

THE FIFTH BOOK OF MOSES, CALLED

DEUTERONOMY

This book repeats much of the history and of the laws contained in the three foregoing books: Moses delivered it to Israel a little before his death, both by word of mouth, that it might affect, and by writing, that it might abide. The men of that generation to which the law was first given were all dead, and a new generation was sprung up, to whom God would have it repeated by Moses himself, now they were going to possess the land of Canaan. The wonderful love of God to his church is set forth in this book; how he ever preserved his church for his own mercies sake, and would still have his name called upon among them. Such are the general outlines of this book, the whole of which shows Moses' love for Israel, and marks him an eminent type of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us apply the exhortations and persuasions to our own consciences, to excite our minds to a believing, grateful obedience to the commands of God.

CHAPTER 1

The words Moses spake to Israel in the plains of Moab, The promise of Canaan. (1-8) Judges provided for the people. (9-18) Of the sending the spies-God's anger for their unbelief and disobedience. (19-46)

◀ **Deuteronomy 1:1**

Vs. 1-8: Moses spake to the people all the Lord had given him in commandment. Horeb was but eleven days distant from Kadesh-barnea. This was to remind them that their own bad conduct had occasioned their tedious wanderings; that they might the more readily understand the advantages of obedience. They must now go forward. Though God brings his people into trouble and affliction, he knows when they have been tried long enough. When God commands us to go forward in our Christian course, he sets the heavenly Canaan before us for our encouragement.

Deuteronomy 1:9

Vs. 9-18: Moses reminds the people of the happy constitution of their government, which might make them all safe and easy, if it was not their own fault. He owns the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham, and prays for the further accomplishment of it. We are not straitened in the power and goodness of God; why should we be straitened in our own faith and hope? Good laws were given to the Israelites, and good men were to see to the execution of them, which showed God's goodness to them, and the care of Moses.

Deuteronomy 1:19

Vs. 19-46: Moses reminds the Israelites of their march from Horeb to Kadesh-barnea, through that great and terrible wilderness. He shows how near they were to a happy settlement in Canaan. It will aggravate the eternal ruin of hypocrites, that they were not far from the kingdom of God. As if it were not enough that they were sure of their God before them, they would send men before them. Never any looked into the Holy Land, but they must own it to be a good land. And was there any cause to distrust this God? An unbelieving heart was at the bottom of all this. All disobedience to God's laws, and distrust of his power and goodness, flow from disbelief of his word, as all true obedience springs from faith. It is profitable for us to divide our past lives into distinct periods; to give thanks to God for the mercies we have received in each, to confess and seek the forgiveness of all the sins we can remember; and thus to renew our acceptance of God's salvation, and our surrender of ourselves to his service. Our own plans seldom avail to good purpose; while courage in the exercise of faith, and in the path of duty, enables the believer to follow the Lord fully, to disregard all that opposes, to triumph over all opposition, and to take firm hold upon the promised blessings.

CHAPTER 2

The Edomites to be spared. (1-7) The Moabites and Ammonites to be spared. (8-23) The Amorites to be destroyed. (24-37)

◀◀◀ Deuteronomy 2:1

Vs. 1-7: Only a short account of the long stay of Israel in the wilderness is given. God not only chastised them for their murmuring and unbelief, but prepared them for Canaan; by humbling them for sin, teaching them to mortify their lusts, to follow God, and to comfort themselves in him. Though Israel may be long kept waiting for deliverance and enlargement, it will come at last. Before God brought Israel to destroy their enemies in Canaan, he taught them to forgive their enemies in Edom. They must not, under pretense of God's covenant and conduct, think to seize all they could lay hands on. Dominion is not founded in grace. God's Israel shall be well placed, but must not expect to be placed alone in the midst of the earth. Religion must never be made a cloak for injustice. Scorn to be beholden to Edomites, when thou hast an all-sufficient God to depend upon. Use what thou hast, use it cheerfully. Thou hast experienced the care of the Divine providence, never use any crooked methods for thy supply. All this is equally to be applied to the experience of the believer.

◀◀◀ Deuteronomy 2:8

Vs. 8-23: We have the origin of the Moabites, Edomites, and Ammonites. Moses also gives an instance older than any of these; the Caphtorims drove the Avims out of their country. These revolutions show what uncertain things worldly possessions are. It was so of old, and ever will be so. Families decline, and from them estates are transferred to families that increase; so little continuance is there in these things. This is recorded to encourage the children of Israel. If the providence of God has done this for Moabites and Ammonites, much more would his promise do it for Israel, his peculiar people. Cautions are given not to meddle with Moabites and Ammonites. Even wicked men must not be wronged. God gives and preserves outward blessings to wicked men; these are not the best things, he has better in store for his own children.

Deuteronomy 2:24

Vs. 24-37: God tried his people, by forbidding them to meddle with the rich countries of Moab and Ammon. He gives them possession of the country of the Amorites. If we keep from what God forbids, we shall not lose by our obedience. The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; and he gives it to whom he pleases; but when there is no express direction, none can plead his grant for such proceedings. Though God assured the Israelites that the land should be their own, yet they must contend with the enemy. What God gives we must endeavor to get. What a new world did Israel now come into! Much more joyful will the change be, which holy souls will experience, when they remove out of the wilderness of this world to the better country, that is, the heavenly, to the city that has foundations. Let us, by reflecting upon God's dealings with his people Israel, be led to meditate upon our years spent in vanity, through our transgressions. But happy are those whom Jesus has delivered from the wrath to come. To whom he hath given the earnest of his Spirit in their hearts. Their inheritance cannot be affected by revolutions of kingdoms, or changes in earthly possessions.

CHAPTER 3

The conquest of Og king of Bashan. (1-11) The land of Gilead and Bashan. (12-20) Moses encourages Joshua. (21-29)

<REF> **Deuteronomy 3:1**

Vs. 1-11: Og was very powerful, but he did not take warning by the ruin of Sihon, and desire conditions of peace. He trusted his own strength, and so was hardened to his destruction. Those not awakened by the judgments of God on others, ripen for the like judgments on themselves.

<REF> **Deuteronomy 3:12**

Vs. 12-20: This country was settled on the Reubenites, Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh: see <REF> Numbers 32. Moses repeats the condition of the grant to which they agreed. When at rest, we should desire to see our brethren at rest too, and should be ready to do what we can towards it; for we are not born for ourselves, but are members one of another.

<REF> **Deuteronomy 3:21**

Vs. 21-29: Moses encouraged Joshua, who was to succeed him. Thus the aged and experienced in the service of God, should do all they can to strengthen the hands of those who are young, and setting out in religion. Consider what God has done, what God has promised. If God be for us, who can be against us, so as to prevail? We reproach our Leader if we follow him trembling. Moses prayed, that, if it were God's will, he might go before Israel, over Jordan into Canaan. We should never allow any desires in our hearts, which we cannot in faith offer up to God by prayer. God's answer to this prayer had a mixture of mercy and judgment. God sees it good to deny many things we desire. He may accept our prayers, yet not grant us the very things we pray for. It God does not by his providence give us what we desire, yet if by his grace he makes us content without, it comes to much the same. Let it suffice thee to have God for thy Father, and heaven for thy portion, though thou hast not every thing thou wouldst have in the world. God promised Moses a sight of Canaan from the top of Pisgah. Though he should not have the possession of it, he

should have the prospect of it. Even great believers, in this present state, see heaven but at a distance. God provided him a successor. It is a comfort to the friends of the church of Christ, to see God's work likely to be carried on by others, when they are silent in the dust. And if we have the earnest and prospect of heaven, let these suffice us; let us submit to the Lord's will, and speak no more to Him of matters which he sees good to refuse us.

CHAPTER 4

Earnest exhortations to obedience, and dissuasives from idolatry.

(1-23) Warnings against disobedience, and promises of mercy.

(24-40) Cities of refuge appointed. (41-49)

Deuteronomy 4:1

Vs. 1-23: The power and love of God to Israel are here made the ground and reason of a number of cautions and serious warnings; and although there is much reference to their national covenant, yet all may be applied to those who live under the gospel. What are laws made for but to be observed and obeyed? Our obedience as individuals cannot merit salvation; but it is the only evidence that we are partakers of the gift of God, which is eternal life through Jesus Christ. Considering how many temptations we are compassed with, and what corrupt desires we have in our bosoms, we have great need to keep our hearts with all diligence. Those cannot walk aright, who walk carelessly. Moses charges particularly to take heed of the sin of idolatry. He shows how weak the temptation would be to those who thought aright; for these pretended gods, the sun, moon, and stars, were only blessings which the Lord their God had imparted to all nations. It is absurd to worship them; shall we serve those that were made to serve us? Take heed lest ye forget the covenant of the Lord your God. We must take heed lest at any time we forget our religion. Care, caution, and watchfulness, are helps against a bad memory.

Deuteronomy 4:24

Vs. 24-40: Moses urged the greatness, glory, and goodness of God. Did we consider what a God he is with whom we have to do, we should surely make conscience of our duty to him, and not dare to sin against him. Shall we forsake a merciful God, who will never forsake us, if we are faithful unto him? Whither can we go? Let us be held to our duty by the bonds of love, and prevailed with by the mercies of God to cleave to him. Moses urged God's authority over them, and their obligations to him. In keeping God's commandments they would act wisely for themselves. The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom. Those who enjoy the benefit of Divine light and laws, ought to support their character for wisdom and honor, that God

may be glorified thereby. Those who call upon God, shall certainly find him within call, ready to give an answer of peace to every prayer of faith. All these statutes and judgments of the Divine law are just and righteous, above the statutes and judgments of any of the nations. What they saw at mount Sinai, gave an earnest of the day of judgment, in which the Lord Jesus shall be revealed in flaming fire. They must also remember what they heard at mount Sinai. God manifests himself in the works of the creation, without speech or language, yet their voice is heard, ^{
}Psalm 19:1,3; but to Israel he made himself known by speech and language, condescending to their weakness. The rise of this nation was quite different from the origin of all other nations. See the reasons of free grace; we are not beloved for our own sakes, but for Christ's sake. Moses urged the certain benefit and advantage of obedience. This argument he had begun with, ver. 1, That ye may live, and go in and possess the land; and this he concludes with, ver. 40, That it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee. He reminds them that their prosperity would depend upon their piety. Apostasy from God would undoubtedly be the ruin of their nation. He foresees their revolt from God to idols. Those, and those only, shall find God to their comfort, who seek him with all their heart. Afflictions engage and quicken us to seek God; and, by the grace of God working with them, many are thus brought back to their right mind. When these things are come upon thee, turn to the Lord thy God, for thou seest what comes of turning from him. Let all the arguments be laid together, and then say, if religion has not reason on its side. None cast off the government of their God, but those who first abandon the understanding of a man.

