  
The God who put the stars in place  
Is the God who cares for me. --Berg

**The God who holds the universe is the God who is holding you.**

### **Deuteronomy 33:12**

#### **Complete Safety** - Faith's Checkbook

"And of Benjamin he said, The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him, and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders."—Deuteronomy 33:12

YES, there is no safety like that which comes of dwelling near to God. For His best beloved, the Lord can find no surer or safer place. O Lord, let me always abide under thy shadow, close to thy wounded side. Nearer and nearer would I come to thee, my Lord; and when once specially near thee, I would abide there forever.

What a covering is that which the Lord gives to His chosen! Not a fair roof shall cover him, nor a bomb-proof casement, nor even an angel's wing, but Jehovah Himself. Nothing can come at us when we are thus covered. This covering the Lord will grant us all the day long, however long the day. Lord, let me abide this day consciously beneath this canopy of love, this pavilion of sovereign power.

Does the third clause mean that the Lord in His temple would dwell among the mountains of Benjamin, or that the Lord would be where Benjamin's burden should be placed; or does it mean that we are borne upon the shoulders of the Eternal? In any case, the Lord is the support and strength of His saints. Lord, let me ever enjoy thy help, and then my arms will be sufficient for me.

### **Deuteronomy 33:13**

#### **Precious Things** - Faith's Checkbook

"And of Joseph he said, Blessed of the Lord be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath."—Deuteronomy 33:13

WE may be rich in such things as Joseph obtained, and we may have them in a higher sense. Oh, for "the precious things of heaven!" Power with God, and the manifestation of power from God, are most precious. We would enjoy the peace of God, the joy of the Lord, the glory of our God. The benediction of the three divine Persons in love and grace and fellowship, we prize beyond the most fine gold. The things of earth are as nothing in preciousness compared with the things of heaven.

"The dew." How precious is this! How we pray and praise, when we have the dew! What refreshing, what growth, what perfume, what life there is in us when the dew is about! Above all things else, as plants of the Lord's own right hand planting, we need the dew of His Holy Spirit.

"The deep that coucheth beneath." Surely this refers to that unseen ocean underground which supplies all the fresh springs which make glad the earth. Oh to tap the eternal fountains! This is an unspeakable boon; let no believer rest till he possesses it. The all-sufficiency of Jehovah is ours forever. Let us resort to it now.

### **Deuteronomy 33:18**

#### **Going Out with Joy** - Faith's Checkbook

"And of Zebulun he said, Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out."—Deuteronomy 33:18

THE blessings of the tribes are ours; for we are the true Israel who worship God in the spirit, and have no confidence in the flesh. Zebulun is to rejoice because Jehovah will bless his going out; we also see a promise for ourselves lying latent in this benediction. When we go out, we will look out for occasions of joy.

We go out to travel, and the providence of God is our convoy. We go out to emigrate, and the Lord is with us both on land and sea. We go out as missionaries, and Jesus saith, "Lo, I am with you unto the end of the world." We go out day by day to our labor, and we may do so with pleasure, for God will be with us from morn till eve.

A fear sometimes creeps over us when starting, for we know not what we may meet with; but this blessing may serve us right well as a word of good cheer. As we pack up for moving, let us put this verse into our traveling trunk; let us drop it into our hearts and keep it there; yea, let us lay it on our tongue to make us sing. Let us weigh anchor with a song or jump into the carriage with a psalm. Let us belong to the rejoicing tribe and, in our every movement, praise the Lord with joyful hearts.

### **Deuteronomy 33:18**

It certainly is not possible for us to be in a position where Omnipotence cannot assist us. God has servants everywhere. There are "treasures hid in the sand" (Deut. 33:19), and the Lord's chosen shall eat thereof. When the clouds hide the mountains, they are as real as in the sunshine, so the promise and the providence of God are unchanged by the obscurity of our faith or the difficulties of our position. There is hope, and hope at hand; therefore, let us be of good cheer. When we are at our worst, let us trust with unshaking faith. Recollect that then is the time when we can most glorify God by faith. (Spurgeon - Daily Help)

### **Deuteronomy 33:24 - H A Ironside**

Oil is a well-known type of the Holy Spirit. He who dips his foot in oil will leave a mark behind him as he walks through this scene. It is walking in the Spirit that causes any life to count for God. Such a person will enjoy the fellowship of his brethren as they see Christ in his ways. And he will be blessed with children. It is the man who walks in the Spirit who is a successful soul-winner and knows the joy of seeing his children in the faith glorifying God on his behalf. Asher is the blessed or happy one. Happy indeed is he of whom these things are true.

