

V'ETCHANAN

DEUTERONOMY (D'VARIM 3:23 – 7:11)

INTRODUCTION:

1. In this portion, Moses explains how he prayed to the LORD, not to continue being leader, but to cross the river and walk in the land to see it.
 - a. Joshua is already designated as the leader to succeed him.
2. It is interesting that even Moses was prevented from going into the Land because of disobedience – because he didn't sanctify His name in sight of the people.
3. He wants to see (verse 25) “this good mountain” –הר טוב *ha'har ha'tov* – which is specific.
 - a. Would assume this is the mountain range directly across from where he stood.
 - b. Some traditions understand this to mean the Temple Mount, Mount Moriah.
4. Interestingly, Mount Moriah in Hebrew is *b'har ha'moriah* בהר המוריה.
 - a. Moriah is from the terms *re'ah Yah* – “seen of Yah.”
 - b. Gen. 22 calls it land of Moriah (before Abraham names it) and rendered מריה.
 - c. The word “teacher” is *moreh* and is מורה (מרה).
 - d. Interesting that the “teacher” Moses (משה) was anxious to see Moriah (מרה).
5. One commentator notes that Moses' life is somewhat defined by mountains.
 - Horeb – called to be a leader.
 - Sinai – Received the Torah on behalf of Israel.
 - Nebo – Where he looked into Land.
 - Mount of Transfiguration – Stood with Messiah.
6. Yet, we see that God did not listen to him and, in a sense, told him to be silent on the matter.
 - a. Instead he was to “command” Joshua to do what Moses would not be allowed to do.

CHAPTER 4: HEARKEN TO GOD'S COMMANDS

1. Verse 1: “Hearken” – “listen, hear” is Hebrew *sh'ma* שמע.
 - a. “Statutes” – literally, “engraved decrees.”
 - b. “to do them” – Main purpose of teaching is to provoke others to “do.”
2. “Not learning, but doing is the principal thing.” (Ethics of the Fathers).
 - a. That you may live and possess the land.
3. Verse 2: “You shall not add...nor shall you subtract” – as is to “improve” upon God's work.
 - a. The word “add” is derived from the root *yasaf* (Heb. יסף): *Yosef* יוסף is derived.
 - b. Means to “augment, add, increase.”
4. The word “diminish, subtract” is from the root *gara* (Heb. גרע).
 - a. Also means to “restrain, lessen” and even “scrape off.”
5. We are to “keep” or “guard” these commands (v. 2) which is impossible if add to or diminish.
 - a. This is the tactic of the adversary from the beginning.

“Then the serpent said to the woman, ‘You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.’ ” – Genesis 3:4

6. He took away from the Creator's word and added to what He said.
 - a. The serpent (Heb. *nachash* נחש) is subtle, crafty (Heb. *arum* ערום).
 - b. When Adam ate of the fruit he realized he was naked (Heb. עירום).
 - c. Adam emulated traits of the serpent – started adding to and taking away.
7. Moses likens the admonition of not adding to and taking away to sin of Baal Peor.
 - a. This recorded in Numbers 25:1 – mingling with women of Midian.
 - b. Went to sacrifices of their gods and were destroyed “from your midst.”
 - c. This mixing with other seed is equivalent to or result of “adding to” and “diminishing.”
8. Moses reminds them that “you saw” – you're alive because you didn't do it.
9. To keep these commands is what will distinguish Israel from the nations.
 - a. Slaves rising to prominence with a sound and moral society would attract attention.
 - b. The nations would acknowledge Israel as possessing wisdom and understanding.
10. Verse 8: Moses points out that no other nation has laws such as this; righteous and just.
11. Verse 9: “Keep your soul diligently” – basically tells Israel their survival is dependent on keeping these instructions and remembering what they saw with their eyes at Sinai.
12. Verses 11-12: Recounts the spectacle of Sinai, describing what they saw.
 - a. The mountain burning with fire, smoke and darkness.

“And the LORD spoke to you out of the midst of the fire. You heard the sound of the words, but saw no form; only a voice.” – Deuteronomy 4:12

13. Wording of this verse hints at a tradition concerning the events of Sinai.
 - a. God's voice was as divided tongues of fire visible to the people assembled.
 - b. This is what we see in Acts 2 – cloven tongues of fire.
 - c. Still they saw “no one” and yet knew He was in their midst.
14. To emphasize that God was giving them a covenant of fire, engraved in stone.
15. Verse 15-16: “Take great heed to yourselves” – since they saw no form, they were not to portray Him using any type of image.
 - a. This, in my belief, is what happened at Sinai with the golden calf.
 - b. Verse 16: stipulates no images “male or female” – no Hebrew word for “goddess.”

