

EXODUS: Lesson Eleven, Review of Israel's History and Laws ***Deuteronomy 1 – 26***

Subject: Moses preached sermons to Israel about their history and the law.

Main Idea: Moses passed on lessons from history and the Law to the younger Israelites.

Principles:

1. *Because we are forgetful, we need to study God's word continually.*
2. *Every person chooses to enter a covenant relationship with God for him or herself.*

Introduction

By the time a person reaches their middle adult years, they often have valuable skills, work ethics, family history, spiritual values and life lessons that they want to pass on. Many of us cherish the same items and values that our parents have passed on to us.

The book of Deuteronomy opens by informing us that Moses addressed Israel on the first day of the eleventh month in the fortieth year after they left Egypt, while they were positioned just across the Jordan River from Canaan. This tells us that those to whom he was speaking were either children or had not yet been born at the time of the two momentous occasions when their parents had received the Law of God on Mount Sinai and when they had refused to enter Canaan. Moses knew he was at the end of his life. He had a great deal to pass on and this was the time to do it, for these now-adult children were on the brink of occupying Canaan. They would need the important lessons he had to teach.

The Hebrew title for this book comes from the opening words of the text: “these are the words.” The Greek translators of the Old Testament renamed it *Deuteronomy*, meaning, “second law.” The book contains Moses’ three final sermons. The presentation and recording of these sermons were his final acts of leadership. Interestingly, the format of the sermons is virtually identical to traditional Hittite treaties from the same period. They begin with a *preamble* (which we find in Exodus 1:1-5), followed by a *historical prologue* (as in Exodus 1:6-4:40), *general stipulations* (Exodus 5:1-11:32), *specific stipulations* (Exodus 12:1-26:15), *blessings and curses* (Exodus 27:1-28:68) and *witnesses* (as in Exodus 30:19, 31:19, 32:1-43).ⁱ Moses’ first sermon includes the preamble and the historical prologue. His second sermon discusses the general and specific stipulations of the covenant. The blessings and curses are found in Moses’ third sermon and will be covered in Lesson 12. However, Deuteronomy is much more than a treaty. In addition to being longer than traditional treaties, Moses’ impassioned, sermon-like form is indicative of his personal interest and fervor. He was deeply concerned about this younger generation of Israelites remembering their history, understanding the laws by which they were to live, and the significance of obeying God for the sake of their future. Moses’ concern was clearly God’s concern, for the opening verses indicate that his words had come directly from God (1:3).

I. **Moses' First Sermon** – Deuteronomy 1 – 4

A. Preamble – 1:1-5: The setting of Moses' first sermon is the first part of the preamble. In verse 2 and throughout Deuteronomy, Moses refers to Mount Sinai as "Horeb" (the one exception is in 33:2). Verse 5 concludes the preamble with the words, "Moses began to expound this law." The word translated "law" is the Hebrew word *Torah*. It means, "to inform, instruct, direct, or guide." As it turns out, the first portion of the "law" Moses expounds is actually history. In the Hebrew tradition, as evidenced in the Pentateuch, recorded history is an important part of *Torah*. It was recorded to instruct and guide us, no less than God's laws. Moses' first sermon is *Torah* in the form of a history lesson.