O Lord, whate'er my path may be,  
If only I may walk with Thee  
And talk with Thee along the way,  
I'll praise Thee for it ALL some day.



## **Deuteronomy 33:25 - William MacDonald - Truths to Live By**

God promises to give His people strength according to their needs at any particular time. He does not promise it in advance of the need, but when the crisis comes, the grace is there to meet it.

Perhaps you are called to go through a patch of sickness and suffering. If you knew in advance how great the testing would be, you would say, "I know I could never bear it." But all the divine support comes with the testing, to your amazement and everyone else's.

We live in fear of the time when our loved ones will be called away by death. We are sure our little world will fall apart and that we ourselves will be utterly unable to cope. But it isn't that way at all. We are conscious of the Lord's presence and power in a way we never knew before.

Many of us have close scrapes with death in accidents and situations of extreme peril. We find our hearts flooded with peace when ordinarily we would be in panic. We know it is the Lord, coming alongside to help.

As we read the stories of those who have heroically laid down their lives for the sake of Christ, we realize afresh that God gives "martyr grace for martyr days." Their cool courage was beyond human bravery. Their bold witness was obviously empowered from on high.

Now it should be obvious that worrying in advance of the need produces nothing but ulcers. The fact is that God doesn't give the grace and strength until they are needed. As D. W. Whittle said,

I have nothing to do with tomorrow,  
The Savior will make that His care;  
Its grace and its strength I can't borrow,  
Then why should I borrow its care?

Annie Johnson Flint's memorable lines are ever apropos.

He giveth more grace when the burdens grow greater;  
He sendeth more strength when the labors increase.  
To added affliction He addeth His mercy;  
To multiplied trials, His multiplied peace.

When we have exhausted our store of endurance,  
When our strength has failed ere the day is half done,  
When we reach the end of our hoarded resources,  
Our Father's full giving is only begun.

## **Deuteronomy 33:25a**

### **Secret of a Happy Life**

"Your castles and strongholds shall have bars of iron and bronze, and as your day, so shall your strength, your rest and security, be."  
(Amplified Version) (Deuteronomy 33:25)

These two Scripture verses prompted someone to write,

"One secret of a happy Christian life is living by the day. It's the long stretches that tire us. But really, there are no long stretches. Life does not come to us all at once. Tomorrow is not ours; but when it does come, God will supply both daily bread and daily strength."

As Pastor Philip Doddridge was walking along the street one day, he was feeling depressed and desolate, for something had happened to burden his heart. Passing a small cottage, he heard through the open door the voice of a child reading the words found in Deuteronomy 33:25,

"... as your days, so shall your strength be."

The Holy Spirit used that truth to bolster his sinking morale. He was encouraged not to look too far ahead, but just to go on living for the Lord from moment to moment in the consciousness that God would care for him.

Apparently D. L. Moody also learned that secret, for he said,

“A man can no more take a supply of grace for the future than he can eat enough today to last him for the next 6 months, nor can he inhale sufficient air into his lungs with one breath to sustain life for a week to come. We are permitted to draw upon God’s store of grace from day to day as we need it!”

God never gives His strength in advance, so let’s stop crossing bridges before we come to them. The Heavenly Father will graciously supply our every need—one day at a time!

**Don’t try to bear tomorrow’s burdens with today’s grace.**

### **Deuteronomy 33:25**

#### **Heavy Duty Shoes - Faith's Checkbook**

“Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be.”—Deuteronomy 33:25

HERE are two things provided for the pilgrim: shoes and strength.

As for the shoes: they are very needful for traveling along rough ways, and for trampling upon deadly foes. We shall not go barefoot; this would not be suitable for princes of the blood royal. Our shoes shall not be at all of the common sort, for they shall have soles of durable metal which will not wear out even if the journey be long and difficult. We shall have protection proportionate to the necessities of the road and the battle. Wherefore let us march boldly on, fearing no harm even though we tread on serpents, or set our foot upon the dragon himself.