CHAPTER 4: TO BE A LIGHT

1. Verse 19: “Lest you lift up your eyes unto heaven...and be drawn away and worship.”
 - a. “Host of heaven” was dominant influence in Babylon as well as in Egypt.
 - b. Used these luminaries as symbols of deities.
2. “Be drawn away” – be lured away by their brightness and magnificence.
 - a. People are typically attracted by things that shine.
3. “Which the LORD has allotted unto all the peoples under the whole heaven.”
 - a. “Allotted” is Heb. חלק *chalak* – “to divide, portion or designate.”
 - b. Some interpret this to mean given to the nations to enjoy their light or heat.
 - c. This was is their only source of light – distinguished from Israel.

“The sun shall no longer be your light by day, nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you; but the LORD will be to you an everlasting light, and your God your glory.”

– Isaiah 60:19

4. Israel receives its light from the Creator – the light that first appeared at beginning.
 - a. Before the sun, moon and stars were brought forth on Day 4.
5. Many sages suggest this means much more – designated to them to be worshiped by them.
 - a. That God allowed the heathens to worship the sun, moon and stars as stepping stone.
 - b. To bring them to higher stage of belief.
6. If that is true, could be supported by Abram in Ur becoming Abraham of Canaan.
7. It is true that many of us grew up believing things we've since discovered as wrong.
 - a. Yet, those things and beliefs served a role in bringing us to where we are.
8. Rabbis state that war was declared against Canaanites, not because of dogma, but because of cruelty and debauchery of their beliefs.
9. In other words, other heathen nations were not placed on same level of Canaanites.
 - a. Roman, Persian and other empires obeyed certain laws of conduct.
 - b. Believed these other nations were following in the ways that had been taught them.
10. Sages differentiate that approach from what was given to Israel – first-hand knowledge.
 - a. Yet, there is only ONE WAY that leads to life.
 - b. Israel's mandate is to be a light to the nations.

“Thus says God the LORD, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread forth the earth and that which comes from it, who gives breath to the people on it, and spirit to those who walk on it:I, the LORD, have called you in righteousness, and will hold your hand; I will keep you and give you as a covenant to the people, as a light to the gentiles, to open blind eyes, to bring out prisoners from the prison, those who sit in darkness from the prison house.” – Isaiah 42:5-7

11. Ultimately speaks of Messiah Y'shua but, being the head, affects the body as well.
 - a. Israel called to be this light to the nations who are “blind” and “in prison.”
 - b. This is reiterated in Isaiah 49:3-6
 - c. Notice that this is spoken by One who “created the heavens” and everything in them.
12. Now notice what Paul has to say about this subject:

“For ever since the creation of the universe his invisible qualities — both his eternal power and his divine nature — have been clearly seen, because they can be understood from what he has made. Therefore, they have no excuse; because, although they know who God is, they do not glorify him as God or thank him. On the contrary, they have become futile in their thinking; and their undiscerning hearts have become darkened. Claiming to be wise, they have become fools! In fact, they have exchanged the glory of the immortal God for mere images, like a mortal human being, or like birds, animals or reptiles! This is why God has given them up to the vileness of their hearts' lusts, to the shameful misuse of each other's bodies. They have exchanged the truth of God for falsehood, by worshipping and serving created things, rather than the Creator — praised be he forever. Amen”

– Romans 1:20-25 [Complete Jewish Bible]

13. I'm not so sure about idea that heavenly bodies were given to nations to worship.
 - a. It is understood that they did but in contradiction to what they knew to be true.
 - b. The nations do what is right in their own eyes.
 - c. Thus Israel is called to be a nation that does what is right in God's eyes, thus a light.

14. Verse 20: That is accentuated by fact He took Israel out of “iron furnace, out of Egypt.”
 - a. Term is “iron crucible” – that which is used to purify gold and purge of foreign matter.
 - b. Heb. word “furnace” is כּוּר *kur* – verb means to “purify, repair and correct.”
 - c. Related to something that is “dug” or “bored” implying a pit used to serve as furnace.
 - d. Interesting because other words are rendered “furnace.”
15. Egypt is intense suffering intended to purge them of base instincts and rebels.
 - a. Egypt and Pharaoh serve purpose of readying Israel to conform to His will.
 - b. Torah places limitations on our evil inclination – Egypt’s way removed boundaries.
16. Still, purpose is to ready a people to distinguish God’s way from that of Egypt and world.
 - a. Israel to be a “people of inheritance” – cannot be renounced by Israel.
 - b. This call and responsibility stands for all time.