B. **Historical Prologue** – 1:6 – 4:40

i. Israel's Past – 1:6 – 3:29

1. *God's Command to Leave Sinai* – 1:6-8 Moses had a point to make and it came from not too distant history: the Israelites' departure from Horeb (Mount Sinai) just forty years earlier. He emphasized that they had left at God's command and with His instructions to "go in and take possession of the land [He] swore He would give [the Patriarchs]" (1:8). It was a timely encouragement that what they were about to do, they would be doing at God's express command and as a result of His promise.
2. *Leaders Appointed* – 1:9-18: Next, Moses recalled the occasion on which he had chosen men from each tribe to assist him in judging disputes (Exodus 18), emphasizing the reason he had needed help: "the Lord, the God of your ancestors, increased you a thousand times... as He promised!" (1:11). The fulfillment of that promise (Genesis 15:5; 22:17) would have encouraged the Israelites that God would also keep His promise to give them Canaan.
3. *Israel's Rebellion* – 1:19-46 Moses' encouragements were followed by warnings. After spies had been sent to reconnoiter the land and returned with a frightening report, their parents had not trusted God (1:32; Hebrews 3:12, 19) and consequently, they had refused to enter the land. Their rebellion did not end there. Once Moses told them of the consequences for their rebellion, they had sinned further by attempting to enter Canaan against God's express command (1:40-42). They had wept over the results of their rebellion, but the Lord had "turned a deaf ear." They had remained in the vicinity of Kadesh for thirty-eight years. The fact that no further information was given about those years serves to emphasize their monotony. Moses wanted to be sure the younger generation understood the severe consequences of rebelling against the Lord and that they did not repeat their parents' sins.

4. *End of Wanderings* – 2:1 – 3:29: Moses offered further encouragement and warnings from events that had occurred in the past year.
- a. *Relatives Received an Inheritance* – 2:1-23: When the forty years had almost ended, the Lord had told Moses, “You have made your way around this hill country long enough” (2:2). It had been time for Israel to head to the plains of Moab in anticipation of entering Canaan. God instructed them not to harass their relatives -- the Edomites, the Moabites, and the Ammonites -- as they traveled, since their lands were God-given. This fact would have encouraged the Israelites of the certainty of receiving their own God-given land inheritance.
 - b. *Transjordan Given to Israel* – 2:24-3:22: Furthermore, the Lord had already given the Israelites military victory over the Amorite kings, Sihon and Og, in the Transjordan. Two and a half tribes of Israel were settled there. “The Lord will do the same to all the kingdoms over there where you are going. Do not be afraid of them; the Lord your God Himself will fight for you” (3:21-22). Up to this point, the Israelites had only known Moses’ leadership, but they could be confident that Joshua would also lead them in accordance with the Lord’s instructions (3:21).
 - c. *Moses’ Ongoing Pleas*– 3:23-29: Stating that Joshua would lead Israel into Canaan reminded Moses of the occasion on which he himself had forfeited the privilege, the time he struck the rock at Meribah (Numbers 20:12). In this sermon, we learn for the first time of Moses’ repeated pleas (as recently as the past year) that the Lord allow him entrance. Finally, the Lord had said, “That is enough. Do not speak to me anymore about this matter.” However, He graciously granted Moses permission to climb Mount Pisgah and view Canaan before his death. Three times in this sermon, Moses stated that the Lord’s fury with him had been “because of [the Israelites]” (1:37, 3:26, 4:21). Moses was not dismissing his responsibility for his personal sin; instead, he was reminding the Israelites of their history of rebelliousness, that *their* sin was the sin behind his own, and thus issuing another warning.

- ii. Application – 4:1-40: After reviewing Israel’s history, Moses ended the sermon in chapter four with application to the Israelites’ present situation and with exhortations. Moses did not want these younger Israelites to make the same mistakes their parents had made. He wanted them to claim all of God’s promises and enter Canaan.
1. *Adding to or subtracting from the Law*: Moses warned them against adding to or subtracting from the Lord’s words (4:2). In the centuries since this warning, the Jews’ insistence on legalistic adherence to the “letter of the Law” amounts to adding to what was intended by “spirit of the Law” (Jesus often pointed this out to the religious leaders of His day [for instance, Matthew 12:1-14]). On the other hand, those (sometimes called “antinomians”) who live as though God’s grace releases them from keeping His moral laws have subtracted from His word.
 2. *Exhortations*: Moses’ first sermon concludes with the following exhortations: Obedience would enable the Israelites to live a full life in Canaan (4:1-4); keeping God’s commands would enable them to show the nations what it meant to be God’s people (4:5-8); teaching these things to their children was essential (4:9-14); great diligence was needed with regard to the dangers of idolatry (4:15-31); and remembering God’s greatness and glory would give them the confidence to trust Him (4:32-40). Included in Moses’ warnings regarding idolatry and the importance of remembering God’s greatness and glory (4:31-40) are a prophetic description of exactly what happened in Israel’s later history: for many generations during which they lived in Canaan, their idolatry provoked the Lord to anger until He finally scattered them among other peoples. Those who survived embraced the gods of the lands in which they were living. However, when a small, distressed remnant realized their need to seek the Lord with all their hearts, the Lord allowed them to return.