As for the strength: it shall be continued as long as our days shall continue, and it shall be proportioned to the stress and burden of those days. The words are few, “as thy days thy strength,” but the meaning is full. This day we may look for trial and for work which will require energy, but we may just as confidently look for equal strength. This word given to Asher is given to us also who have faith wherewith to appropriate it. Let us rise to the holy boldness which it is calculated to create within the believing heart.

### **Deuteronomy 33:25**

As thy days, so shall thy strength be ... I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me

Deuteronomy 33:25; Phil. 4:13

He will not impose upon you one needless burden. He will not exact more than He knows your strength will bear. He will ask no Peter to come to Him on the water, unless He impart at the same time strength and support on the unstable waves. He will not ask you to draw water if the well is too deep, or to withdraw the stone if too heavy. But neither at the same time will He admit as an impossibility that which, as a free and responsible agent, it is in your power to avert. He will not regard as your misfortune what is your crime. - John MacDuff

### **Deuteronomy 33:25**

As thy days, so shall thy strength be

No day without its duty; no duty without strength to perform it.

### **Deuteronomy 33:26-29**

#### **Everlasting Arms**

After a pre-concert rehearsal in New York City’s Carnegie Hall, Randall Atcheson sat on stage alone. He had successfully navigated the intricate piano compositions of Beethoven, Chopin, and Liszt for the evening program, and with only minutes remaining before the doors opened, he wanted to play one more piece for himself. What came from his heart and his hands was an old hymn by Elisha Hoffman:

What have I to dread,  
what have I to fear,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms?  
I have blessed peace  
with my Lord so near,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms.

Those words echo the truth in the final blessing of Moses: “There is no one like the God of Jeshurun, who rides the heavens to help you, and in His excellency on the clouds. The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms” (Deuteronomy

33:26-27).

What a gift we have in our own arms and hands—they can swing a hammer, hold a child, or help a friend. But while our strength is limited, God's boundless power on our behalf is expressed in might and gentle care. "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save" (Isaiah 59:1). "He will gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom" (Isaiah 40:11).

Whatever challenge or opportunity we face, there is security and peace in His everlasting arms. —David C. McCasland

### **The heavenly Father's arms never tire of holding His children**

**Deuteronomy 33:27** The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.

#### **The Everlasting Arms**

In these days of jet travel, when we can cruise at altitudes of over 30,000 feet, flying can be most enjoyable as we wing our way above the storms and the turbulence of lower altitudes. Occasionally, however, some rough air is still experienced, and in those moments how reassuring it is to see the plane's wings out-stretched like two huge arms bearing us up. Recently, while flying from Atlanta to Chicago, we passed through some choppy air. As I looked out upon the giant silver wings of the jet, I was reminded of the words of Moses in Deuteronomy 33:27: "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." What a comfort it is for the true Christian to have such an assurance in the storms of life! When the bottom seems to fall out of living, how encouraging is the realization that the eternal God is bearing us up and will give sustaining grace for every trial. When Joseph was sold by his brethren into Egypt, it must have seemed to him the end of everything worthwhile in life; and yet the everlasting arms of God bore him up into a place of prominence and blessing. When Daniel was cast into the den of lions it seemed as though death was certain; yet even in that tragic situation he discovered that "the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him" (Ps. 34:7). Many Christians can testify from personal experience that those very circumstances of life which seemed to be most threatening were used by God to bring about increased blessing, greater joy, and more effective service.

Are you disturbed today by the trials of life? Is the air a little "choppy"? Are you experiencing some "turbulence"? Then just rest, relax, and trust in the Lord and you too will feel the strengthening resources of His power and know beyond a shadow of doubt that "underneath are the everlasting arms."

Oh, how sweet to walk in this pilgrim way,

Leaning on the everlasting arms;

Oh, how bright the path grows from day to day,

Leaning on the everlasting arms.