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}Deuteronomy 4:41

Vs. 41-49: Here is the introduction to another discourse, or sermon, Moses preached to Israel, which we have in the following chapters. He sets the law before them, as the rule they were to work by, the way they were to walk in. He sets it before them, as the glass in which they were to see their natural face, that, looking into this perfect law of liberty, they might continue therein. These are the laws, given when Israel was newly come out of Egypt; and they were now repeated. Moses gave these laws in charge, while they encamped over against Beth-peor, an idol place of the Moabites. Their present triumphs were a powerful argument for obedience. And we should understand our own situation as sinners, and

the nature of that gracious covenant to which we are invited. Therein greater things are shown to us than ever Israel saw from mount Sinai; greater mercies are given to us than they experienced in the wilderness, or in Canaan. One speaks to us, who is of infinitely greater dignity than Moses; who bare our sins upon the cross; and pleads with us by His dying love.

CHAPTER 5

The covenant in Horeb. (1-5) The ten commandments repeated. (6-22) The request of the people that the law might be delivered through Moses. (23-33)

Deuteronomy 5:1

Vs. 1-5: Moses demands attention. When we hear the word of God we must learn it; and what we have learned we must put in practice, for that is the end of hearing and learning; not to fill our heads with notions, or our mouths with talk, but to direct our affection and conduct.

Deuteronomy 5:6

Vs. 6-22: There is some variation here from Exodus 20 as between the Lord's prayer in Matthew 6 and Luke 11. It is more necessary that we tie ourselves to the things, than to the words unalterably. The original reason for hallowing the Sabbath, taken from God's resting from the work of creation on the seventh day, is not here mentioned. Though this ever remains in force, it is not the only reason. Here it is taken from Israel's deliverance out of Egypt; for that was typical of our redemption by Jesus Christ, in remembrance of which the Christian Sabbath was to be observed. In the resurrection of Christ we were brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God, with a mighty hand, and an outstretched arm. How sweet is it to a soul truly distressed under the terrors of a broken law, to hear the mild and soul-reviving language of the gospel!

Deuteronomy 5:23

Vs. 23-33: Moses refers to the consternation caused by the terror with which the law was given. God's appearances have always been terrible to man, ever since the fall; but Christ, having taken away sin, invites us to come boldly to the throne of grace. They were in a good mind, under the strong convictions of the word they heard. Many have their consciences startled by the law who have them not purified; fair promises are extorted from them, but no good principles are fixed and rooted in them. God commended what they said. He desires the welfare and salvation of poor

sinners. He has given abundant proof that he does so; he gives us time and space to repent. He has sent his Son to redeem us, promised his Spirit to those who pray for him, and has declared that he has no pleasure in the ruin of sinners. It would be well with many, if there were always such a heart in them, as there seems to be sometimes; when they are under conviction of sin, or the rebukes of providence, or when they come to look death in the face. The only way to be happy, is to be holy. Say to the righteous, It shall be well with them. Let believers make it more and more their study and delight, to do as the Lord God hath commanded.

CHAPTER 6

A persuasive to obedience. (1-3) An exhortation to obedience. (4,5) Obedience taught. (6-16) General precepts, Instructions to be given to their children. (17-25)

Deuteronomy 6:1

Vs. 1-3: In this and the like passages, the “commandments” seem to denote the moral law, the “statutes” the ceremonial law, and the “judgments” the law by which the judges decided. Moses taught the people all that, and that only, which God commanded him to teach. Thus Christ’s ministers are to teach his churches all he has commanded, neither more nor less, ⁴⁸¹Matthew 28:20. The fear of God in the heart will be the most powerful principle of obedience. It is highly desirable that not we only, but our children, and our children’s children, may fear the Lord. Religion and righteousness advance and secure the prosperity of any people.

Deuteronomy 6:4

Vs. 4, 5: Here is a brief summary of religion, containing the first principles of faith and obedience. Jehovah our God is the only living and true God; he only is God, and he is but One God. Let us not desire to have any other. The three-fold mention of the Divine names, and the plural number of the word translated God, seem plainly to intimate a Trinity of persons, even in this express declaration of the unity of the Godhead. Happy those who have this one Lord for their God. It is better to have one fountain than a thousand cisterns; one all-sufficient God than a thousand insufficient friends. This is the first and great commandment of God’s law, that we love him; and that we do all parts of our duty to him from a principle of love; My son, give me thine heart. We are to love God with all our heart, and soul, and might. That is,

1. With a sincere love; not in word and tongue only, but inwardly in truth.

2. With a strong love. He that is our All, must have our all, and none but he.
3. With a superlative love; we must love God above any creature whatever, and love nothing but what we love for him.
4. With an intelligent love. To love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, we must see good cause to love him.
5. With an entire love; he is ONE, our hearts must be united in his love. Oh that this love of God may be shed abroad in our hearts!

Deuteronomy 6:6

Vs. 6-16: Here are means for maintaining and keeping up religion in our hearts and houses.

1. Meditation. God's words must be laid up in our hearts, that our thoughts may be daily employed about them.
2. The religious education of children. Often repeat these things to them. Be careful and exact in teaching thy children. Teach these truths to all who are any way under thy care.
3. Pious discourse. Thou shalt talk of these things with due reverence and seriousness, for the benefit not only of thy children, but of thy servants, thy friends and companions. Take all occasions to discourse with those about thee, not of matters of doubtful disputation, but of the plain truths and laws of God, and the things that belong to our peace.
4. Frequent reading of the word. God appointed them to write sentences of the law upon their walls, and in scrolls of parchment to be worn about their wrists. This seems to have been binding in the letter of it to the Jews, as it is to us in the intent of it; which is, that we should by all means make the word of God familiar to us; that we may have it ready to use upon all occasions, to restrain us from sin, and direct us in duty.

We must never be ashamed to own our religion, nor to own ourselves under its check and government. Here is a caution not to forget God in a day of prosperity and plenty. When they came easily by the gift, they

would be apt to grow secure, and unmindful of the Giver. Therefore be careful, when thou liest safe and soft, lest thou forget the Lord. When the world smiles, we are apt to make court to it, and expect our happiness in it, and so we forget Him who is our only portion and rest. There is need of great care and caution at such a time. Then beware; being warned of your danger, stand upon your guard. Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God; neither by despairing of his power and goodness, while we keep in the way of our duty; nor by presuming upon it, when we turn aside out of that way.

Deuteronomy 6:17

Vs. 17-25: Moses gives charge to keep God's commandments. Negligence will ruin us; but we cannot be saved without diligence. It is our interest, as well as our duty, to be religious. It will be our life. Godliness has the promise of the continuance and comfort of the life that now is, as far as it is for God's glory. It will be our righteousness. It is only through the Mediator we can be righteous before God. The knowledge of the spirituality and excellencies of the holy law of God, is suited to show sinful man his need of a Savior, and to prepare his heart to welcome a free salvation. The gospel honors the law, not only in the perfect obedience of the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ; but in that it is a plan for bringing back apostate rebels and enemies, by repentance, faith, forgiveness, and renewing grace, to love God above all things, even in this world; and in the world above, to love him perfectly, even as angels love him.

CHAPTER 7

Intercourse with the Canaanites forbidden. (1-11) Promises if they were obedient. (12-26)

Deuteronomy 7:1

Vs. 1-11: Here is a strict caution against all friendship and fellowship with idols and idolaters. Those who are in communion with God, must have no communication with the unfruitful works of darkness. Limiting the orders to destroy, to the nations here mentioned, plainly shows that after ages were not to draw this into a precedent. A proper understanding of the evil of sin, and of the mystery of a crucified Savior, will enable us to perceive the justice of God in all his punishments, temporal and eternal. We must deal decidedly with our lusts that war against our souls; let us not show them any mercy, but mortify, and crucify, and utterly destroy them. Thousands in the world that now is, have been undone by ungodly marriages; for there is more likelihood that the good will be perverted, than that the bad will be converted. Those who, in choosing yoke-fellows, keep not within the bounds of a profession of religion, cannot promise themselves helps meet for them.

Deuteronomy 7:12

Vs. 12-26: We are in danger of having fellowship with the works of darkness if we take pleasure in fellowship with those who do such works. Whatever brings us into a snare, brings us under a curse. Let us be constant to our duty, and we cannot question the constancy of God's mercy. Diseases are God's servants; they go where he sends them, and do what he bids them. It is therefore good for the health of our bodies, thoroughly to mortify the sin of our souls; which is our rule of duty. Yet sin is never totally destroyed in this world; and it actually prevails in us much more than it would do, if we were watchful and diligent. In all this the Lord acts according to the counsel of his own will; but that counsel being hid from us, forms no excuse for our sloth and negligence, of which it is in no degree the cause. We must not think, that because the deliverance of the church, and the destruction of the enemies of the soul, are not done immediately, therefore they will never be done. God will do his own work in his own

method and time; and we may be sure that they are always the best. Thus corruption is driven out of the hearts of believers by little and little. The work of sanctification is carried on gradually; but at length there will be a complete victory. Pride, security, and other sins that are common effects of prosperity, are enemies more dangerous than beasts of the field, and more apt to increase upon us.

CHAPTER 8

Exhortations and cautions, enforced by the Lord's former dealings with Israel, and his promises. (1-9) Exhortations and cautions further enforced. (10-20)

Deuteronomy 8:1

Vs. 1-9: Obedience must be,

- 1.** Careful, observe to do;
- 2.** Universal, to do all the commandments; and
- 3.** From a good principle, with a regard to God as the Lord, and their God, and with a holy fear of him. To engage them to this obedience, Moses directs them to look back.