Summary Statement: Moses reviewed Israel’s history, pointing out their inclination to rebellion and God’s record of faithfulness. On fifteen different occasions in his first two sermons, Moses exhorted the Israelites to “remember.” They had not lived through all of the history he reviewed, but the lessons were ones they should have known. Like every good teacher, Moses taught by repetition.

Principle: *Because we are forgetful, we need to study God’s word continually.*

Many people will say they have never forgotten a particular piece of advice, a phrase, or a story because their parents repeated it so often. Similarly, you may not recall the details of some of the Bible's stories after one reading, or even two, but with repeated readings through the years you will! If the *GOD of the WORD* studies are your first time going through the Bible, my prayer is that the Holy Spirit will whet your appetite so that you choose to spend the rest of your life reviewing and studying it. You can use a variety of methods. Perhaps you will spend a year searching out all of God's promises, or comparing the four Gospels, or studying Biblical prayers, or carefully making your way through one of the minor prophets.

Moses told the Israelites not to let these lessons fade from their hearts but to repeat them to their children when they were sitting at home and when they were walking along the road; in other words, to repeat God's word in various times and ways until it was impressed on them. They needed to keep the Law continually before them (Deuteronomy 4:9, 6:7-9, 11:19-21) so they would not forget it (4:9, 23).

Application: Have you ever made a conscious decision to spend the rest of your life studying God's word so that all of its truths are deeply impressed on you? What technique might you employ to review some of what you have already studied? Have you considered memorizing key verses?

Every teacher knows that sharing information with others is one of the best ways to remember it for one's self. With whom might you begin sharing what you are learning? If you are already teaching, have you learned the art of repetition and review?

Transition: Since Moses ended his first sermon with a comment about enjoying long life in the land, moving on to his second sermon, he addressed the immediate need for safety by setting aside three "cities of refuge" in the Transjordan (4:41-43), where two-and-a-half Israelite tribes were busy settling. The last verses of chapter 4 introduce Moses' second sermon, which begins in chapter 5. In his first sermon, he passed on lessons from history. In the second one, he reviewed God's Law. However, he did not merely restate it. Rather, he passed on a divinely inspired commentary, that expanded and applied the Law to the new lives they would have in Canaan. Continuing to follow the pattern used in secular treaties of the day, Moses first discussed the Law's general stipulations and then its specifics.

II. Moses' Second Sermon – Deuteronomy 5 – 26

A. General Stipulations – 5:1 – 11:32

i. The Conditional Nature of the Covenant

1. *With Whom was the Covenant Made?* God first made His covenant with the Israelites at Horeb, yet in 5:3, Moses stated that it was made with “all of us who are alive here today.” He was speaking in a corporate sense; obviously, the many thousands with whom the covenant had been made at Horeb were dead.
2. *Conditional Nature of the Covenant:* The covenant given to these Israelites and their parents was distinctly different than the covenant that had been given to their ancestors more than four hundred years earlier. The Patriarchal Covenant guaranteed their forefathers the eventual inheritance of Canaan and was unconditional. It would be a grave mistake for the Israelites of Moses' day to assume they could *remain* and *prosper* in Canaan unconditionally! Similar to ancient, suzerain-vassal covenants between overlords and underlings, the Sinaitic Covenant that Moses' audience lived under was *conditional*. Enjoyment of the land and blessing in the land were conditional upon Israel's obedience to the covenant requirements. Since Moses was concerned about the Israelites continuing to enjoy and remain in the land, generation after generation, he preached on the covenant's stipulations and urged them to obey. Obedience is far more than outward conformity. It needs to flow from the heart, out of personal love for God.