“What you have in your mind shall never be, when you say, ‘We will be like the Gentiles, like the families in other countries, serving wood and stone.’ As I live, says the Lord GOD, surely with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out, I will rule over you....I will **purge the rebels from among you, and those who transgress against Me... they shall not enter the land of Israel.” – Ezekiel 20:32-33, 38**

17. Context of this verse is when He gathers all Israel from the nations – last days.
 - a. From the “furnace” of “Egypt” (Heb. מִצְרַיִם *mitzrayim*) – “pressure, trial.”
 - b. In Egypt they had mingled with culture; so it is as the end of days.
18. Y’shua speaks to the “mixed congregation” of Laodicea:

“I counsel you to buy from me **gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.” – Revelation 3:18-19**

19. Consider the “furnace” of Daniel 3: 3 men who refused to bow; rather sanctified His Name.
 - a. This furnace was heated “seven times” hotter.
 - b. Interestingly, God’s word is like silver that is purified “seven times” (Prov. 12:6).
20. God’s people of inheritance are promised He will not forsake the covenant.

“For the LORD will not forsake His people, for His great name's sake, because it has pleased the LORD to make you His people.” – 1 Samuel 12:22

“Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace (כּוּר *kur*) of affliction.”– Isaiah 48:10

CHAPTER 4: JEALOUS GOD

1. Verses 21-22: Moses was forbidden to “go over Jordan” as a punishment of his error.
 - a. He is to die outside of the land, on the east side of Jordan.
 - b. We glean that Moses led through the wilderness but Joshua led into land.
 - c. Moses (law) led them through desert but Yehoshua (Y’shua) led them into land.
2. Verse 22: “I must die in this land” – Rashi’s comment on this:

“Not even my bones will be carried over Jordan to be laid to rest in the sacred soil, as will happen with the bones of Joseph.”

3. The Talmudic reason given for this statement is because Joseph always acknowledged himself as a Hebrew and Moses did not.
 - a. Whether this is accurate is unclear but is possible.
 - b. Interesting that descendant of Joseph (Joshua) led them into the land.
4. Still, both of them came out of Egypt; both traversed the wilderness.
 - a. One was alive and one was dead.
 - b. Yet, at the crossing, one died and one was “resurrected” in Joshua.
5. Not completely sure why Moses’ bones were not permitted to be buried in land.
 - a. Perhaps people would have been tempted to build a shrine.
 - b. Result is Moses is “hidden” from plain view and yet, Jews accept him.
 - c. Believe his words even though they cannot “see” him.
 - d. Likewise, believe in coming of Elijah though he can’t be “seen” – taken up.
6. Interestingly, these two appear on Mount of Transfiguration (high, unnamed mountain).
 - a. Moses from Levi, Elijah from “inhabitants of Gilead” – Gilead a descendant of Joseph.
 - b. Representing two witnesses, symbolizing both are in Messiah – the one not “seen.”
7. Consider: at one point Moses concealed identity while Joseph always acknowledged it.
 - a. There are those who are of “natural” Israel who act like nations (Egypt).
 - b. There are those who are of the nations who strive to behave as “seed of Abraham.”
8. In the end, all must be grafted into Messiah.
 - a. Acknowledge who and what we are and behave accordingly if we are to enter land.
9. Verse 23: “Take heed” – if Moses not permitted to enter because of his error, Israel should note He doesn’t play favorites and they should be grateful they are entering the land.
 - a. He is a devouring fire (positive and negative connotations).
 - b. He is a “jealous God” – doesn’t allow loyalty due Him to be given to someone else.
10. Interesting comment from H.G. Wells:

“None of the founders of the great heathen religions had any inkling of this idea of a jealous God, a God who would have ‘none other gods.’ ”

11. The cultures of Greece and Rome worshiped a myriad of “non-jealous” gods.
 - a. When Jerusalem fell, Rome was prepared to give God of Israel place in their pantheon.
 - b. This could never be and, so, the Jews were always at odds with Rome.
12. Truth cannot make any concession to falsehood; it can’t compromise with it or “tolerate” it.
 - a. To do so would be to surrender to the falsehood; once done, falsehood expands.
 - b. This is why there is a story of Hanukkah; the three Hebrews of Dan. 3.
13. Culture will cede belief in “God” as long as it remains in “proper place.”
 - a. For example, “separation of church and state.”
 - b. Must also allow for “other gods” and “other views” concerning God/religion.
 - c. Being “tolerant” – because He is a “jealous God” we can’t be tolerant.
14. Some contend that it should go beyond this; we have a responsibility to teach there are “false gods” and “false ideas.”
 - a. Legend that Abram began his journey by smashing idols in opposition to everyone.