—E. A. Hoffman

### **You can't break God's promises by leaning on them!**

#### **Deuteronomy 33:27**

"The eternal God is thy refuge." — Deuteronomy 33:27 (Morning and Evening)

The word refuge may be translated "mansion," or "abiding- place," which gives the thought that God is our abode, our home. There is a fulness and sweetness in the metaphor, for dear to our hearts is our home, although it be the humblest cottage, or the scantiest garret; and dearer far is our blessed God, in whom we live, and move, and have our being. It is at home that we feel safe: we shut the world out and dwell in quiet security. So when we are with our God we "fear no evil." He is our shelter and retreat, our abiding refuge. At home, we take our rest; it is there we find repose after the fatigue and toil of the day. And so our hearts find rest in God, when, wearied with life's conflict, we turn to him, and our soul dwells at ease. At home, also, we let our hearts loose; we are not afraid of being misunderstood, nor of our words being misconstrued. So when we are with God we can commune freely with him, laying open all our hidden desires; for if the "secret of the Lord is with them that fear him," the secrets of them that fear him ought to be, and must be, with their Lord. Home, too, is the place of our truest and purest happiness: and it is in God that our hearts find their deepest delight. We have joy in him which far surpasses all other joy. It is also for home that we work and labour. The thought of it gives strength to bear the daily burden, and quickens the fingers to perform the task; and in this sense we may also say that God is our home. Love to him strengthens us. We think of him in the person of his dear Son; and a glimpse of the suffering face of the Redeemer constrains us to labour in his cause. We feel that we must work, for we have brethren yet to be saved, and we have our Father's heart to make glad by bringing home his wandering sons; we would fill with holy mirth the sacred family among whom we dwell. Happy are those who have thus the God of Jacob for their refuge!

## Deuteronomy 33:27

“Underneath are the everlasting arms.” — Deuteronomy 33:27 (Morning and Evening)

God—the eternal God—is himself our support at all times, and especially when we are sinking in deep trouble. There are seasons when the Christian sinks very low in humiliation. Under a deep sense of his great sinfulness, he is humbled before God till he scarcely knows how to pray, because he appears, in his own sight, so worthless. Well, child of God, remember that when thou art at thy worst and lowest, yet “underneath” thee “are everlasting arms.” Sin may drag thee ever so low, but Christ’s great atonement is still under all. You may have descended into the deeps, but you cannot have fallen so low as “the uttermost”; and to the uttermost he saves. Again, the Christian sometimes sinks very deeply in sore trial from without. Every earthly prop is cut away. What then? Still underneath him are “the everlasting arms.” He cannot fall so deep in distress and affliction but what the covenant grace of an ever-faithful God will still encircle him. The Christian may be sinking under trouble from within through fierce conflict, but even then he cannot be brought so low as to be beyond the reach of the “everlasting arms”—they are underneath him; and, while thus sustained, all Satan’s efforts to harm him avail nothing.

This assurance of support is a comfort to any weary but earnest worker in the service of God. It implies a promise of strength for each day, grace for each need, and power for each duty. And, further, when death comes, the promise shall still hold good. When we stand in the midst of Jordan, we shall be able to say with David, “I will fear no evil, for thou art with me.” We shall descend into the grave, but we shall go no lower, for the eternal arms prevent our further fall. All through life, and at its close, we shall be upheld by the “everlasting arms”—arms that neither flag nor lose their strength, for “the everlasting God fainteth not, neither is weary.”

## Deuteronomy 33:27

### A Stroll With God

Etty Hillesum was a young Jewish woman living in Amsterdam in 1942. During that time, the Nazis were arresting Jews and herding them off to concentration camps. As she awaited inevitable arrest, and with a fear of the unknown, she began to read the Bible—and met Jesus. She simply put her hand in God’s hand and found rare courage and confidence.

Etty wrote in her diary: “From all sides our destruction creeps up on us and soon the ring will be closed and no one at all will be able to come to our aid. But I don’t feel that I am in anybody’s clutches. I feel safe in God’s arms. And whether I am sitting at my beloved old desk in the Jewish district or in a labor camp under SS guards, I shall feel safe in God’s arms. For once you have begun to walk with God, you need only keep on walking with Him, and all of life becomes one long stroll.”

Etty was a living, courageous picture of the psalmist’s declaration: “Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in You... What can flesh do to me?” (56:3-4). What a challenge for anyone plagued by fear!