- ii. The Covenant for the Younger Generation: Moses seemed to have two goals in this sermon: when the Law was first given to their parents at Sinai, the Israelites were not living in Canaan, but this younger generation soon would. Although the covenant was the same as that given at Horeb, it needed some amendments, based on the changing condition of being in the Promised Land. In his second sermon, Moses' first goal was to give a Deuteronomic law code that emphasized and expanded upon the laws in a way that was relevant to their new life in Canaan. Moses' second goal was to encourage the people to embrace the covenant *for themselves*. “In line with secular covenant arrangements, each new generation of covenant partners must subscribe to the terms sworn to by their respective ancestors.”ⁱⁱ

iii. The Ten Commandments – Chapter 5

1. *Relationship Between the Commandments*: Moses began by restating the Ten Commandments, the foundation of God’s moral law and part of the covenant’s general stipulations. All the specific stipulations flowed from these principles. The first four commandments address one’s relationship to God. Our relationship to Him is not only critical to heart-felt obedience, it is also the basis for healthy relationships with others. Thus, the last six commands involve human relationships.
2. *Israel’s Heart and God’s Heart*: The older generation had agreed to these covenant stipulations but was unable to keep them. The Lord had said to Moses, “Oh, that their hearts would be inclined to fear me and keep all my commands always, so that it might go well with them and their children after them!” (5:29). In this statement, we hear the heart of God. He knows our lives work better when we follow His laws. He has given them to us to benefit us. He wants us to enjoy full and blessed lives. “Walk in obedience to all that the Lord your God has commanded you,” Moses said, “so that you may live and prosper and prolong your days in the land that you will possess” (5:33). Yet, the Israelites’ hearts were *not* inclined to follow the Lord. Like us, they needed to have their hearts made new. That need became the basis of the “new” covenant, foretold in Jeremiah 31:31-34 and instituted by the work of Christ and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. A primary mark of a person who has entered the new covenant by faith in Christ is a sincere desire to please God out of genuine love for Him.

iv. Chapters 6-11

1. *Remembering Who They Were and What God Had Done*: After restating the moral laws of the Ten Commandments, Moses preached about the need for the Israelites to remember that they had been slaves in Egypt (6:12) and had done nothing to deserve the land of Canaan (9:4). In truth, they were rebellious and sinful people (9:7, 23). Nevertheless, God had redeemed them and was calling them to love Him, walk in obedience to Him, and hold fast to him (11:22). The obligations of the Law were to be viewed in light of *God’s grace to them as sinners*. Chapter 6 begins with a reminder that the decrees and laws of the Lord were for the purpose of blessing His people that it might go well with them (6:3)
2. *The Shema* – 6:4-9 The Hebrew word *shema* means “hear.” Deuteronomy 6:4-9 has long been known in Jewish tradition as the *Shema* on the basis of verse four’s injunction to “hear” its words. It is considered their basic statement of faith.

- a. *Verse 4* is a very important statement of monogamy. “The Lord our God, the Lord is one” was so important in consideration of the polygamous culture of Moses’ day (and many cultures around the world still today). It is on this basis that Jews have rejected the doctrine of the Trinity. In truth, the *Shema* does not preclude a Trinity but affirms oneness of purpose and consistency *within* the Godhead.
 - b. *Verse 5*: Jesus quoted verse 5 of the *Shema* when asked what was the most important of all the commands (Matthew 22:37): “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.”
 - c. *Verse 6*: The *Shema* states, “These commands that I give you today are to be on your hearts.” Deuteronomy emphasizes the importance of the heart. If we have been tempted to believe that outward compliance is what God desires, Deuteronomy makes it clear that the obedience to which He calls is an obedience that comes from the heart. We obey because we love and trust Him. Loving God is our greatest duty and privilege.
 - d. *Verses 7-9*: We are to impress upon our children that the basis for obedience is our love for God. The laws of God are to be internalized (6:6-9, 10:16). Moses urged the Israelites to tie the laws onto their hands and foreheads and write them on their doorframes. This admonition is the basis of the “mezuzahs” found today on Jewish doorframes. In earlier days, religious Jews tied “phylacteries” (small scrolls containing the *Shema*) to their foreheads.
3. *Quoted By Jesus When Tempted* – The book of Deuteronomy is quoted over and over again in the New Testament. Jesus quoted verses 13 and 16 of chapter 6 at the time of His temptations (Matthew 4:1-11). He also quoted from chapter 8 (verse 3).
 4. *Perils*: Ray Stedman has pointed out that Moses’ second sermon warns of three primary perils: the peril of prosperity, the peril of adversity, and the peril of neglecting to teach your children.ⁱⁱⁱ These perils are addressed in the remainder of chapter 6.
 - a. *The peril of prosperity*: Once the people entered the rich land of Canaan, they were to be careful not to forget the Lord, who redeemed them from slavery in Egypt (6:10-12). Prosperity puts us in danger of forgetting the Lord.