It is good to remember all the ways, both of God's providence and grace, by which he has led us through this wilderness, that we may cheerfully serve him and trust in him. They must remember the straits they were sometimes brought into, for mortifying their pride, and manifesting their perverseness; to prove them, that they and others might know all that was in their heart, and that all might see that God chose them, not for any thing in them which might recommend them to his favor. They must remember the miraculous supplies of food and raiment granted them. Let none of God's children distrust their Father, nor take any sinful course for the supply of their necessities. Some way or other, God will provide for them in the way of duty and honest diligence, and verily they shall be fed. It may be applied spiritually; the word of God is the food of the soul. Christ is the word of God; by him we live. They must also remember the rebukes they had been under, and not without need. This use we should make of all our afflictions; by them let us be quickened to our duty. Moses also directs them to look forward to Canaan. Look which way we will, both to look back and to look forward, will furnish us with arguments for obedience. Moses saw in that land a type of the better country. The gospel church is the New Testament Canaan, watered with the Spirit in his gifts and graces, planted with trees of righteousness, bearing fruits of

righteousness. Heaven is the good land, in which nothing is wanting, and where is fullness of joy.

Deuteronomy 8:10

Vs. 10-20: Moses directs to the duty of a prosperous condition. Let them always remember their Benefactor. In everything we must give thanks. Moses arms them against the temptations of a prosperous condition. When men possess large estates, or are engaged in profitable business, they find the temptation to pride, forgetfulness of God, and carnal-mindedness, very strong; and they are anxious and troubled about many things. In this the believing poor have the advantage; they more easily perceive their supplies coming from the Lord in answer to the prayer of faith; and, strange as it may seem, they find less difficulty in simply trusting him for daily bread. They taste a sweetness therein, which is generally unknown to the rich, while they are also freed from many of their temptations. Forget not God's former dealings with thee. Here is the great secret of Divine Providence. Infinite wisdom and goodness are the source of all the changes and trials believers experience. Israel had many bitter trials, but it was "to do them good." Pride is natural to the human heart. Would one suppose that such a people, after their slavery at the brick-kilns, should need the thorns of the wilderness to humble them? But such is man! And they were proved that they might be humbled. None of us live a single week without giving proofs of our weakness, folly, and depravity. To broken-hearted souls alone the Savior is precious indeed. Nothing can render the most suitable outward and inward trials effectual, but the power of the Spirit of God. See here how God's giving and our getting are reconciled, and apply it to spiritual wealth. All God's gifts are in pursuance of his promises. Moses repeats the warning he had often given of the fatal consequences of forsaking God. Those who follow others in sin, will follow them to destruction. If we do as sinners do, we must expect to fare as sinners fare.

CHAPTER 9

The Israelites not to think their success came by their own worthiness. (1-6) Moses reminds the Israelites of their rebellions. (7-29)

Deuteronomy 9:1

Vs. 1-6: Moses represents the strength of the enemies they were now to encounter. This was to drive them to God, and engage their hope in him. He assures them of victory, by the presence of God with them. He cautions them not to have the least thought of their own righteousness, as if that procured this favor at God's hand. In Christ we have both righteousness and strength; in Him we must glory, not in ourselves, nor in any sufficiency of our own. It is for the wickedness of these nations that God drives them out. All whom God rejects, are rejected for their own wickedness; but none whom he accepts are accepted for their own righteousness. Thus boasting is for ever done away: see Ephesians 2:9, 11, 12.

Deuteronomy 9:7

Vs. 7-29: That the Israelites might have no pretense to think that God brought them to Canaan for their righteousness, Moses shows what a miracle of mercy it was, that they had not been destroyed in the wilderness. It is good for us often to remember against ourselves, with sorrow and shame, our former sins; that we may see how much we are indebted to free grace, and may humbly own that we never merited any thing but wrath and the curse at God's hand. For so strong is our propensity to pride, that it will creep in under one pretense or another. We are ready to fancy that our righteousness has got for us the special favor of the Lord, though in reality our wickedness is more plain than our weakness. But when the secret history of every man's life shall be brought forth at the day of judgment, all the world will be proved guilty before God. At present, One pleads for us before the mercy-seat, who not only fasted, but died upon the cross for our sins; through whom we may approach, though self-condemned sinners, and beseech for undeserved mercy and for eternal life, as the gift of God in Him. Let us refer all the

victory, all the glory, and all the praise, to Him who alone bringeth salvation.

CHAPTER 10

God's mercies to Israel after their rebellion. (1-11) An exhortation to obedience. (12-22)

Deuteronomy 10:1

Vs. 1-11: Moses reminded the Israelites of God's great mercy to them, notwithstanding their provocations. There were four things in and by which the Lord showed himself reconciled to Israel. God gave them his law. Thus God has entrusted us with Bibles, Sabbaths, and sacraments, as tokens of his presence and favor. God led them forward toward Canaan. He appointed a standing ministry among them for holy things. And now, under the gospel, when the pouring forth of the Spirit is more plentiful and powerful, the succession is kept up by the Spirit's work on men's hearts, qualifying and making some willing for that work in every age. God accepted Moses as an advocate or intercessor for them, and therefore appointed him to be their prince and leader. Moses was a type of Christ, who ever lives, pleading for us, and has all power in heaven and in earth.

Deuteronomy 10:12

Vs. 12-22: We are here taught our duty to God in our principles and our practices. We must fear the Lord our God. We must love him, and delight in communion with him. We must walk in the ways in which he has appointed us to walk. We must serve him with all our heart and soul. What we do in his service we must do cheerfully, and with good will. We must keep his commandments. There is true honor and pleasure in obedience. We must give honor to God; and to him we must cleave, as one we love and delight in, trust in, and from whom we have great expectations. We are here taught our duty to our neighbor. God's common gifts to mankind oblige us to honor all men. And those who have themselves been in distress, and have found mercy with God, should be ready to show kindness to those who are in the like distress. We are here taught our duty to ourselves. Circumcise your hearts. Cast away all corrupt affection and unequaled, which hinder you from fearing and loving God. By nature we do not love God. This is original sin, the source whence our wickedness proceeds; and the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to

the law of God, neither indeed can be; so then they that are in the flesh cannot please God, ~~ROM~~ Romans 8:5-9. Let us, without delay or reserve, come and cleave to our reconciled God in Jesus Christ, that we may love, serve, and obey him acceptably, and be daily changed into his image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord. Consider the greatness and glory of God; and his goodness and grace; these persuade us to our duty. Blessed Spirit! Oh for thy purifying, persevering, and renewing influences, that being called out of the state of strangers, such as our fathers were, we may be found among the number of the children of God, and that our lot may be among the saints.

CHAPTER 11

The great work God wrought for Israel. (1-7) Promises and threatenings. (8-17) Careful study of God's word requisite. (18-25) The blessings and the curse set forth. (26-32)

Deuteronomy 11:1

Vs. 1-7: Observe the connection of these two; Thou shalt love the Lord, and keep his charge. Love will work in obedience, and that only is acceptable obedience which flows from a principle of love, ^{<GRB>}1 John 5:3. Moses recounts some of the great and terrible works of God which their eyes had seen. What our eyes have seen, especially in our early days, should affect us, and make us better long afterwards.

Deuteronomy 11:8

Vs. 8-17: Moses sets before them, for the future, life and death, the blessing and the curse, according as they did or did not keep God's commandment. Sin tends to shorten the days of all men, and to shorten the days of a people's prosperity. God will bless them with an abundance of all good things, if they would love him and serve him. Godliness has the promise of the life that now is; but the favor of God shall put gladness into the heart, more than the increase of corn, and wine, and oil. Revolt from God to idols would certainly be their ruin. Take heed that your hearts be not deceived. All who forsake God to set their affection upon any creature, will find themselves wretchedly deceived, to their own destruction; and this will make it worse, that it was for want of taking heed.

Deuteronomy 11:18

Vs. 18-25: Let all be directed by the three rules here given.

1. Let our hearts be filled with the word of God. There will not be good practices in the life, unless there be good thoughts, good affection, and good principles in the heart.
2. Let our eyes be fixed upon the word of God, having constant regard to it as the guide of our way, as the rule of our work, Psalms 119:30.

3. Let our tongues be employed about the word of God. Nor will any thing do more to cause prosperity, and keeping up religion in a nation, than the good education of children.

Deuteronomy 11:26

Vs. 26-32: Moses sums up all the arguments for obedience in two words, the blessing and the curse. He charged the people to choose which they would have. Moses then appointed a public and solemn proclamation of the blessing and curse, to be made upon the two mountains of Gerizim and Ebal. We have broken the law, and are under its curse, without remedy from ourselves. In mercy, the gospel again sets before us a blessing and a curse. A blessing, if we obey the call to repentance, to faith in Christ, and newness of heart and life through him; an awful curse, if we neglect so great salvation. Let us thankfully welcome these glad tidings of great joy; and let us not harden our hearts, but hear this voice of God while it is called today, and while he invites us to come to him upon a mercy-seat. Let us be diligent to make our calling and election sure.

CHAPTER 12

Monuments of idolatry to be destroyed. (1-4) The place of God's service to be kept. (5-32)

Deuteronomy 12:1

Vs. 1-4: Moses comes to the statutes he had to give in charge to Israel; and begins with such as relate to the worship of God. The Israelites are charged not to bring the rites and usages of idolaters into the worship of God; not under color of making it better. We cannot serve God and mammon; nor worship the true God and idols; nor depend upon Christ Jesus and upon superstitious or self-righteous confidences.

Deuteronomy 12:5

Vs. 5-32: The command to bring ALL the sacrifices to the door of the tabernacle, was now explained with reference to the promised land. As to moral service, then, as now, men might pray and worship every where, as they did in their synagogues. The place which God would choose, is said to be the place where he would put his name. It was to be his habitation, where, as King of Israel, he would be found by all who reverently sought him. Now, under the gospel, we have no temple or altar that sanctifies the gift but Christ only: and as to the places of worship, the prophets foretold that in every place the spiritual incense should be offered, ³⁰¹¹Malachi 1:11. Our Savior declared, that those are accepted as true worshippers, who worship God in sincerity and truth, without regard either to this mountain or Jerusalem, ³⁰⁰²John 4:21. And a devout Israelite might honor God, keep up communion with him, and obtain mercy from him, though he had no opportunity of bringing a sacrifice to his altar. Work for God should be done with holy joy and cheerfulness. Even children and servants must rejoice before God; the services of religion are to be a pleasure, and not a task or drudgery. It is the duty of people to be kind to their ministers, who teach them well, and set them good examples. As long as we live, we need their assistance, till we come to that world where ordinances will not be needed. Whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we are commanded to do all to the glory of God. And we must do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to the Father through him. They must not even

inquire into the modes and forms of idolatrous worship. What good would it do them to know those depths of Satan? And our inward satisfaction will be more and more, as we abound in love and good works, which spring from faith and the in-dwelling Spirit of Christ.