- b. I agree on one hand, but more important to teach of the One God.
- c. By knowing truth, the lie is easily discerned.
- d. Consider Paul's actions in Athens.

“Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him when he saw that the city was given over to idols. Therefore he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and with the Gentile worshipers, and in the marketplace daily with those who happened to be there. Then certain Epicurean and Stoic philosophers encountered him. And some said, ‘What does this babbling man want to say?’ Others said, ‘He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign gods,’ because he preached to them Y’shua and the resurrection. And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, ‘May we know what this new doctrine is of which you speak? For you are bringing some strange things to our ears; therefore we want to know what these things mean.’ For all the Athenians and the foreigners who were there spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing. Then Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, ‘Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: ‘TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.’ Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you.” – Acts 17:16-23

- 15. Were they truly worshipping without knowing Him?
 - a. Main point: Paul didn't break their gods or demean them for their false worship.
 - b. He used what they acknowledged as means of speaking the truth.
 - c. Some heard the truth and believed, now discerning the falsehood.
- 16. There are times to break down the idols, pillars and asherah poles; there are times to expose the lie by simply speaking of the true.
- 17. Verse 25: Moses tells them after being in the land for a while, they would abandon truth.
 - a. He tells them “when you do” not “if you do.”
 - b. Will make these graven images in defiance of a jealous God learned from inhabitants.
 - c. Heaven and earth will be witnesses against them and they will be exiled from the land.
 - d. They were “scattered” before they even “entered” (verse 27).
- 18. Those who were entering would not be as susceptible to this, but later generations.
 - a. Those who did not see these things first hand – it was ancient history to them.
 - b. Complicating it would be the prosperity they would enjoy in the Land.
 - c. Prosperity acts like a drug and dulls our spiritual senses.
 - d. “You shall have been long” (in the land) is literally “you have grown stale.”
- 19. Y’shua, in referring to the last days, said this of His people:

“And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.” – Matthew 24:12

- 20. Of course, “lawlessness” is understood to be “torahlessness” – love will cool (stale).
- 21. This part of the Torah is read on 9 Av – it tells how Israel goes into exile and how to return.
 - a. 9 Av commemorates the destruction of the Temple.
 - b. Tradition states that Temple stood 410 years.
 - c. Footnote: Go figure out what this means: $1607 + 410 = 2017$.
- 22. Moses warns this scattering will be result of their stale love and subsequent idolatry.

- a. Idolatry is equivalent to mixing clean and unclean - Golden Calf incident.
 - b. Acts 15 warns against mixing: idolatry, fornication, eating blood or unclean.
 - c. Thus, tree of knowledge of Good and Evil = idolatry;
 - d. Result of idolatry (mixing) is exile; Adam was exiled.
23. Verse 28: In exile they would serve “gods, the works of men’s hands, wood and stone.”
- a. In order to gain acceptance, they become polluted by the nations’ values.
 - b. Current situation with Israel and the UN
 - c. End up worshiping something inferior to humans – beneath us (under heel).
 - d. End up acting like something beneath us – animals.
24. This would occur in these other nations which end up serving as a “furnace.”
- a. Intended to purge you of these impurities.
25. We have much to learn from this scenario:
- Not having first-hand experience but only hearing of these things.
 - Being stimulated by those around us who do serve other gods.
 - Consequently, mixing these other things with truth.
 - Being in exile and coming to realize these things.

CHAPTER 4: AT THE END OF DAYS

1. Verse 29: “But from there, you will seek the LORD” – in these nations surrounded by idols.
- a. Will “find” Him if you “search” for Him.
 - b. “Seek” in Hebrew is *בָּקַשׁ* *bakash* – “search for unknown; seek to find.”
 - c. “Find” is *מָצָא* *matza*’ – not only to find but “to attain, acquire and secure.”
 - d. But must “search” for Him – Hebrew is *דָּרַשׁ* *darash* – “inquire, demand, investigate.”
2. If you seek the “unknown God” (Mars Hill) intending to find; if you investigate thoroughly (study, inquire), you will attain your goal – you will find me.
- a. This can only be done by one whose heart is determined to understand the answer.
 - b. Y’shua said:

“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.” – Matthew 7:7-8

3. Notice that word “find” is Heb. *מָצָא* *matza*’ (not *מָצָה* *matzah*); yet phonetically synonymous.
- a. Some look at the *matzah* and do not “see.”
 - b. Others who search “see” the *מָצָה* *matzah* and *מָצָא* *matza*’ – **acquire** the answer.
 - c. See Y’shua in the *matzah*.
 - d. The disciples Y’shua met on road to Emmaus did not discern Him.

“Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight.” – Luke 24:30-31

4. Verse 30: This will occur “at the end of days” – Heb. *בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים* *acharitha’yamim*.
- a. This is understood to mean just before the coming of Messiah.
 - b. Same period Daniel wrote of in chapter 12 referring to it as *קֶצֶת* *ketz*.

- c. Would happen in your “distress” (Heb. צָר *tzar*) – KJV renders it “tribulation.”
- 5. *Tzar* is “tight or narrow place; a strait” – from root meaning “oppressed, besieged.”
 - a. This is the word that gives birth to מצרים *mitzrayim* or “Egypt” - the “furnace.”
- 6. “You will return” to the LORD – (Hebrew is שׁוּב *shuv*).
 - a. Actually it is שַׁבַּת *shavta*: spelled identically to *shabbat*.
 - b. Interesting that the “return” is tied to *Shabbat*.
- 7. Verse 31: “The LORD is a merciful God” – and a “consuming fire.”
 - a. To the wicked the fire consumes; to the righteous the fire purges and restores.
- 8. Verse 32: Begins to discuss distinct relationship between Israel and God.
 - a. As a consequence of that relationship, Israel’s responsibility.

“He declares His word to Jacob, His statutes and His judgments to Israel. He has not dealt thus with any nation; and as for His judgments, they have not known them.”

– Psalm 147:19-20

- 9. There is no other nation that He has given His Word to – to accept His Word and live by it is to come into the nation.
 - a. This would mean that God has not given this unique relationship to America.
 - b. That doesn’t mean He didn’t raise US up for a purpose – but not to be Israel.
 - c. This would also include what we call “the Church.”
- 10. He did so with great signs and wonders – e.g. splitting the sea.
- 11. Verse 35: Purpose was that Israel would know that “the LORD is God” and there is no other.
 - a. Talmudic interpretation includes “magical powers” – not to put faith in those things.
 - b. Would include curses: e.g. Bil’am couldn’t curse implying others can’t either.
- 12. This is why I don’t believe that true believers can be under a curse pronounced by others.
 - a. I believe that, like Israel, we can subject ourselves to things through disobedience.
- 13. However, obedience results in blessing upon us, our children and prolongs our days (v. 40).
 - a. Verse 37: He led Israel from Egypt as a father leads a son by the hand.
- 14. Verse 39: “Lay it to heart” –people know thing intellectually but never “take it to heart.”
 - a. Internalize it until it becomes part of who you are.
 - b. Many “know” things but lack the commitment to do them from their heart.
- 15. First and great command is “Love the LORD your God with heart” then soul and strength.
 - a. Many try to bypass the heart and love intellectually.
 - b. I believe those who deny Y’shua as “Word made flesh” are guilty of this.
 - c. We all have to struggle with this issue; though we know we must still take it to heart.

CHAPTER 5: LESSONS OF THE WILDERNESS

- 1. Moses relates how that, never before, had a nation witnessed the things they had:
 - The events of Mount Sinai.
 - Manna from heaven.
 - Water from a Rock.
 - Led through the wilderness.
- 2. Therefore, we are always to be mindful of them that we not forget God and perish as those nations Israel was about to dispossess.
- 3. Paul warns this generation not to make the same mistakes as those who were in the wilderness.

“Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.” – 1 Corinthians 10:11-12