- b. *The peril of adversity*: The Israelites were to thrust their enemies from the land (6:19). If they did not, they would find themselves worshipping their gods (6:13-14) and meeting adversity. “For the Lord your God is a jealous God and His anger will burn against you, and He will destroy you from the face of the land” (6:15).
 - c. *The peril of neglecting to teach their children*: The Israelites were to teach their children that the Laws were for their benefit – to prosper them and keep them out of the slavery their forefathers had endured (6:20-25). Throughout Deuteronomy, parents are urged to look for teachable moments.
5. *Humility*: To keep the laws of God requires humility. Our great God knows better than we and is worthy of our obedience. Chapters 6-11 encouraged humility.
- a. *6:10-12*: Moses urged the Israelites to remember the Lord when they became prosperous. Gratitude is a mark of humility. Ingratitude is often the first mark of a drift away from Him (Romans 1:21).
 - b. *7:7-10*: God did not set His affection on the Israelites or choose them as His instrument to drive out the Canaanites because the Israelites were powerful (great in number), for when He swore His oath to their ancestors, they were “the fewest of all peoples” (7:7-8). God’s affection and choice were results of His grace and further reasons for humility.
 - c. *8:3-4*: The Lord had humbled them, causing them to hunger and then feeding them with manna, to teach them that “man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.” They needed to *remain* humbly dependent on Him.
 - d. *8:10-18*: After they were settled in the land, they were not to think that they prospered by their own abilities or their hearts would become proud (8:14). Their ability to produce wealth comes from the Lord (8:18).
 - e. *Chapter 9*: The Israelites needed to remember that they inherited the land because of the Canaanites’ wickedness (9:4-6), not because of their own righteousness or integrity. In reality, they had been “stiff-necked,” and that was cause for humility, for the judgment that was about to fall on the Canaanites could also fall on them. Moses illustrated this point by reminding the Israelites of their rebellion in worshipping the golden calf and refusing to enter Canaan.

- f. *Chapter 11: Loving the Lord and teaching children* is emphasized again in chapter 11. Although everything in heaven and on earth belongs to the Lord, He chose and loved *the Israelites!* This was motivation to humbly fear, obey, and “love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul” (10:12), to praise Him (10:21), to circumcise one’s hearts (10:16), and to love others (10:18).

B. Specific Stipulations – 12:1-26:19: Beginning in chapter 12, Moses preached on specific laws. His intention was not to be exhaustive, but to teach the Israelites to apply the principles of the Ten Commandments to all areas of their lives by giving certain, specific examples. In choosing these examples, he had in mind their pending possessing of the land. Although much of what he said is a repetition of laws given earlier, it was important that the younger generation heard them. Again, a good teacher often teaches by repetition. All the specific laws Moses addressed can ultimately be seen as encouragement to live holy and loving lives.

