

Come Follow Me
An Elo Viz Production
Week 21
Deuteronomy

Deuteronomy is a Greek word that means “the second law”. It is basically Moses recapping everything that he has taught the children of Israel in the last 40 years. As you know Moses is told that he will not enter the promised land in his lifetime and he knows he is going to die soon so he gathers all the children of Israel together which are now the children of the people that he brought out of Egypt, most of them have died and this is the second generation. So he gathers them all together and teaches them one last time. Some scholars have ironically named this book the “Gospel of Love”. That is because the word “Love” is used about 21 times. This book is so important that the book of Deuteronomy will be referred to in the rest of the old testament over 350 times. In the new testament over 95 times. So a total of 445 times this book is referred to in the rest of the Bible. Jesus in his ministry quotes Deuteronomy more than any other book in their Bible at the time of his ministry.

Deuteronomy is composed of 3 farewell speeches given over the course of a month. Chapters 1-3 Moses reviews the past, Chapters 4-26 regulations for the present, and chapters 27 to the end preparations for the future.

Now I know this is not part of the chapters to read in Deuteronomy but I think that it is very important to understand. In chapter 1 vs 6-7

“The Lord our God spake unto us in Horeb, saying, Ye have dwelt long enough in this [mount](#): Turn you, and take your journey, and go to the mount of the Amorites, and unto all *the places* nigh thereunto, in the plain, in the hills, and [in the vale](#), and in the [south](#), and by the sea side, to the land of the Canaanites, and unto Lebanon, unto the great river, the river Euphrates.”

This is the Lord telling them all that he has prepared for them, the Promised land flowing with milk and honey. If you were to take a ruler and draw it out on a map you would see that the promised land that God intended them to occupy was about 300,000 square miles. That's what God was giving them. The condition was they had to lay claim to it and take it and walk through it. At their pinnacle, under king David and king Solomon when they became very large and the people were strong and expanded. at the very best the children of Israel ever did to conquer that blessed land and possess it; Israel only occupied a total of about 30,000 square miles. 10% is all they took of what God was offering them, 10%.

Now why is that important? We may be missing amazing blessings in our lives that God has in store for us. We are missing out on those for one reason, the same reason that the Children of Israel missed out on their blessings: look at Chapter 28 verses 1-13;

“And it shall come to pass, **if** thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, **if** thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God.
-Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field.

-Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.

-Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store.

-Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out.

-The Lord shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways.

-The Lord shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto; and he shall bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

-The Lord shall establish thee a holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, **if** thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, and walk in his ways.

-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.

-And the Lord shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers to give thee.

-The Lord shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the brain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.

-And the Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; **if** that thou hearken unto the commandments of the Lord thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them.”

Did you catch all of those blessings? What a list... This is the same promise that God gives to all his Covenant people. This is the key to success in life. It is all the blessings that any human being will ever seek. But did you catch that huge/tiny word that appeared over 4 times in those verses? Verses 1,2,9, and 13: All these blessings will be yours “IF”. If you will hearken unto the voice of the Lord and keep His Commandments. This is the sum of everything that Moses was trying to teach his people for the last 40 years in the wilderness. Just listen, Just obey and God will give you everything you ever dreamed of. All these marvelous blessings are yours IF you just listen and obey. This is his promise to all of His children wherever they live in any dispensation.

Now that we know this, let's take an evaluation of our lives. Do you feel like we have all the God has promised us? Do we feel wantings in our life? Loneliness, poverty, Sadness?

God's promises are clear: Harken unto his voice and keep his commandments and your life will be changed and blessed beyond your mortal comprehension.

But how do we start or continue? I'm sure we all have some degree of these feelings of inadequacy. Some part of us that feels that we can do better, that we can do more. At this point in our lives how do we start or continue to claim the blessings that God has for each of us?

The answer is simple and the pathway is clear. “Forget yourself, your needs. and practice daily to hear and obey his Voice”. That's it, now if you are asking “How do I hear or recognize his voice?” We can start with turning off or turning down at least the noise of the world. This can be done by eliminating social media, TV, music, and friends that focably pull us away from God. And replace them with uplifting, kind, faith promoting material that brings the spirit into our lives. That's the start. Now if you're like my son who asked me the other day “I don't know what to read or listen to. Where do I find the media that helps me feel the spirit?”

Which I thought was a great question. When I made some suggestions of conference talks and books his answer was “those are boring or hard to listen to”. Which is true when you start down that path. The world has conditioned us to believe that we need to be entertained. It's interesting that we can make such snap judgments with what we like and don't like, what's interesting to watch or look at and what we pass on so quickly. This is not the way of God and His gospel. True relationships and connections take time and patience. This is true with His form of Entertainment (which is totally the wrong word to use) But i'm not sure how else to describe it. We need to teach ourselves to love and seek after Godly things, to get past those feelings of being entertained and look deep at what we can learn from every conference talk and Gospel teaching in the form of Books or music or talks. If you were to replace the worldly media with Godly media it will be extremely hard for you at first, but you will see over time that your spirit will start to shun the world and crave those Godly things that will never leave you feeling empty like the worldly things do. This is a promise... I know this is true and that it works because I have felt it in my life. That shift, the release from the adversary's grasp and the warmth of the Savior's embrace is like nothing else we could experience in the world. Once you have felt that you will never want to return to the mind numbing emptiness the world gives out so freely.

Do you remember what Jesus said to the people after they condemned the women taken in adultery? After they cast her at his feet and commanded him to judge her for her sins, he responds with grace and forgiveness, that is what all of us will receive when we go before him. John 8:10-12:

“When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I **condemn** thee: go, and **sin** no **more**. Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the **light** of the world: he that followeth me shall not **walk** in **darkness**, but shall have the light of life.

That is what he is offering: “the Light of life”, a land “flowing with milk and honey”
“Come unto me” is the invitation to all of us everyday of our lives.

Im combine my witness to that of President Hollands when he said:

“[Jesus] is saying to us, “Trust me, learn of me, do what I do. Then, when you walk where *I* am going,” He says, “we can talk about where *you* are going, and the problems you face and the troubles you have. If you will follow me, I will lead you out of darkness,” He promises. “I will give you answers to your prayers. I will give you rest to your souls.”

“My beloved friends, I know of no other way for us to succeed or to be safe amid life's many pitfalls and problems. I know of no other way for us to carry our burdens or find what Jacob in the Book of Mormon called “that happiness which is prepared for the saints.”

“My desire today is for *all* of us—to have more straightforward personal experience with the Savior's example.” “true discipleship, and the strength that comes from experiencing firsthand the majesty of His touch.”

Of this truth I am a witness. In the sacred name of Jesus Christ, Amen.