CHAPTER 13

Enticers to idolatry to be put to death. (1-5) Relations who entice to idolatry not to be spared. (6-11) Idolatrous cities not to be spared. (12-18)

Deuteronomy 13:1

Vs. 1-5: Moses had cautioned against the peril that might arise from the Canaanites. Here he cautions against the rise of idolatry among themselves. It is needful for us to be well acquainted with the truths and precepts of the Bible; for we may expect to be proved by temptations of evil under the appearance of good, of error in the guise of truth; nor can any thing rightly oppose such temptations, but the plain, express testimony of God's word to the contrary. And it would be a proof of sincere affection for God, that, notwithstanding specious pretenses, they should not be wrought upon to forsake God, and follow other gods to serve them.

Deuteronomy 13:6

Vs. 6-11: It is the policy of Satan to try to lead us to evil by those whom we love, whom we least suspect of any ill design, and whom we are desirous to please, and apt to conform to. The enticement here is supposed to come from a brother or child, who are near by nature; from a wife or friend, who are near by choice, and are to us as our souls. But it is our duty to prefer God and religion, before the nearest and dearest friends we have in the world. We must not, to please our friends, break God's law. Thou shalt not consent to him, nor go with him, not for company, or curiosity, not to gain his affection. It is a general rule, If sinners entice thee, consent thou not, ^{<3010>}Proverbs 1:10. And we must not hinder the course of God's justice.

Deuteronomy 13:12

Vs. 12-18: Here is the case of a city revolting from the God of Israel, and serving other gods. The crime is supposed to be committed by one of the cities of Israel. Even when they were ordered to preserve their religion by force, yet they were not allowed to bring others to it by fire and sword.

Spiritual judgments under the Christian dispensation are more terrible than the execution of criminals; we have not less cause than the Israelites had, to fear the Divine wrath. Let us then fear the spiritual idolatry of covetousness, and the love of worldly pleasure; and be careful not to countenance them in our families, by our example or by the education of our children. May the Lord write his law and truth in our hearts, there set up his throne, and shed abroad his love!

CHAPTER 14

The Israelites to distinguish themselves from other nations. (1-21)
Respecting the application of tithes. (22-29)

Deuteronomy 14:1

Vs. 1-21: Moses tells the people of Israel how God had given them three distinguishing privileges, which were their honor, and figures of those spiritual blessings in heavenly things, with which God has in Christ blessed us. Here is election; “The Lord hath chosen thee.” He did not choose them because they were by their own acts a peculiar people to him above other nations, but he chose them that they might be so by his grace; and thus were believers chosen, ^{<BIB>}Ephesians 1:4. Here is adoption; “Ye are the children of the Lord your God;” not because God needed children, but because they were orphans, and needed a father. Every spiritual Israelite is indeed a child of God, a partaker of his nature and favor. Here is sanctification; “Thou art a holy people.” God’s people are required to be holy, and if they are holy, they are indebted to the grace God which makes them so. Those whom God chooses to be his children, he will form to be a holy people, and zealous of good works. They must be careful to avoid every thing which might disgrace their profession, in the sight of those who watch for their halting. Our heavenly Father forbids nothing but for our welfare. Do thyself no harm; do not ruin thy health, thy reputation, thy domestic comforts, thy peace of mind. Especially do not murder thy soul. Do not be the vile slave of thy appetites and passions. Do not render all around thee miserable, and thyself wretched; but aim at that which is most excellencies and useful. The laws which regarded many sorts of flesh as unequalled, were to keep them from mingling with their idolatrous neighbors. It is plain in the gospel, that these laws are now done away. But let us ask our own hearts, Are we of the children of the Lord our God? Are we separate from the ungodly world, in being set apart to God’s glory, the purchase of Christ’s blood? Are we subjects of the work of the Holy Ghost? Lord, teach us from these precepts how pure and holy all thy people ought to live!

Deuteronomy 14:22

Vs. 22-29: A second portion from the produce of their land was required. The whole appointment evidently was against the covetousness, distrust, and selfishness of the human heart. It promoted friendliness, liberality, and cheerfulness, and raised a fund for the relief of the poor. They were taught that their worldly portion was most comfortably enjoyed, when shared with their brethren who were in want. If we thus serve God, and do good with what we have, it is promised that the Lord our God will bless us in all the works of our land. The blessing of God is all to our outward prosperity; and without that blessing, the work of our hands will bring nothing to pass. The blessing descends upon the working hand. Expect not that God should bless thee in thy idleness and love of ease. And it descends upon the giving hand. He who thus scatters, certainly increases; and to be free and generous in the support of religion, and any good work, is the surest and safest way of thriving.

CHAPTER 15

The year of release. (1-11) Concerning the release of servants. (12-18) Respecting the firstlings of cattle. (19-23)

Deuteronomy 15:1

Vs. 1-11: This year of release typified the grace of the gospel, in which is proclaimed the acceptable year of the Lord; and by which we obtain the release of our debts, that is, the pardon of our sins. The law is spiritual, and lays restraints upon the thoughts of the heart. We mistake, if we think thoughts are free from God's knowledge and check. That is a wicked heart indeed, which raises evil thoughts from the good law of God, as theirs did, who, because God had obliged them to the charity of forgiving, denied the charity of giving. Those who would keep from the act of sin, must keep out of their minds the very thought of sin. It is a dreadful thing to have the cry of the poor justly against us. Grudge not a kindness to thy brother; distrust not the providence of God. What thou doest, do freely, for God loves a cheerful giver, ^{<4002>}2 Corinthians 9:7.

Deuteronomy 15:12

Vs. 12-18: Here the law concerning Hebrew servants is repeated. There is an addition, requiring the masters to put some small stock into their servants' hands to set up with for themselves, when sent out of their servitude, wherein they had received no wages. We may expect family blessings, the springs of family prosperity, when we make conscience of our duty to our family relations. We are to remember that we are debtors to Divine justice, and have nothing to pay with. That we are slaves, poor, and perishing. But the Lord Jesus Christ, by becoming poor, and by shedding his blood, has made a full and free provision for the payment of our debts, the ransom of our souls, and the supply of all our wants. When the gospel is clearly preached, the acceptable year of the Lord is proclaimed; the year of release of our debts, of the deliverance of our souls, and of obtaining rest in him. And as faith in Christ and love to him prevail, they will triumph over the selfishness of the heart, and over the unkindness of the world, doing away the excuses that rise from unbelief, distrust, and covetousness.

Deuteronomy 15:19

Vs. 19-23: Here is a direction what to do with the firstlings. We are not now limited as the Israelites were; we make no difference between a first calf, or lamb, and the rest. Let us then look to the gospel meaning of this law, devoting ourselves and the first of our time and strength to God; and using all our comforts and enjoyments to his praise, and under the direction of his law, as we have them all by his gift.

CHAPTER 16

The yearly feasts. (1-17) Of judges, Groves and images forbidden. (18-22)

Deuteronomy 16:1

Vs. 1-17: The laws for the three yearly feasts are here repeated; that of the Passover, that of the Pentecost, that of Tabernacles; and the general law concerning the people's attendance. Never should a believer forget his low estate of guilt and misery, his deliverance, and the price it cost the Redeemer; that gratitude and joy in the Lord may be mingled with sorrow for sin, and patience under the tribulations in his way to the kingdom of heaven. They must rejoice in their receivings from God, and in their returns of service and sacrifice to him; our duty must be our delight, as well as our enjoyment. If those who were under the law must rejoice before God, much more we that are under the grace of the gospel; which makes it our duty to rejoice evermore, to rejoice in the Lord always. When we rejoice in God ourselves, we should do what we can to assist others also to rejoice in him, by comforting the mourners, and supplying those who are in want. All who make God their joy, may rejoice in hope, for He is faithful that has promised.

Deuteronomy 16:18

Vs. 18-22: Care is taken for the due administration of justice. All personal regards must be laid aside, so that right is done to all, and wrong to none. Care is taken to prevent following the idolatrous customs of the heathen. Nothing belies God more, or tends more to corrupt the minds of men, than representing and worshipping, by an image, that God, who is an almighty and eternal Spirit, present every where. Alas! even in gospel days, and under a better dispensation, established upon better promises, there is a tendency to set up idols, under one form or another, in the human heart.

CHAPTER 17

All sacrifices to be perfect, Idolaters must be slain. (1-7) Difficult controversies. (8-13) The choice of a king, His duties. (14-20)

Deuteronomy 17:1

Vs. 1-7: No creature which had any blemish was to be offered in sacrifice to God. We are thus called to remember the perfect, pure, and spotless sacrifice of Christ, and reminded to serve God with the best of our abilities, time, and possession, or our pretended obedience will be hateful to him. So great a punishment as death, so remarkable a death as stoning, must be inflicted on the Jewish idolater. Let all who in our day set up idols in their hearts, remember how God punished this crime in Israel.

Deuteronomy 17:8

Vs. 8-13: Courts of judgment were to be set up in every city. Though their judgment had not the Divine authority of an oracle, it was the judgment of wise, prudent, experienced men, and had the advantage of a Divine promise.

Deuteronomy 17:14

Vs. 14-20: God himself was in a particular manner Israel's King; and if they set another over them, it was necessary that he should choose the person. Accordingly, when the people desired a king, they applied to Samuel, a prophet of the Lord. In all cases, God's choice, if we can but know it, should direct, determine, and overrule ours. Laws are given for the prince that should be elected. He must carefully avoid every thing that would turn him from God and religion. Riches, honors, and pleasures, are three great hindrances of godliness, (the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life,) especially to those in high stations; against these the king is here warned. The king must carefully study the law of God, and make that his rule; and having a copy of the Scriptures of his own writing, must read therein all the days of his life. It is not enough to have Bibles, but we must use them, use them daily, as long as we live. Christ's scholars never learn above their Bibles, but will have constant occasion for them, till

they come to that world where knowledge and love will be made perfect. The king's writing and reading were as nothing, if he did not practice what he wrote and read. And those who fear God and keep his commandments, will fare the better for it even in this world.