i. Living a Holy and Loving Life – Chapters 12 – 26

1. *Holiness in Worship* (Chapter 12): The entirety of this chapter is concerned with where the Israelites would worship once they entered the land. The Israelites were not to offer sacrifices in any location of their own choice for fear of becoming like the pagan nations around them, “doing as they saw fit” (12:8). Rather, they were only to sacrifice at one location, the place the Lord would choose for His dwelling (12:11). In later years, but before the Temple was built and Jerusalem became their permanent center of worship (1 Kings 8:14), Mizpah, Gilgal, and Gibeon served as successive centers of worship. When the kingdom of Israel divided, King Jeroboam encouraged the Israelites to abandon Jerusalem by setting up alternative worship locations in Dan and Bethel. As a result, the Israelites became increasingly pagan-like in their worship (1 Kings 12:26-30).
2. *Honoring God’s Word as Holy* (Chapter 13): The Israelites were warned about the danger of allowing signs and wonders (13:1-5) or the suggestions of loved ones (13:6-11) and troublemakers (13:12-17) to usurp the final authority of God’s word. Temptations have to seek sensational religious experiences, follow the religion of relatives without thinking for one’s self, and be swayed by the (often very vocal) opponents of God’s truth have always existed. Yet we must honor God’s word as our final authority.

3. *Food and Money* (Chapter 14): Tithing and observing the God-ordained distinction between clean and unclean food were also means of maintaining holy and loving lives.
4. *Generosity* (Chapter 15): Generosity was evidence of loving God and personal holiness, and it could be displayed by canceling debts, releasing servants, and giving the Lord the firstborn from their flocks and herds.
5. *Celebration and Justice* (Chapter 16)
 - a. This chapter reviews the three great festivals of Israel. While they had wandered in the wilderness, joining together for them was not difficult. Once they entered the land, all males would have to travel to the Lord's appointed worship center to properly celebrate the three great festivals and make the required sacrifices. Attendance at festivals was an opportunity to love God by remembering His goodness to them.
 - b. The chapter ends by discussing the importance of ensuring justice prevailed in the Promised Land. Throughout the Old Testament, God's people are urged to promote justice as a way of loving God and loving others (Exodus 23:2, 6; Leviticus 19:15; Deuteronomy 16:19-20, 24:17, 27:19; 1 Kings 10:9; Psalm 11:7, 99:4, 106:3; Proverbs 18:5; Isaiah 1:17, 30:18; 56:1, 61:8; Micah 6:8, etc.).
6. *Chapter 17*: Chapter 17 discusses the justice system, sentencing idolaters to capital punishment and establishing parameters for the king God would appoint over them. Although Israel was a theocracy (the Lord was their king), these laws anticipated the people's request for a human king: the Lord was to choose the king (17:15); the king was not to accumulate weapons (horses), wealth, or wives, or these would lead him astray (17:16-17); the king was to write a copy of the Law of the Lord and read it all the days of his life (17:18-19); and the king was to rule in a loving and holy manner, in submission to God's word (17:20).
7. *Chapter 18*
 - a. In chapter 18, the people were told to provide for the Lord's ministers and not to follow the evil ways of the world. They were banned from practicing human sacrifice, divination or sorcery, interpreting omens, engaging in witchcraft, casting spells, or consulting mediums or spiritists. The Lord detested these acts. Instead, they were to be holy (blameless [18:13]) before the Lord.

- b. Chapter 18 also promises the Lord would raise up a prophet from among the Israelites who would be like Moses (18:15). Although Moses may have had a succession of prophets in mind, this prophecy has been embraced in Jewish and Christian traditions alike as ultimately pointing to the Messiah.
- 8. *Chapter 19*: Chapter 19 further addresses matters concerning justice in the land. The Lord commanded the Israelites to appoint three “cities of refuge” west of the Jordan after they entered Canaan, just as Moses had done for the tribes in the Transjordan. A ruling concerning the need for witnesses in trying cases was also given. One was not enough to settle a matter; two or three witnesses were required. God’s people were to act justly, giving the benefit of the doubt, while decisively punishing confirmed sin.
- 9. *War* (Chapter 20): Chapter 20 talks about war. The Lord would ensure their victory if they led holy and loving lives. They should not fear reducing the size of their army since the Lord would fight on their behalf. Those who were setting up new households, were engaged or newly married, or simply afraid should not be sent to war. Many of their young and strong men would have been excused, but Israel had nothing to prove in going to war. They were to destroy completely all people groups in close proximity to them. They were God’s appointed instruments of justice on these people. If they failed to do so, these people would become a snare to their holiness. However, they were to attempt to live at peace with distant enemies.
- 10. *Chapters 21-26* discuss acknowledging that sin leads to death, not showing favoritism within one’s family, a child’s fear of the Lord and respect for their parents, treating one another with love and respect, and living just and holy lives. There are two particular passages of interest.
 - a. Deuteronomy 24:1-4 gives a ruling concerning divorce, a passage to which the religious leaders of Jesus’ day referred when they asked him about divorce (Matthew 19:3, 7). The passage neither condones nor condemns divorce but is primarily focused on a ruling for remarriage. A man was forbidden to remarry a woman he had divorced for “indecent” (presumably meaning marital unfaithfulness [Matthew 5:31-32, 19:7-9]) if she had been married to another man in the meantime. The reason given is simply that to do so “would be detestable in the eyes of the Lord”