As we sense the strength of God’s everlasting arms beneath us (Dt. 33:27), we can stroll through life with confidence, holding the hand of our unseen Companion.— by Vernon C. Grounds (Our Daily Bread)

I never walk alone, Christ walks beside me,  
He is the dearest Friend I’ve ever known;  
With such a Friend to comfort and to guide me,  
I never, no, I never walk alone. —Ackley  
© 1952 The Rodeheaver Company

**You can be confident about tomorrow  
if you walk with God today.**

## Deuteronomy 33:27a

### Fall Into His Arms

“The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.” Deuteronomy 33:27

As I was reading the words of today’s text from Deuteronomy, I recalled an old song written by Ada Habershon. “When I fear my faith will fail, Christ will hold me fast; when the tempter would prevail, He can hold me fast.” Say, that’s good theology!

A lady who was facing difficult trials and troubling circumstances came to W. B. Hinson at the close of a sermon and said,

“I’m very much afraid I might fall.”

Hinson replied,

“Well, why don’t you do it?”

"But Preacher," she protested, "where would I fall to?"

"You would fall down into the everlasting arms of God," came his reply.

Then he said,

"I have read in the Bible that His everlasting arms are underneath His children. And you know, I believe that if you fall down upon those everlasting arms, it is sure and certain that you will never fall through them."

Yes, the believer can rest in the unfailing strength and support of the omnipotent Father. God bolsters this assurance with a progression of truth in Isaiah 41:10 when He says through the prophet,

"I am with thee." "I will strengthen thee." "I will help thee." "I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness."

And in John 17:11 we read this prayer of our Lord:

"Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me."

His request will not be thwarted because our Savior has given every believer into the keeping, safeguarding power of the Father. So even when we stumble, we fall into the everlasting arms of His grace. -P. R. Van Gorder (Our Daily Bread)

He who to the wind and wave

Commanded, "Peace, be still!"

Stands with arms outstretched to save

And keep you in His will.-Stairs

**When we get to the place where there's nothing left but God,**

**we find that God is all we need.**

**Deuteronomy 33:27b**

**ALL YOU WILL EVER NEED!**

"The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms (Deuteronomy 33:27).

As I read Deuteronomy 33, I recalled an old song written by Ada Habershon. "When I fear my faith will fail, Christ will hold me fast; when the tempter would prevail, He can hold me fast."

A woman facing difficult trials and troubling circumstances came to W. B. Hinson at the close of a sermon and said, "I'm very much afraid I might fall." Hinson replied, "Well, why don't you do it?" "But Preacher," she protested, "where would I fall to?" "You would fall down into the everlasting arms of God," he replied. Then he said, "I have read in the Bible that His everlasting arms are underneath His children. And you know, I believe that if you fall down upon those everlasting arms, it is sure and certain that you will never fall through them." Without question, the believer can rest in the unfailing strength and support of the omnipotent Father. God bolsters this assurance with a progression of truth in Isaiah 41:10 when He says through the prophet, "I am with you." "I will strengthen you." "I will help you." "I will uphold you with My righteous right hand." And in John 17:11 we read this prayer of our Lord: "Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me." His request will not be thwarted because our Savior has given every believer into the keeping, safeguarding power of the Father. So even when we stumble, we fall into the everlasting arms of His grace. —P. R. Van Gorder. (Our Daily Bread)

**When we get to the place where there's nothing left but God,  
we find that God is all we need.**

**Deuteronomy 33:28**

**Dwelling Safely Apart - Faith's Checkbook**

"Israel then shall dwell in safety alone: the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine, also his heavens shall drop down dew."—Deuteronomy 33:28

THE more we dwell alone, the more safe shall we be. God would have His people separate from sinners. His call to them is, "Come ye out from among them." A Christian world is such a monstrosity as the Scriptures never contemplate. A worldly Christian is

spiritually diseased. Those who compromise with Christ's enemies may be reckoned with them.

Our safety lies not in making terms with the enemy, but in dwelling alone with our best Friend. If we do this, we shall dwell in safety, despite the sarcasms, the slanders, and the sneers of the world. We shall be safe from the baleful influence of its unbelief, its pride, its vanity, its filthiness.

God also will make us dwell in safety alone in that day when sin shall be visited on the nations by wars and famines.

The Lord brought Abram from Ur of the Chaldees, but he stopped halfway. He had no blessing till, having set out to go to the land of Canaan, to the land of Canaan he came. He was safe alone even in the midst of foes. Lot was not safe in Sodom though in a circle of friends. Our safety is in dwelling apart with God.