CHAPTER 18

A provision respecting Levites. (1-8) The abominations of the Canaanites to be avoided. (9-14) Christ the great Prophet. (15-22)

<581> **Deuteronomy 18:1**

Vs. 1-8: Care is taken that the priests entangle not themselves with the affairs of this life, nor enrich themselves with the wealth of this world; they have better things to mind. Care is likewise taken that they want not the comforts and conveniences of this life. The people must provide for them. He that has the benefit of solemn religious assemblies, ought to give help for the comfortable support of those that minister in such assemblies.

<581> **Deuteronomy 18:9**

Vs. 9-14: Was it possible that a people so blessed with Divine institutions, should ever be in any danger of making those their teachers whom God had made their captives? They were in danger; therefore, after many like cautions, they are charged not to do after the abominations of the nations of Canaan. All reckoning of lucky or unlucky days, all charms for diseases, all amulets or spells to prevent evil, fortune-telling, etc. are here forbidden. These are so wicked as to be a chief cause of the rooting out of the Canaanites. It is amazing to think that there should be any pretenders of this kind in such a land, and day of light, as we live in. They are mere impostors who blind and cheat their followers.

<581> **Deuteronomy 18:15**

Vs. 15-22: It is here promised concerning Christ, that there should come a Prophet, great above all the prophets; by whom God would make known himself and his will to the children of men, more fully and clearly than he had ever done before. He is the Light of the world, <482> John 8:12. He is the World by whom God speaks to us, <400> John 1:1; <300> Hebrews 1:2. In his birth he should be one of their nation. In his resurrection he should be raised up at Jerusalem, and from thence his doctrine should go forth to all the world. Thus God, having raised up his Son Christ Jesus, sent him to bless us. He should be like unto Moses, only above him. This prophet is

come, even JESUS; and is “He that should come,” and we are to look for no other. The view of God which he gives, will not terrify or overwhelm, but encourages us. He speaks with fatherly affection and Divine authority united. Whoever refuses to listen to Jesus Christ, shall find it is at his peril; the same that is the Prophet is to be his Judge, ^{<B128}John 12:48. Woe then to those who refuse to hearken to His voice, to accept His salvation, or yield obedience to His sway! But happy they who trust in Him, and obey Him. He will lead them in the paths of safety and peace, until He brings them to the land of perfect light, purity, and happiness. Here is a caution against false prophets. It highly concerns us to have a right touchstone wherewith to try the word we hear, that we may know what that word is which the Lord has not spoken. Whatever is against the plain sense of the written word, or which gives countenance or encouragement to sin, we may be sure is not that which the Lord has spoken.

CHAPTER 19

*The cities of refuge, The man-slayer, The murderer. (1-13)
Landmarks not to be removed. (14) The punishment of false
witnesses. (15-21)*

Deuteronomy 19:1

Vs. 1-13: Here is the law settled between the blood of the murdered, and the blood of the murderer; provision is made, that the cities of refuge should be a protection, so that a man should not die for that as a crime, which was not his willing act. In Christ, the Lord our Righteousness, refuge is provided for those who by faith flee unto him. But there is no refuge in Jesus Christ for presumptuous sinners, who go on still in their trespasses. Those who flee to Christ from their sins, shall be safe in him, but not those who expect to be sheltered by him in their sins.

Deuteronomy 19:14

Vs. 14: Direction is given to fix landmarks in Canaan. It is the will of God that every one should know his own; and that means should be used to hinder the doing and suffering of wrong. This, without doubt, is a moral precept, and still binding. Let every man be content with his own lot, and be just to his neighbors in all things.

Deuteronomy 19:15

Vs. 15-21: Sentence should never be passed upon the testimony of one witness alone. A false witness should suffer the same punishment which he sought to have inflicted upon the person he accused. Nor could any law be more just. Let all Christians not only be cautious in bearing witness in public, but be careful not to join in private slanders; and let all whose consciences accuse them of crime, without delay flee for refuge to the hope set before them in Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER 20

*Exhortation and proclamation respecting those who went to war.
(1-9) Peace to be offered, What cities were to be devoted. (10-20)*

Deuteronomy 20:1

Vs. 1-9: In the wars wherein Israel engaged according to the will of God, they might expect the Divine assistance. The Lord was to be their only confidence. In these respects they were types of the Christian's warfare. Those unwilling to fight, must be sent away. The unwillingness might arise from a man's outward condition. God would not be served by men forced against their will. Thy people shall be willing, ^{<510>}Psalm 110:3. In running the Christian race, and fighting the good fight of faith, we must lay aside all that would make us unwilling. If a man's unwillingness rose from weakness and fear, he had leave to return from the war. The reason here given is, lest his brethren's heart fail as well as his heart. We must take heed that we fear not with the fear of them that are afraid, ^{<230>}Isaiah 8:12.

Deuteronomy 20:10

Vs. 10-12: The Israelites are here directed about the nations on whom they made war. Let this show God's grace in dealing with sinners. He proclaims peace, and beseeches them to be reconciled. Let it also show us our duty in dealing with our brethren. Whoever are for war, we must be for peace. Of the cities given to Israel, none of their inhabitants must be left. Since it could not be expected that they should be cured of their idolatry, they would hurt Israel. These regulations are not the rules of our conduct, but Christ's law of love. The horrors of war must fill the feeling heart with anguish upon every recollection; and are proofs of the wickedness of man, the power of Satan, and the just vengeance of God, who thus scourges a guilty world. But how dreadful their case who are engaged in unequalled conflict with their Maker, who will not submit to render him the easy tribute of worship and praise! Certain ruin awaits them. Let neither the number nor the power of the enemies of our souls dismay us; nor let even our own weakness cause us to tremble or to faint. The Lord will save us; but in this war let none engage whose hearts are fond of the world, or afraid of the cross and the conflict. Care is here taken that in besieging

cities the fruit-trees should not be destroyed. God is a better friend to man than he is to himself; and God's law consults our interests and comforts; while our own appetites and passions, which we indulge, are enemies to our welfare. Many of the Divine precepts restrain us from destroying that which is for our life and food. The Jews understand this as forbidding all willful waste upon any account whatsoever. Every creature of God is good; as nothing is to be refused, so nothing is to be abused. We may live to want what we carelessly waste.

CHAPTER 21

The expiation of uncertain murder. (1-9) Respecting a captive taken to wife. (10-14) The first-born not to be disinherited for private affection. (15-17) A stubborn son to be stoned. (18-21) Malefactors not to be left hanging all night. (22,23)

Deuteronomy 21:1

Vs. 1-9: If a murderer could not be found out, great solemnity is provided for putting away the guilt from the land, as an expression of dread and detesting of that sin. The providence of God has often wonderfully brought to light these hidden works of darkness, and the sin of the guilty has often strangely found them out. The dread of murder should be deeply impressed upon every heart, and all should join in detecting and punishing those who are guilty. The elders were to profess that they had not been any way aiding or abetting the sin. The priests were to pray to God for the country and nation, that God would be merciful. We must empty that measure by our prayers, which others are filling by their sins. All would be taught by this solemnity, to use the utmost care and diligence to prevent, discover, and punish murder. We may all learn from hence to take heed of partaking in other men's sins. And we have fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, if we do not reprove them.

Deuteronomy 21:10

Vs. 10-14: By this law a soldier was allowed to marry his captive, if he pleased. This might take place upon some occasions; but the law does not show any approval of it. It also intimates how binding the laws of justice and honor are in marriage; which is a sacred engagement.

Deuteronomy 21:15

Vs. 15-17: This law restrains men from disinheriting their eldest sons without just cause. The principle in this case as to children, is still binding to parents; they must give children their right without partiality.

Deuteronomy 21:18

Vs. 18-21: Observe how the criminal is here described. He is a stubborn and rebellious son. No child was to fare the worse for weakness of capacity, slowness, or dullness, but for willfulness and obstinacy. Nothing draws men into all manner of wickedness, and hardens them in it more certainly and fatally, than drunkenness. When men take to drinking, they forget the law of honoring parents. His own father and mother must complain of him to the elders of the city. Children who forget their duty, must thank themselves, and not blame their parents, if they are regarded with less and less affection. He must be publicly stoned to death by the men of his city. Disobedience to a parent's authority must be very evil, when such a punishment was ordered; nor is it less provoking to God now, though it escapes punishment in this world. But when young people early become slaves to sensual appetites, the heart soon grows hard, and the conscience callous; and we can expect nothing but rebellion and destruction.

Deuteronomy 21:22

Vs. 22, 23: By the law of Moses, the touch of a dead body was defiling, therefore dead bodies must not be left hanging, as that would defile the land. There is one reason here which has reference to Christ; "He that is hanged is accursed of God;" that is, it is the highest degree of disgrace and reproach. Those who see a man thus hanging between heaven and earth, will conclude him abandoned of both, and unworthy of either. Moses, by the Spirit, uses this phrase of being accursed of God, when he means no more than being treated most disgracefully, that it might afterward be applied to the death of Christ, and might show that in it he underwent the curse of the law for us; which proves his love, and encourages to faith in him.

CHAPTER 22

*Of humanity towards brethren. (1-4) Various precepts. (5-12)
Against impurity. (13-30)*

Deuteronomy 22:1

Vs. 1-4: If we duly regard the golden rule of “doing to others as we would they should do unto us,” many particular precepts might be omitted. We can have no property in any thing that we find. Religion teaches us to be neighborly, and to be ready to do all good offices to all men. We know not how soon we may have occasion for help.

Deuteronomy 22:5

Vs. 5-12: God’s providence extends itself to the smallest affairs, and his precepts do so, that even in them we may be in the fear of the Lord, as we are under his eye and care. Yet the tendency of these laws, which seem little, is such, that being found among the things of God’s law, they are to be accounted great things. If we would prove ourselves to be God’s people, we must have respect to his will and to his glory, and not to the vain fashions of the world. Even in putting on our garments, as in eating or in drinking, all must be done with a serious regard to preserve our own and others’ purity in heart and actions. Our eye should be single, our heart simple, and our behavior all of a piece.

Deuteronomy 22:13

Vs. 13-30: These and the like regulations might be needful then, and yet it is not necessary that we should curiously examine respecting them. The laws relate to the seventh commandment, laying a restraint upon fleshly lusts which war against the soul.