(24:4). Jesus clearly stated that divorce was never God's ideal (Matthew 19:4-6).

- b. Deuteronomy 25:5-10 discusses levirate marriage, a provision for those who died without leaving an heir. In levirate marriage, the brother of a dead man would marry his brother's widow and provide a child to carry on the name of the dead brother. A living brother who took such a role came to be known as a "kinsman-redeemer." The kinsman-redeemer is a type of the coming Messiah. He redeemed the bride of the dead brother, paying the price, and doing what the dead brother could not do for himself in order to ensure his name was "not blotted out" (Deuteronomy 25:6). In the book of Ruth, Boaz' marriage to Ruth is an example.

Summary Statement: As we will see in the next lesson, the information Moses was giving the Israelites was preparing them for a covenant renewal. Those who heard him preach on the law's stipulations had to consider whether they were willing to enter into the covenant. Their parents had faced the same decision. Moses was faithful in explaining the covenant's terms, but each individual in every generation had to decide to whether or not they would embrace it.

Principle: *Every person chooses to enter a covenant relationship with God for him or herself.*

Application: God has no grandchildren, only children. We cannot inherit a covenant relationship with Him. We must not think that we belong to Him by association with a church, a Bible study, or because of our relatives' faith. We enter the covenant relationship God offers us today by *personal faith* in Christ and His atonement. Entering that covenant and receiving His salvation is as simple as declaring with one's mouth that "Jesus is Lord" and believing in one's heart that God raised Him from the dead (Romans 10:9-10). It is a matter of *outward profession* and *inner trust*. It is not something someone else can do for us, nor we for anyone else. It is a personal choice.

Moses wanted the Israelites to succeed. He knew that receiving the Law from their parents was not enough. They had to embrace the covenant for themselves. They needed a personal love for God. Love for Him was at the heart of their success.

Conclusion

Just as Moses passed on lessons from history and the Law to the younger Israelites, we are obligated to pass on God’s truth. Jesus commanded us to do so (Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 1:8). Paul wondered how unbelievers can “call on the one they have not believed in” or “believe in the one of whom they have not heard.” “How can they hear without someone preaching to them? ... As it is written, ‘how beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!’” (Romans 10:14-15).

Not everyone will be eager to receive what we share. Those who sense we truly care for them and genuinely love God will be the most receptive to our message. It is hard to miss Moses’ personal love for the Lord and for the Israelites in reading Deuteronomy. Like Moses, our responsibility is to appropriately pass on the news, love those with whom we share (Leviticus 19:18), and love the Lord our God with all our hearts, souls, and strength (Deuteronomy 6:5). To the world, genuine love for God and for others is a curiosity. Are you as eager as Moses was to pass on God’s truth while you still have the opportunity? Does your life reflect a genuine love for God and others? Would those with whom you share God’s truth answer the same?

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- ⁱ Merrill, E. H. (1994). *Deuteronomy* (Vol. 4, pp. 29–30). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.
- ⁱⁱ Merrill, E. H. (1994). *Deuteronomy* (Vol. 4, p. 141). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Stedman, Ray C. (2012, by Elaine Stedman). *Adventuring Through the Bible* (p. 108). Grand Rapids, MI: Discovery House Publishers.