### **Deuteronomy 33:28a**

#### **The Dew of Heaven** - Faith's Checkbook

"His heavens shall drop down dew."—Deuteronomy 33:28

WHAT the dew in the East is to the world of nature, that is the influence of the Spirit in the realm of grace. How greatly do I need it! Without the Spirit of God I am a dry and withered thing. I droop, I fade, I die. How sweetly does this dew refresh me! When once favored with it, I feel happy, lively, vigorous, elevated. I want nothing more. The Holy Spirit brings me life and all that life requires. All else without the dew of the Spirit is less than nothing to me: I hear, I read, I pray, I sing, I go to the table of communion, and I find no blessing there until the Holy Ghost visits me. But when He bedews me, every means of grace is sweet and profitable.

What a promise is this for me! "His heavens shall drop down dew." I shall be visited with grace. I shall not be left to my natural drought, or to the world's burning heat, or to the sirocco of Satanic temptation. Oh, that I may at this very hour feel the gentle, silent, saturating dew of the Lord! Why should I not? He who has made me to live as the grass lives in the meadow will treat me as He treats the grass; He will refresh me from above. Grass cannot call for dew as I do. Surely, the Lord who visits the unpraying plant will answer to His pleading child.

### **Deuteronomy 33:29**

#### **Over Jordan with Singing** - Faith's Checkbook

"Thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee." —Deuteronomy 33:29

THAT arch-enemy, the devil, is a liar from the beginning; but he is so very plausible that, like mother Eve, we are led to believe him. Yet in our experience we shall prove him a liar.

He says that we shall fall from grace, dishonor our profession, and perish with the doom of apostates; but, trusting in the Lord Jesus, we shall hold on our way and prove that Jesus loses none whom His Father gave Him. He tells us that our bread will fail, and we shall starve with our children; yet the Feeder of the ravens has not forgotten us yet, and He will never do so, but will prepare us a table in the presence of our enemies.

He whispers that the Lord will not deliver us out of the trial which is looming in the distance, and he threatens that the last ounce will break the camel's back. What a liar he is! For the Lord will never leave us, nor forsake us. "Let him deliver him now!" cries the false fiend: but the Lord will silence him by coming to our rescue.

He takes great delight in telling us that death will prove too much for us. "How wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" But there also he shall prove a liar unto us, and we shall pass through the river singing psalms of glory.

### **Deuteronomy 33:29a**

"Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord!" — Deuteronomy 33:29 (Morning and Evening)

He who affirms that Christianity makes men miserable, is himself an utter stranger to it. It were strange indeed, if it made us wretched, for see to what a position it exalts us! It makes us sons of God. Suppose you that God will give all the happiness to his enemies, and reserve all the mourning for his own family? Shall his foes have mirth and joy, and shall his home-born children inherit sorrow and wretchedness? Shall the sinner, who has no part in Christ, call himself rich in happiness, and shall we go mourning as if we were penniless beggars? No, we will rejoice in the Lord always, and glory in our inheritance, for we "have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but we have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." The rod of chastisement must rest upon us in our measure, but it worketh for us the comfortable fruits of righteousness; and therefore by the aid of the divine Comforter, we, the "people saved of the Lord," will joy in the God of our salvation. We are married unto Christ; and shall our great Bridegroom permit his spouse to linger in constant grief? Our hearts are knit unto him: we are his members, and though for awhile

we may suffer as our Head once suffered, yet we are even now blessed with heavenly blessings in him. We have the earnest of our inheritance in the comforts of the Spirit, which are neither few nor small. Inheritors of joy for ever, we have foretastes of our portion. There are streaks of the light of joy to herald our eternal sunrising. Our riches are beyond the sea; our city with firm foundations lies on the other side the river; gleams of glory from the spirit-world cheer our hearts, and urge us onward. Truly is it said of us, "Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord?"

### **Deuteronomy 33:29**

Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, a people saved by the Lord. Deut. 33:29.