4. Moses exhorts Israel to “hear” the commands and then “learn” and “do” them.
 - a. Most of the people had not been present to hear the voice at Mount Sinai.
 - b. Knowledge is needed before you perform something.
 - c. Knowledge alone is not enough; understanding and wisdom is required.
5. Verse 3: “The LORD made this covenant, not with the fathers, but with us.”
 - a. Some understand this to mean, “not with the fathers alone but with us too.”
 - b. “Us” would not be limited to just those present but with the nation forever.
 - c. God spoke it to Israel and those words resound through time to us today.
6. Verse 6: Moses relates the Ten Commands – expressing He is the ruler of the Universe.
 - a. Not just a “god” who is tied to “wind” or “earth” or “sea.”
 - b. He created it all and rules it all, therefore He can command how we are to live.
7. Verse 6: First: “I am the LORD your God” – in realizing this other things will fall into place.
8. Verse 7: Second Command: in recognition of first, no other gods “before me.”
 - a. Hebrew “before me” is פני *p’nei* or “in my face.”
 - b. This would insinuate “to provoke me” as in case of Nimrud or Korah before Moses.
9. Verse 8: “any manner of likeness” – this is to imply worship of true God in form of any image.
 - a. This is essentially what happened with the Golden Calf – mixing the two.
 - b. Therefore, it is idolatry.
10. Verse 9: “nor serve them” – Suggesting that images that would incite worship are prohibited.
 - a. Cherubim on the ark; 12 bronze bulls under basin in Temple.
 - b. Would seem this not a prohibition on art.
11. However, when art has tried to portray “God” who was not seen, the picture is something other than “God” – significance of “God” is, nevertheless, given to it.
 - a. Religious icons, e.g. crucifix, Sacred Heart, pictures of Messiah, etc.
 - b. Reminded that He is a jealous God.
 - c. Visits iniquity on the third and fourth generations of those who hate Him.
 - d. Mercy to the 1000th generation of those who love Him and keep His commands.
 - e. His anger lasts only a short time but His mercy is forever.
12. Verse 11: Third Command: “Shall take the name of the LORD in vain” – avoid oaths.
 - a. Hebrew word “take” is from root that means to “exalt or lift up.”
 - b. “In vain” is לשוא *l’shav* – “for vanity, falsehood.”
 - c. From root that means “desolate, to devastate.”
 - d. Don’t lift or exalt the name of YHVH in order to desolate or devastate.
13. Don’t invoke the name of God to facilitate or “legitimize” something untrue or that has destructive intent.
 - a. This would be mingling holy with profane.
 - b. Within the context of swearing by heaven, earth or Jerusalem, Y’shua said:

“But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No.’ For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.” – Matthew 5:37

14. Those tempted to invoke YHVH as if to say, this is truth are being led astray by Adversary.

15. Then obviously this is much more than mispronouncing the Name.
 - a. In fact, it is actually speaking to His authority and Holiness rather than pronunciation.
 - b. Don't use the Holy Name for vain or destructive purposes.
16. Fourth Command: "Observe the Shabbat" – literally "guard" (Heb. root שמר *shamar*).
 - a. In Exodus it was "Remember" or זכור *zachar*.
 - b. Latter speaks of doing those positive things concerning Shabbat.
 - c. "Observe" means to avoid those negative aspects – don't profane.
17. Verse 15: To help in obligation to "remember" and "observe" Shabbat, recall that you were slaves in Egypt and God brought you out.
 - a. In Egypt Israel slaved day after day without rest.
 - b. Distinguish work from slavery; you are to be an עבד *eved* "bondservant."
 - c. Don't impose on others that which you despised in Egypt.
18. Rabbinical interpretation notes that here Shabbat is linked to Exodus from Egypt; when mentioned in Exodus is linked to Creation.
 - a. Thus, Kiddush speaks of Shabbat as "commemoration of Exodus from Egypt."
 - b. Also refers to "remembrance of the work of Creation."
19. Creation is establishment of "house" (symbolized by ב of בראשית *b'reshiyt*) out of darkness.
 - a. Exodus is calling a people out of the "iron furnace" – forging a house.
20. Verse 16: Fifth command – "Honor father and mother" – that your days may be long.
 - a. And go well with you in the land.
 - b. Hinting that a strong and healthy national life is dependent upon a sound family life.
 - c. If that be the case, America is in big trouble.
21. The last five commands are linked together with the conjunction "and" (Heb. ו *v*).
 - a. To demonstrate one is not to prioritize human relationships – all important.
 - b. To break one suggests might be more inclined to commit the other.
22. Verses 17-20: Don't murder, commit adultery, steal or bear false witness.
 - a. "False" is same word that is translated "vain" in verse 11 – "to desolate, devastate."
23. Verse 21: Tenth command: "Don't covet your neighbor's wife or his belongings."
24. Verse 22: "With a great voice, and it went on no more" – they couldn't bear to hear more.
 - a. They had said, "We will hear and do" but you go speak with Him.
25. Moses then tells them:

"Then the LORD heard the voice of your words when you spoke to me, and the LORD said to me: 'I have heard the voice of the words of this people which they have spoken to you. They are right in all that they have spoken. 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 5:28-29

26. Moses ended up communicating those things God wished them to hear.
 - a. This begins in Exodus 21 – laws of a bondservant.
27. Verse 32: "Shall not turn aside to the right or left" – must go straight ahead.
 - a. Reminiscent of the crossing of the Red Sea.
 - b. We are to walk in the way God has commanded us.
 - c. "Steps of a good man are ordered of God."
 - d. That is the only way that we are going to live, prosper and possess the promise.