CHAPTER 23

Who are shut out from the congregation. (1-8) Cleanliness enjoined. (15-25) Of fugitive servants, Usury, and other precepts. (9-14)

Deuteronomy 23:1

Vs. 1-8: We ought to value the privileges of God's people, both for ourselves and for our children, above all other advantages. No personal blemishes, no crimes of our forefathers, no difference of nation, shuts us out under the Christian dispensation. But an unsound heart will deprive us of blessings; and a bad example, or an unsuitable marriage, may shut our children from them.

Deuteronomy 23:9

Vs. 9-14: The camp of the Lord must have nothing offensive in it. If there must be this care taken to preserve the body clean, much more should we be careful to keep the mind pure.

Deuteronomy 23:15

Vs. 15-25: It is honorable to shelter and protect the weak, provided they are not wicked. Proselytes and converts to the truth, should be treated with particular tenderness, that they may have no temptation to return to the world. We cannot honor God with our substance, unless it be honestly and honorably come by. It must not only be considered what we give, but how we got it. Where the borrower gets, or hopes to get, it is just that the lender should share the gain; but to him that borrows for necessary food, pity must be showed. That which is gone out of thy lips, as a solemn and deliberate vow, must not be recalled, but thou shalt keep and perform it punctually and fully. They were allowed to pluck and eat of the corn or grapes that grew by the road side; only they must not carry any away. This law intimated what great plenty of corn and wine they should have in Canaan. It provided for the support of poor travelers, and teaches us to be kind to such, teaches us to be ready to distribute, and not to think every thing lost that is given away. Yet it forbids us to abuse the kindness of

friends, or to take advantage of what is allowed. Faithfulness to their engagements should mark the people of God; and they should never encroach upon others.

CHAPTER 24

Of divorce. (1-4) Of new-married persons, Of man-stealers, Of pledges. (5-13) Of justice and generosity. (14-22)

Deuteronomy 24:1

Vs. 1-4: Where the providence of God, or his own wrong choice in marriage, has allotted to a Christian a trial instead of a help meet; he will from his heart prefer bearing the cross, to such relief as tends to sin, confusion, and misery. Divine grace will sanctify this cross, support under it, and teach so to behave, as will gradually render it more tolerable.

Deuteronomy 24:5

Vs. 5-13: It is of great consequence that love be kept up between husband and wife; that they carefully avoid every thing which might make them strange one to another. Man-stealing was a capital crime, which could not be settled, as other thefts, by restitution. The laws concerning leprosy must be carefully observed. Thus all who feel their consciences under guilt and wrath, must not cover it, or endeavor to shake off their convictions; but by repentance, and prayer, and humble confession, take the way to peace and pardon. Some orders are given about pledges for money lent. This teaches us to consult the comfort and subsistence of others, as much as our own advantage. Let the poor debtor sleep in his own raiment, and praise God for thy kindness to him. Poor debtors ought to feel more than commonly they do, the goodness of creditors who do not take all the advantage of the law against them, nor should this ever be looked upon as weakness.

Deuteronomy 24:14

Vs. 14-22: It is not hard to prove that purity, piety, justice, mercy, fair conduct, kindness to the poor and destitute, consideration for them, and generosity of spirit, are pleasing to God, and becoming in his redeemed people. The difficulty is to attend to them in our daily walk and conversation.

CHAPTER 25

*Extent of punishment. (1-3) The ox that treadeth the corn. (4)
Marriage of a brother's wife. (5-12) Of unjust weights. (13-16)
War against Amalek. (17-19)*

Deuteronomy 25:1

Vs. 1-3: Every punishment should be with solemnity, that those who see it may be filled with dread, and be warned not to offend in like manner. And though the criminals must be shamed as well as put to pain, for their warning and disgrace, yet care should be taken that they do not appear totally vile. Happy those who are chastened of the Lord to humble them, that they should not be condemned with the world to destruction.

Deuteronomy 25:4

Vs. 4: This is a charge to husbandmen. It teaches us to make much of the animals that serve us. But we must learn, not only to be just, but kind to all who are employed for the good of our better part, our souls, 1 Corinthians 9:9.

Deuteronomy 25:5

Vs. 5-12: The custom here regulated seems to have been in the Jewish law in order to keep inheritances distinct; now it is unlawful.

Deuteronomy 25:13

Vs. 13-16: Dishonest gain always brings a curse on men's property, families, and souls. Happy those who judge themselves, repent of and forsake their sins, and put away evil things, that they may not be condemned of the Lord.

Deuteronomy 25:17

Vs. 17-19: Let every persecutor and injurer of God's people take warning from the case of the Amalekites. The longer it is before judgment comes, the more dreadful will it be at last. Amalek may remind us of the foes of our souls. May we be enabled to slay all our lusts, all the corruptions both

within and without, all the powers of darkness and of the world, which oppose our way to the blessed Savior.

CHAPTER 26

Confession in offering the first-fruits. (1-11) The prayer after disposal of the third year's tithe. (12-15) The covenant between God and the people. (16-19)

Deuteronomy 26:1

Vs. 1-11: When God has made good his promises to us, he expects we should own it to the honor of his faithfulness. And our creature comforts are doubly sweet, when we see them flowing from the fountain of the promise. The person who offered his first-fruits, must remember and own the mean origin of that nation, of which he was a member. A Syrian ready to perish was my father. Jacob is here called a Syrian. Their nation in its infancy sojourned in Egypt as strangers, they served there as slaves. They were a poor, despised, oppressed people in Egypt; and though become rich and great, had no reason to be proud, secure, or forgetful of God. He must thankfully acknowledge God's great goodness to Israel. The comfort we have in our own enjoyments, should lead us to be thankful for our share in public peace and plenty; and with present mercies we should bless the Lord for the former mercies we remember, and the further mercies we expect and hope for. He must offer his basket of first-fruits. Whatever good thing God gives us, it is his will that we make the most comfortable use we can of it, tracing the streams to the Fountain of all consolation.

Deuteronomy 26:12

Vs. 12-15: How should the earth yield its increase, or, if it does, what comfort can we take in it, unless therewith our God gives us his blessing? All this represented the covenant relation between a reconciled God and every true believer, and the privileges and duties belonging to it. We must be watchful, and show that according to the covenant of grace in Christ Jesus, the Lord is our God, and we are his people, waiting in his appointed way for the performance of his gracious promises.

Deuteronomy 26:16

Vs. 16-19: Moses here enforces the precepts. They are God's laws, therefore thou shalt do them, to that end were they given thee; do them, and dispute them not; do them, and draw not back; do them, not carelessly and hypocritically, but with thy heart and soul, thy whole heart and thy whole soul. We forswear ourselves, and break the most sacred engagement, if, when we have taken the Lord to be our God, we do not make conscience of obeying his commands. We are elected to obedience, ^{<BIB>}1 Peter 1:2; chosen that we should be holy, ^{<BIB>}Ephesians 1:4; purified a peculiar people, that we might not only do good works, but be zealous in them, ^{<BIB>}Titus 2:14. Holiness is true honor, and the only way to everlasting honor.

CHAPTER 27

The law to be written on stones in the promised land. (1-10) The curses to be pronounced on mount Ebal. (11-26)

Deuteronomy 27:1

Vs. 1-10: As soon as they were come into Canaan, they must set up a monument, on which they must write the words of this law. They must set up an altar. The word and prayer must go together. Though they might not, of their own heads, set up any altar besides that at the tabernacle; yet, by the appointment of God, they might, upon special occasion. This altar must be made of unhewn stones, such as they found upon the field. Christ, our Altar, is a stone cut out of the mountain without hands, refused by the builders, as having no form or comeliness, but accepted of God the Father, and made the Head of the corner. In the Old Testament the words of the law are written, with the curse annexed; which would overcome us with horror, if we had not, in the New Testament, an altar erected close by, which gives consolation. Blessed be God, the printed copies of the Scriptures among us, do away the necessity of such methods as were presented to Israel. The end of the gospel ministry is, and the end of preachers ought to be, to make the word of God as plain as possible. Yet, unless the Spirit of God prosper such labors with Divine power, we shall not, even by these means, be made wise unto salvation: for this blessing we should therefore daily and earnestly pray.

Deuteronomy 27:11

Vs. 11-26: The six tribes appointed for blessing, were all children of the free women, for to such the promise belongs, ^{<406>}Galatians 4:31. Levi is here among the rest. Ministers should apply to themselves the blessing and curse they preach to others, and by faith set their own Amen to it. And they must not only allure people to their duty with the promises of a blessing, but awe them with the threatenings of a curse, by declaring that a curse would be upon those who do such things. To each of the curses the people were to say, Amen. It professed their faith, that these, and the like curses, were real declarations of the wrath of God against the ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, not one jot of which shall fall to the ground. It

was acknowledging the equity of these curses. Those who do such things deserve to fall, and lie under the curse. Lest those who were guilty of other sins, not here mentioned, should think themselves safe from the curse, the last reaches all. Not only those who do the evil which the law forbids, but those also who omit the good which the law requires. Without the atoning blood of Christ, sinners can neither have communion with a holy God, nor do any thing acceptable to him; his righteous law condemns every one who, at any time, or in any thing, transgresses it. Under its awful curse we remain as transgressors, until the redemption of Christ is applied to our hearts. Wherever the grace of God brings salvation, it teaches the believer to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, consenting to, and delighting in the words of God's law, after the inward man. In this holy walk, true peace and solid joy are to be found.

CHAPTER 28

The blessings for obedience. (1-14) The curses for disobedience. (15-44) Their ruin, if disobedient. (45-68)

Deuteronomy 28:1

Vs. 1-14: This chapter is a very large exposition of two words, the blessing and the curse. They are real things and have real effects. The blessings are here put before the curses. God is slow to anger, but swift to show mercy. It is his delight to bless. It is better that we should be drawn to what is good by a child-like hope of God's favor, than that we be frightened to it by a slavish fear of his wrath. The blessing is promised, upon condition that they diligently hearken to the voice of God. Let them keep up religion, the form and power of it, in their families and nation, then the providence of God would prosper all their outward concerns.