These sentences are taken from the last discourse of Moses. This also was a poem. It is described as a blessing. Often he had set before the people cursing and blessing. His last words to them were of blessing only. In stately and majestic language he first affirmed anew the majesty of Jehovah, and declared His love for the peoples, that is for the tribes of Israel. He then pronounced the words of blessing upon these tribes, Simeon only being omitted (why, we do not know). Reuben and Judah are referred to in terms which suggest that they were saved so as by fire. Levi, having lost all earthly possessions for the special honour of bearing the Word of Jehovah, receives the reward of such sacrifice. The reference to Benjamin shows the safety of frailty in the Divine government. The choicest things of all are said of Joseph. His are all "precious things and the good-will of Him that dwelt in the bush." His, therefore, is the portion of government. Issachar and Zebulun are seen triumphing over disability. Gad, overcoming at last, is appointed a judge. Dan becomes typical of conquest. Naphtali is satisfied. Asher is sustained. Thus in his final benediction Moses makes the varied realization of blessing by the tribes unfold the all-sufficiency of God. The concluding words again celebrate the greatness of God as finally manifested in His tenderness and strength toward His people. Verily, happy are the people who are saved by Jehovah. (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

### **Deuteronomy 34**

#### **Sunset Boulevard**

Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical Sunset Boulevard tells the story of Norma Desmond, a former silent film star. When the talking movies came into fashion, she lost her audience. As an older woman, she longed for the glory of her past. In her mind, silent facial expressions alone made a good movie—not dialogue. In the song "With One Look" Norma sings:

With one look I can break your heart;

With one look I play every part ...

With one look I'll ignite a blaze;

I'll return to my glory days.

Because Norma lived in the past, her life ended in tragedy.

It's been said that each life is like a book, lived one chapter at a time. If you think your most fruitful years are behind you, remember you're writing a new chapter now. Learn to live each day with contentment in the present.

Near the end of Moses' life, God showed him the Promised Land. Clearly, he had accomplished his mission in life. But he didn't long for the miracles of his "glory days." Instead, Moses was content to obey God in the present. In his sunset years, he mentored Joshua to be his successor (Deut. 31:1-8).

Living contentedly in the present has a way of making us productive for a lifetime—for God's glory. —Dennis Fisher (Our Daily Bread)

I give my life to You, O Lord,  
And live for You each day;  
Grant me contentment as I strive  
To follow and obey. —Sper

**Living in the past paralyzes the present  
and bankrupts the future.**

### **Deuteronomy 34:1, 5**

#### **THE CHRISTIAN'S "CORONATION DAY"!**

"And the Lord showed him all the land So Moses, the servant of the Lord, died" Deuteronomy 34:1, 5

When I was a sixth grader, an elderly lady visited our one-room country schoolhouse to announce a community event. Though energetic and full of zest for life, she was somewhat stooped, her hair was white, and her face was lined with wrinkles. After she left, one of the boys loudly said,

"I never want to get old."

The teacher, a bitter unbeliever, countered with the words,

"Do you want to die young?"

"No," the boy replied.

"Well," came the sharp retort, "you will either die young or grow old and die. There are no alternatives."

These words made a deep impression on me. I was only a boy, but even young children think about death. The tone of utter despair in my teacher's voice sent chills down my spine. Without Christ the future is dismal indeed.

How different the prospect for the believer! For him old age can be a time of fullness and blessing, and death does not hold the same dread and fear. I like to think of Moses as he went calmly and serenely up the mountain where he knew he would die. Before God took him from this life, He graciously gave him a full view of the land his people would soon enter. He passed from this life full of faith and confident that the Lord's promises of a glorious future for both himself and his people would certainly be realized.

Another child of God, Dwight L. Moody, had a glorious and triumphant Home-going. In his final moments he exclaimed,

"Heaven opens before me! If this is death, it is sweet! There is no valley here. God is calling and I must go!"

"No," said a loved one, "you are dreaming."

Moody answered,

"No, I'm not dreaming. I have looked within the gates, and I have seen the children's faces. This is my triumph. This is my coronation day!"

Like Moses, Moody had seen the Promised Land — and then peacefully "fallen asleep" in the arms of God!