CHAPTER 6: SH'MA

1. After relating Ten Commands, Moses proceeds to declare the fundamental creed of Israel.
 - a. Oneness of God and Israel's loyalty to Him.
2. Important to note the First Command – I am the LORD your God.
 - a. Without a God who commands, there is no “teeth” to the commandments.
3. The Sh'ma is said twice daily and consists of three sections:
 - Deuteronomy 6:4-9
 - Deuteronomy 11:13-21
 - Numbers 15:37-41
4. Second part addresses promise of reward for obedience and punishment for disobedience.
 - a. Third part is the law of the *tzitzit* and warning against the evil inclinations of the heart.
5. “Hear O Israel: the LORD our God, the LORD is one” – sums up the first two commands.
 - a. At this point, only Israel acknowledges this; in time all the world will acknowledge.

“And the LORD shall be King over all the earth. In that day it shall be ‘The LORD is one,’ and His name one.” – Zechariah 14:9

6. Hebrew word אחד *echad* – “one” is problematic for some who follow Y'shua.
 - a. Difficult to understand how One God is “Father, Son and Spirit.”
7. Perhaps it is as simple as this is something beyond human comprehension.
8. Rabbi Gedaliah Schorr likened it to:

“A ray of light seen through a prism. Though the viewer sees a myriad of different colors, it is a single ray of light. Likewise, God's many manifestations (*including the “Word made flesh”*) are truly one.”

9. In the Sh'ma, the ע *ayin* of שמע *sh'ma* and the ד *dalet* of אחד *echad* are enlarged.
 - a. Combined these two letters are the word עד *ed* or “witness.”
 - b. Those who declare the Sh'ma are witnesses of the one true God.
10. The ד *dalet* of אחד *echad* is also to distinguish it from the word אחר *acher* – “another.”
 - a. Just as ר *resh* is enlarged in word אחר *acher* in Exodus 34:14:

“For you shall worship no other (אחר *acher*) god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.” – Exodus 34:14

11. So that it will not be read, “you shall not worship the one God.”
12. Likewise, the ע *ayin* distinguishes שמע *sh'ma* - “hear” - from שמה *shema* - “perhaps.”
 - a. “Perhaps the LORD is one.”
13. He is one because there is no other; He is one because He is wholly unlike anything else.
14. Verse 5: “And you shall love” – ואהבת *v'ahavta* – God wishes servants who love Him.
 - a. One who fears may leave if duties overwhelm him.
 - b. One who loves makes sacrifices so that he may keep commands of his master.
15. Y'shua said: “If you love me, keep my commandments.”
 - a. To be Y'shua's witnesses, it must be based on “YHWH is one.”
 - b. He said the two upon which all others hang is “Love God...love neighbor.”

- c. Motivation to obey must be in our hearts – this is essential principle in laws of *eved*.
 - d. Serves his master forever because he loves Him.
 - e. Love distinguishes His true followers from those who go through religious exercise.
16. If we love Him in this manner – to obey Him – we are to also love our fellow man.
17. “With all your heart” – the seat of emotion, desire and evil inclination.
- a. Evil inclination includes craving of food, drink and pleasures.
18. We are to channel these cravings into His service; e.g. enjoy what we eat but within the parameters set forth by God.
- a. Ambition and passion is to be channeled in God’s service.
19. “With all your soul” –with your faculties, intellect, thoughts etc.
- a. Even if it requires your life.
 - b. Revelation 12 – those who overcome by the blood, testimony and loved not their lives.
20. And with your “strength” or “resources” – those things that are tangible; we can do.
21. Verse 6: “these words shall be upon your heart” – inscribed as if upon a tablet.
- a. The two stone tablets are called *luchot ha’edut* – “witness stones.”
 - b. The promise is made that they will one day be written upon our hearts.

“But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.” – Jeremiah 31:33

22. This follows the example of the Messiah who, being alluded to in Psalm 40, says:

**“I delight to do your will, O my God, and your law (*torah*) is within my heart.”
– Psalm 40:8**

23. We are to diligently teach these things to our children when we:
- When we sit at home.
 - When we walk down the street.
 - When we retire at night – recite the *Sh’ma*.
 - When we awake in the morning - recite the *Sh’ma*.
24. Verse 8-9: “bind them for a sign” – *tefillin*; post them on doors and gates – *mezuzah*.
- a. *Mezuzah* contains this section of *Sh’ma*; on *mezuzot* is the *psi shiyn* of *יהוה Shaddai*.
 - b. An acrostic for “guardian of the doors of Israel.”
 - c. Symbolizing God watching over His people as a shepherd His flock.