Deuteronomy 28:15

Vs. 15-44: If we do not keep God's commandments, we not only come short of the blessing promised, but we lay ourselves under the curse, which unequaled all misery, as the blessing all happiness. Observe the justice of this curse. It is not a curse causeless, or for some light cause. The extent and power of this curse. Wherever the sinner goes, the curse of God follows; wherever he is, it rests upon him. Whatever he has is under a curse. All his enjoyments are made bitter; he cannot take any true comfort in them, for the wrath of God mixes itself with them. Many judgments are here stated, which would be the fruits of the curse, and with which God would punish the people of the Jews, for their apostasy and disobedience. We may observe the fulfilling of these threatenings in their present state. To complete their misery, it is threatened that by these troubles they should be bereaved of all comfort and hope, and left to utter despair. Those who walk by sight, and not by faith, are in danger of losing reason itself, when every thing about them looks frightful.

Deuteronomy 28:45

Vs. 45-68: If God inflicts vengeance, what miseries his curse can bring upon mankind, even in this present world! Yet these are but the beginning of sorrows to those under the curse of God. What then will be the misery of that world where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched! Observe what is here said of the wrath of God, which should come and remain upon the Israelites for their sins. It is amazing to think that a people so long the favorites of Heaven, should be so cast off; and yet that a people so scattered in all nations should be kept distinct, and not mixed with others. If they would not serve God with cheerfulness, they should be compelled to serve their enemies. We may justly expect from God, that if we do not fear his fearful name, we shall feel his fearful plagues; for one way or other God will be feared. The destruction threatened is described. They have, indeed, been plucked from off the land, ver. 63. Not only by the Babylonish captivity, and when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans; but afterwards, when they were forbidden to set foot in Jerusalem. They should have no rest; no rest of body, ver. 65, but be continually on the remove, either in hope of gain, or fear of persecution. No rest of the mind, which is much worse. They have been banished from city to city, from country to country; recalled, and banished again. These events, compared with the favor shown to Israel in ancient times, and with the prophecies about them, should not only excite astonishment, but turn unto us for a testimony, assuring us of the truth of Scripture. And when the other prophecies of their conversion to Christ shall come to pass, the whole will be a sign and a wonder to all the nations of the earth, and the forerunner of a general spread of true Christianity. The fulfilling of these prophecies upon the Jewish nation, delivered more than three thousand years ago, shows that Moses spake by the Spirit of God; who not only foresees the ruin of sinners, but warns of it, that they may prevent it by a true and timely repentance, or else be left without excuse. And let us be thankful that Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, by being made a curse for us, and bearing in his own person all that punishment which our sins merit, and which we must otherwise have endured for ever. To this Refuge and salvation let sinners flee; therein let believers rejoice, and serve their reconciled God with gladness of heart, for the abundance of his spiritual blessings.

CHAPTER 29

Moses calls Israel's mercies to remembrance. (1-9) The Divine wrath on those who flatter themselves in their wickedness. (10-21) The ruin of the Jewish nation. (22-28) Secret things belong unto God. (29)

Deuteronomy 29:1

Vs. 1-9: Both former mercies, and fresh mercies, should be thought on by us as motives to obedience. The hearing ear, and seeing eye, and the understanding heart, are the gift of God. All that have them, have them from him. God gives not only food and raiment, but wealth and large possessions, to many to whom he does not give grace. Many enjoy the gifts, who have not hearts to perceive the Giver, nor the true design and use of the gifts. We are bound, in gratitude and interest, as well as in duty and faithfulness, to keep the words of the covenant.

Deuteronomy 29:10

Vs. 10-21: The national covenant made with Israel, not only typified the covenant of grace made with true believers, but also represented the outward dispensation of the gospel. Those who have been enabled to consent to the Lord's new covenant of mercy and grace in Jesus Christ, and to give up themselves to be his people, should embrace every opportunity of renewing their open profession of relation to him, and their obligation to him, as the God of salvation, walking according thereto. The sinner is described as one whose heart turns away from his God; there the mischief begins, in the evil heart of unbelief, which unequaled men to depart from the living God to dead idols. Even to this sin men are now tempted, when drawn aside by their own lusts and fancies. Such men are roots that bear gall and wormwood. They are weeds which, if let alone, overspread the whole field. Satan may for a time disguise this bitter morsel, so that thou shalt not have the natural taste of it, but at the last day, if not before, the true taste shall be discerned. Notice the sinner's security in sin. Though he hears the words of the curse, yet even then he thinks himself safe from the wrath of God. There is scarcely a threatening in all the book of God more dreadful than this. Oh that presumptuous

sinner would read it, and tremble! for it is a real declaration of the wrath of God, against ungodliness and unrighteousness of man.

Deuteronomy 29:22

Vs. 22-28: Idolatry would be the ruin of their nation. It is no new thing for God to bring desolating judgments on a people near to him in profession. He never does this without good reason. It concerns us to seek for the reason, that we may give glory to God, and take warning to ourselves. Thus the law of Moses leaves sinners under the curse, and rooted out of the Lord's land; but the grace of Christ toward penitent, believing sinners, plants them again in their land; and they shall no more be pulled up, being kept by the power of God.

Deuteronomy 29:29

Vs. 29: Moses ends his prophecy of the Jews' rejection, just as St. Paul ends his discourse on the same subject, when it began to be fulfilled, **Romans 11:33.** We are forbidden curiously to inquire into the secret counsels of God, and to determine concerning them. But we are directed and encouraged, diligently to seek into that which God has made known. He has kept back nothing that is profitable for us, but only that of which it is good for us to be ignorant. The end of all Divine revelation is, not to furnish curious subjects of speculation and discourse, but that we may do all the words of this law, and be blessed in our deed. This, the Bible plainly reveals; further than this, man cannot profitably go. By this light he may live and die comfortably, and be happy for ever.

CHAPTER 30

Mercies promised to the repentant. (1-10) The commandment manifest. (11-14) Death and life set before them. (15-20)

Deuteronomy 30:1

Vs. 1-10: In this chapter is a plain intimation of the mercy God has in store for Israel in the latter days. This passage refers to the prophetic warnings of the last two chapters, which have been mainly fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and in their dispersion to the present day; and there can be no doubt that the prophetic promise contained in these verses yet remain to come to pass. The Jewish nation shall in some future period, perhaps not very distant, be converted to the faith of Christ; and, many think, again settled in the land of Canaan. The language here used is in a great measure absolute promises; not merely a conditional engagement, but declaring an event assuredly to take place. For the Lord himself here engages to “circumcise their hearts;” and when regenerating grace has removed corrupt nature, and Divine love has supplanted the love of sin, they certainly will reflect, repent, return to God, and obey him; and he will rejoice in doing them good. The change that will be wrought upon them will not be only outward, or consisting in mere opinions; it will reach to their souls. It will produce in them an utter hatred of all sin, and a fervent love to God, as their reconciled God in Christ Jesus; they will love him with all their hearts, and with all their soul. They are very far from this state of mind at present, but so were the murderers of the Lord Jesus, on the day of Pentecost; who yet in one hour were converted unto God. So shall it be in the day of God’s power; a nation shall be born in a day; the Lord will hasten it in his time. As a conditional promise this passage belongs to all persons and all people, not to Israel only; it assures us that the greatest sinners, if they repent and are converted, shall have their sins pardoned, and be restored to God’s favor.

Deuteronomy 30:11

Vs. 11-14: The law is not too high for thee. It is not only known afar off; it is not confined to men of learning. It is written in thy books, made plain, so that he who runs may read it. It is in thy mouth, in the tongue

commonly used by thee, in which thou mayest hear it read, and talk of it among thy children. It is delivered so that it is level to the understanding of the meanest. This is especially true of the gospel of Christ, to which the apostle applies it. But the word is nigh us, and Christ in that word; so that if we believe with the heart, that the promises of the Messiah are fulfilled in our Lord Jesus, and confess them with our mouth, we then have Christ with us.

Deuteronomy 30:15

Vs. 15-20: What could be said more moving, and more likely to make deep and lasting impressions? Every man wishes to obtain life and good, and to escape death and evil; he desires happiness, and dreads misery. So great is the compassion of the Lord, that he has favored men, by his word, with such a knowledge of good and evil as will make them for ever happy, if it be not their own fault. Let us hear the sum of the whole matter. If they and theirs would love God, and serve him, they should live and be happy. If they or theirs should turn from God, desert his service, and worship other gods, that would certainly be their ruin. There never was, since the fall of man, more than one way to heaven; which is marked out in both Testaments, though not with equal clearness. Moses meant that same way of acceptance, which Paul more plainly described; and Paul's words mean the same obedience, on which Moses more fully treated. In both Testaments the good and right way is brought near, and plainly revealed to us.

CHAPTER 31

Moses encourages the people, and Joshua. (1-8) The law to be read every seventh year. (9-13) The Israelites' apostasy foretold, A song given to be witness against them. (14-22) The law delivered to the Levites. (22-30)

Deuteronomy 31:1

Vs. 1-8: Moses assures Israel of the constant presence of God with them. This is applied by the apostle to all God's spiritual Israel, to encourage their faith and hope; unto us is this gospel preached, as well as unto them; he will never fail thee, nor forsake thee, ^{<5815>}Hebrews 13:5. Moses commends Joshua to them for a leader; one whose wisdom, and courage, and affection they had long known; one whom God had appointed to be their leader; and therefore would own and bless. Joshua is well pleased to be admonished by Moses to be strong and of good courage. Those shall speed well, who have God with them; therefore they ought to be of good courage. Through God let us do valiantly, for through him we shall do victoriously; if we resist the devil, he will flee from us.

Deuteronomy 31:9

Vs. 9-13: Though we read the word in private, we must not think it needless to hear it read in public. This solemn reading of the law must be done in the year of release. The year of release was typical of gospel grace, which is called the acceptable year of the Lord; for our pardon and liberty by Christ, engage us to keep his commandments. It must be read to all Israel, men, women, children, and to the strangers. It is the will of God that all people should acquaint themselves with his word. It is a rule to all, therefore should be read to all. Whoever has read of the pains taken by many persons to get scraps of the Scriptures, when a whole copy could not be obtained, or safely possessed, will see how thankful we should be for the thousands of copies amongst us. They will also understand the very different situation in which the Israelites were placed for many ages. But the heart of man is so careless, that all will be found too little, to keep up a knowledge of the truths, precepts, and worship of God.