### **Death need not trouble the Christian—**

**his future is as sure as the promises of God!**

**Deuteronomy 34:7; Luke 2:36–38**

### **Gray Can Be Golden**

Quoting The People's Almanac, Parade Magazine listed a few people with major achievements after age eighty. Among them were David Eugene Ray of Tennessee, who at ninety-nine learned to read; twin sisters Kin Narita and Gin Kanie, who at ninety-nine recorded a hit single in Japan; and Paul Spangler, who at ninety-two completed his fourteenth Marathon. Advertisers are getting the elderly in focus. The cosmetic company Maybelline, Inc. targets older women by offering a Revitalizing line and Age-Denying makeup. McDonald's offers seniors a 25 cent cup of coffee and hires 40,000 of them in its restaurants. Schumacher and Company's Understanding Living Trusts has sold 150,000 copies since being issued in 1990. Modern Maturity, the publication of the American Association of Retired Persons has an annual circulation of 22.5 million copies. The 64 million people in America over 55 hold \$800 billion in their reserve—about 77 percent of the nation's assets—and most of them are willing to spend. With \$300 billion in ready cash, they buy over 40 percent of the new cars and half the luxury cars sold. Indeed, depending on our lifestyle, habits, diet, and exercise, old age need not be gloomy and disagreeable. Instead, we can say with Adam to Orlando in As You Like It, "Therefore my age is as a lusty winter. Frosty but kindly." Can the church afford to ignore these senior citizens? Aren't we compelled to make special efforts to evangelize and disciple those whose very age offers substantial advantages to God's kingdom? - Speaker's sourcebook of new illustrations

### **Deuteronomy 34:9**

"And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him: and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the Lord commanded Moses." (Deut. 34:9)

One important insight we gather from this verse is that Moses appointed Joshua as his successor, knowing that his own ministry would be coming to an end. In doing so, he set a good example for others who are in places of spiritual leadership. Some may think that this is too elementary to emphasize but the fact is that there is often gross failure to train successors and to turn work over to



them. There seems to be an innate resistance to the idea that we are replaceable.

Sometimes this is a problem that faces an elder in a local fellowship. Perhaps he has served faithfully for many years, but the day is approaching when he will no longer be able to shepherd the flock. Yet it is hard for him to train a younger man to take his place. He may see young men as threats to his position. Or he may contrast their inexperience with his own maturity and conclude that they are quite unsuitable. It is easy for him to forget how inexperienced he was at one time, and how he came to his present maturity by being trained to do the work of an overseer.

This can also be a problem on the mission field. The missionary knows that he should train nationals to assume places of leadership. But he rationalizes that they cannot do it as well as he. And they make so many mistakes...and attendance at the meetings will drop if he does not do all the preaching. And anyway, they don't know how to lead. The answer to all these arguments is that he should look upon himself as being expendable. He should train the nationals and delegate authority to them until he works himself out of a job in that particular area. There are always unfilled fields elsewhere. He never needs to be unemployed.

When Moses was replaced by Joshua there was a smooth transition. There was no vacuum of leadership. The cause of God did not suffer trauma. That's the way it should be.

All God's servants should rejoice to see younger men raised up to places of leadership. They should count it a great privilege to share their knowledge and experience with these disciples, then turn the work over to them before they are forced to do so by the hand of death. They should have the selfless attitude that Moses displayed on another occasion when he said, "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets." (William MacDonald}-Truths to Live By)

### **Deuteronomy 34:10**

There hath not arisen a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face.—Deut 34.10

In this last chapter of Deuteronomy we have the writing of another hand. It contains the story of the death of Moses, the equipment of Joshua for his work, and a last tender reference to the great leader and law-giver, beginning with these particular words. For the man who wrote them, they were true words; and they remained true through all the history of that wonderful people until One was born of the seed of David, Who was greater far than Moses. In his second discourse Moses had foretold his coming in the words: "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren like unto thee." Long centuries elapsed, but at last He came, and in His coming fulfilled all Moses had initiated under the Divine government; absorbed and abolished the law which came through him, in the grace and truth which He brought to men. All this does not detract from, but rather enhances our sense of the greatness of this servant of God. His passing was full of beauty. In the fact of his exclusion from the land toward which he had led the people, it was a punishment; but, like all the chastisements of God, it was wonderfully tempered with mercy. There had been no weakening of his force. Everything ended in full strength. He went up to die. Jehovah gave him a vision of the land, and then buried him in that unknown grave. It was an august and glorious ending to a great and dignified life. Thus ends the last book of the Pentateuch, the final section of the Law. Its supreme value is its revelation of the need for the Priest and the Gospel. (G Campbell Morgan - Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)