CHAPTER 6: WARNING NOT TO FORGET

1. Reminds them that prosperity awaits them and not to let it dull their spiritual awareness.
 - a. Prosperity is as great a test as a people can encounter.
 - b. Much more seductive than poverty.
 - c. Consider America.
2. Verse 13: “You shall fear the LORD your God” – as well as love Him.
 - a. Love motivates people to serve; fear is a deterrent from evil.
3. Verse 14: Warns them not to go after other gods, especially those of the people around them.
4. Danger of adopting practice of the heathen nations around them more immediate and likely.

- a. Remember Reuben's proximity to Korah the Kohathite.
 - b. Dathan and Abiram joined in the rebellion.
5. Verse 18: "You shall do what is right and good in the sight of the LORD."
- a. Not enough to do "be right" in our actions – strict adherence to the Law.
 - b. There is a higher justice – i.e. "do what is right" rather than "be right."
 - c. Letter allows for strict, harshness but there are weightier matters says Y'shua.

"Justice and mercy and faith." – Matthew 23:23

6. Consider the woman caught in adultery – Y'shua doesn't dispute what Moses wrote.
- a. He carefully judged the situation and extended mercy.
 - b. "Go and sin no more."
 - c. Rather than "being right" we should "do what is right" in God's eyes.
7. Talmud teaches Jerusalem was destroyed because of strict adherence to Law.
- a. Did not regard equity, mercy and justice.
8. Verse 20: "When your son asks...what are these commandments?"
- a. In today's world the son would say, "Why are we so different?"
 - b. Later generations would have only heard from family all that happened.
 - c. You are to recall those things that transpired in Egypt as if it happened to us.
9. Verse 24: To stress these things He commands us are for our good.
- a. Nothing but good will come about as a result of our obedience.
 - b. May encounter things we do not understand, but it is for our good.
10. Verse 25: If we do as He has commanded, it will be "as righteousness unto us."
- a. This tells us then why Abraham was considered righteous.
 - b. He did what was good in God's sight – His way (hear AND do).

**"And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness."
– Genesis 15:6**

CHAPTER 7: COMING INTO THE LAND

1. Verse 1: "Shall cast out nations before you" – literally to make room for Israel.
- a. There are seven nations greater and mightier.
 - b. Yet God will drive them out.
2. Verse 2: "Shall utterly destroy" – to be considered **חרם** *cherem*.
- a. Something that isn't to get close to you – it is banned.
 - b. Not to make a covenant with them that would allow them to stay.
 - c. They would continue their evil practices and pollute Israel.
3. Does this prohibition have ramifications for the situation in the Land today?
- a. In my opinion, it does – this covenant with death has meant just that for many.
4. Verse 3: "You shall not arrange marriages with them" – don't mingle with the other seed.
- a. The patriarchs understood the dangers of these marriages.
 - b. Abraham sent Eliezer to find a wife for Isaac; Isaac sent Jacob away to find a wife.
5. We see the dangers of this in Genesis 6 – "sons of God" and "daughters of men."
- a. Paul echoes this principle: "don't be unequally yoked...light and darkness don't mix."
6. Not for racial purposes but because your sons and daughters will turned away from God.

7. Instead, Israel was to break down their altars, smash their pillars, cut down their Asherim (trees or poles) and burn their idols.
8. Because Israel is to be a “holy people” – His own treasure (Heb. סגולה *s'gulah*).
 - a. Literally “jewels” – same word used in Exodus 19 – “peculiar treasure.”
9. Verse 7: “He did not set His love upon you...because you were more.”
 - a. Term “love” is קשקש *cheshek* is understood to be “non-rational love.”
 - b. Due solely to the desire of the lover; no other explanation.
 - c. Chose because Israel is the fewest; small fragment of the world.
10. Yet, Israel is chosen to accomplish something that will affect entire world.
 - a. To be the “light to the nations.”
 - b. Reminds of the parable of the mustard seed – which is the Kingdom.

“Another parable He put forth to them, saying: ‘The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, which indeed is the **least of all the seeds; but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches.’ – Matthew 13:31-32**

11. Verse 8: He chose Israel because He was committed to keeping oath given to the fathers.
12. Verse 9: “Know” that God is faithful who keeps His covenant.
 - a. He extends mercy and loves the one who keeps His commandments.
 - b. To a “thousand generations” – 40 years in a generation makes it 40,000 years.
 - c. Longer than man has been around; i.e. eternally.