Deuteronomy 31:14

Vs. 14-22: Moses and Joshua attended the Divine Majesty at the door of the tabernacle. Moses is told again that he must shortly die; even those who are most ready and willing to die, need to be often reminded of its coming. The Lord tells Moses, that, after his death, the covenant he had taken so much pains to make between Israel and their God, would certainly be broken. Israel would forsake Him; then God would forsake Israel. Justly does he cast those off who so unjustly cast him off. Moses is directed to deliver them a song, which should remain a standing testimony for God, as faithful to them in giving them warning, and against them, as persons false to themselves in not taking the warning. The word of God is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of men's hearts, and meets them by reproofs and correction. Ministers who preach the word, know not the imaginations of men; but God, whose word it is, knows perfectly.

Deuteronomy 31:23

Vs. 23-30: The solemn delivery of the book of the law to the Levites, to be deposited in, or rather by the side, of the ark, is again related. The song which follows in the next chapter is delivered to Moses, and by him to the people. He wrote it first, as the Holy Spirit taught him; and then spake it in the hearing of all the people. Moses tells them plainly, I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves. Many a sad thought, no doubt, it occasioned to this good man; but his comfort was, that he had done his duty, and that God would be glorified in their dispersion, if not in their settlement, for the foundation of God stands sure.

CHAPTER 32

The song of Moses. (1,2) The character of God, The character of Israel. (3-6) The great things God had done for Israel. (7-14) The wickedness of Israel. (19-25) The judgments which would come upon them for their sins. (15-18) Deserved vengeance withheld. (26-38) God's deliverance for his people. (39-43) The exhortation with which the song was delivered. (44-47) Moses to go up mount Nebo to die. (48-52)

Deuteronomy 32:1

Vs. 1, 2: Moses begins with a solemn appeal to heaven and earth, concerning the truth and importance of what he was about to say. His doctrine is the gospel, the speech of God, the doctrine of Christ; the doctrine of grace and mercy through him, and of life and salvation by him.

Deuteronomy 32:3

Vs. 3-6: "He is a Rock." This is the first time God is called so in Scripture. The expression denotes that the Divine power, faithfulness, and love, as revealed in Christ and the gospel, form a foundation which cannot be changed or moved, on which we may build our hopes of happiness. And under his protection we may find refuge from all our enemies, and in all our troubles; as the rocks in those countries sheltered from the burning rays of the sun, and from tempests, or were fortresses from the enemy. "His work is perfect:" that of redemption and salvation, in which there is a display of all the Divine perfection, complete in all its parts. All God's dealings with his creatures are regulated by wisdom which cannot err, and perfect justice. He is indeed just and right; he takes care that none shall lose by him. A high charge is exhibited against Israel. Even God's children have their spots, while in this imperfect state; for if we say we have no sin, no spot, we deceive ourselves. But the sin of Israel was not habitual, notorious, unrepented sin; which is a certain mark of the children of Satan. They were fools to forsake their mercies for lying vanities. All willful sinners, especially sinners in Israel, are unwise and ungrateful.

Deuteronomy 32:7

Vs. 7-14: Moses gives particular instances of God's kindness and concern for them. The eagle's care for her young is a beautiful emblem of Christ's love, who came between Divine justice and our guilty souls, and bare our sins in his own body on the tree. And by the preached gospel, and the influences of the Holy Spirit, He stirs up and prevails upon sinners to leave Satan's bondage. In ver. 13,14, are emblems of the conquest believers have over their spiritual enemies, sin, Satan, and the world, in and through Christ. Also of their safety and triumph in him; of their happy frames of soul, when they are above the world, and the things of it. This will be the blessed case of spiritual Israel in every sense in the latter day.

Deuteronomy 32:15

Vs. 15-18: Here are two instances of the wickedness of Israel, each was apostasy from God. These people were called Jeshurun, "an upright people," so some; "a seeing people," so others: but they soon lost the reputation both of their knowledge and of their righteousness. They indulged their appetites, as if they had nothing to do but to make provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts of it. Those who make a God of themselves, and a God of their bellies, in pride and wantonness, and cannot bear to be told of it, thereby forsake God, and show they esteem him lightly. There is but one way of a sinner's acceptance and sanctification, however different modes of irreligion, or false religion, may show that favorable regard for other ways, which is often miscalled candid. How mad are idolaters, who forsake the Rock of salvation, to run themselves upon the rock of perdition!

Deuteronomy 32:19

Vs. 19-25: The revolt of Israel was described in the foregoing verses, and here follow the resolves of Divine justice as to them. We deceive ourselves, if we think that God will be mocked by a faithless people. Sin makes us hateful in the sight of the holy God. See what mischief sin does, and reckon those to be fools that mock at it.

Deuteronomy 32:26

Vs. 26-38: The idolatry and rebellions of Israel deserved, and the justice of God seemed to demand, that they should be rooted out. But He spared Israel, and continues them still to be living witnesses of the truth of the Bible, and to silence unbelievers. They are preserved for wise and holy purposes and the prophecies give us some idea what those purposes are. The Lord will never disgrace the throne of his glory. It is great wisdom, and will help much to the return of sinners to God, seriously to consider their latter end, or the future state. It is here meant particularly of what God foretold by Moses, about this people in the latter days; but it may be applied generally. Oh that men would consider the happiness they will lose, and the misery they will certainly plunge into, if they go on in their trespasses! What will be in the end thereof? ²⁰¹⁵¹Jeremiah 5:31. For the Lord will in due time bring down the enemies of the church, in displeasure against their wickedness. When sinners deem themselves most secure, they suddenly fall into destruction. And God's time to appear for the deliverance of his people, is when things are at the worst with them. But those who trust to any rock but God, will find it fail them when they most need it. The rejection of the Messiah by the Jewish nation, is the continuance of their ancient idolatry, apostasy, and rebellion. They shall be brought to humble themselves before the Lord, to repent of their sins, and to trust in their long-rejected Mediator for salvation. Then he will deliver them, and make their prosperity great.

Deuteronomy 32:39

Vs. 39-43 This conclusion of the song speaks,

- 1.** Glory to God. No escape can be made from his power.
- 2.** It speaks terror to his enemies. Terror indeed to those who hate him. The wrath of God is here revealed from heaven against them.
- 3.** It speaks comfort to his own people. The song concludes with words of joy. Whatever judgments are brought upon sinners, it shall go well with the people of God.

Deuteronomy 32:44

Vs. 44-47: Here is the solemn delivery of this song to Israel, with a charge to mind all the good words Moses had said unto them. It is not a trifle, but a matter of life and death: mind it, and you are made for ever; neglect it, and you are for ever undone. Oh that men were fully persuaded that religion is their life, even the life of their souls!

Deuteronomy 32:48

Vs. 48-52: Now Moses had done his work, why should he desire to live a day longer? God reminds him of the sin of which he had been guilty, for which he was kept from entering Canaan. It is good for the best of men to die repenting the infirmities of which they are conscious. But those may die with comfort and ease, whenever God calls for them, notwithstanding the sins they remember against themselves, who have a believing prospect, and a well-grounded hope of eternal life beyond death.

CHAPTER 33

The glorious majesty of God. (1-5) The blessings of the twelve tribes. (6-23) Strength to believers. (24,25) The excellencies of Israel. (26-29)

Deuteronomy 33:1

Vs. 1-5: To all his precepts, warnings, and prophecies, Moses added a solemn blessing. He begins with a description of the glorious appearances of God, in giving the law. His law works like fire. If received, it is melting, warming, purifying, and burns up the dross of corruption; if rejected, it hardens, sears, pains, and destroys. The Holy Spirit came down in cloven tongues, as of fire; for the gospel also is a fiery law. The law of God written in the heart, is a certain proof of the love of God shed abroad there: we must reckon His law one of the gifts of his grace.

Deuteronomy 33:6

Vs. 6-23: The order in which the tribes are here blessed, is not the same as is observed elsewhere. The blessing of Judah may refer to the whole tribe in general, or to David as a type of Christ. Moses largely blesses the tribe of Levi. Acceptance with God is what we should all aim at, and desire, in all our devotions, whether men accept us or not, ² Corinthians 5:9. This prayer is a prophecy, that God will keep up a ministry in his church to the end of time. The tribe of Benjamin had their inheritance close to mount Zion. To be situated near the ordinances, is a precious gift from the Lord, a privilege not to be exchanged for any worldly advantage, or indulgence. We should thankfully receive the earthly blessings sent to us, through the successive seasons. But those good gifts which come down from the Father of lights, through the rising of the Sun of righteousness, and the pouring out of his Spirit like the rain which makes fruitful, are infinitely more precious, as the tokens of his special love. The precious things here prayed for, are figures of spiritual blessing in heavenly things by Christ, the gifts, graces, and comforts of the Spirit. When Moses prays for the good will of Him that dwelt in the bush, he refers to the covenant, on which all our hopes of God's favor must be founded. The providence of God appoints men's habitations, and wisely disposes men to different

employments for the public good. Whatever our place and business are, it is our wisdom and duty to apply thereto; and it is happiness to be well pleased therewith. We should not only invite others to the service of God, but abound in it. The blessing of Naphtali. The favor of God is the only favor satisfying to the soul. Those are happy indeed, who have the favor of God; and those shall have it, who reckon that in having it they have enough, and desire no more.

Deuteronomy 33:24

Vs. 24, 25: All shall be sanctified to true believers; if their way be rough, their feet shall be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. As thy days, so shall thy strength be. The “day” is often in Scripture put for the events of the day; it is a promise that God would graciously and constantly support under trials and troubles, whatever they were. It is a promise sure to all the spiritual seed of Abraham. Have they work allotted? They shall have strength to do it. Have they burdens appointed? They shall have strength, and never be tempted above what they are able to bear.

Deuteronomy 33:26

Vs. 26-29: None had such a God as Israel. There is no people like the Israel of God. What is here said of the church of Israel is to be applied to the spiritual church. Never were people so well seated and sheltered. Those who make God their habitation, shall have all the comforts and benefits of a habitation in him, **Psalm 91:1**. Never were people so well supported and born up. How low soever the people of God are at any time brought, everlasting arms are underneath them, to keep the spirit from sinking, from fainting, and their faith from failing. Divine grace is sufficient for them, **2 Corinthians 12:9**. Never were people so well commanded. Thus believers are more than conquerors over their spiritual enemies, through Christ that loved them. Never were people so well secured and protected. Israel shall dwell in safety alone. All who keep close to God, shall be kept safe by him. Never were people so well provided for. Every true Israelite looks with faith to the better country, the heavenly Canaan, which is filled with better things than corn and wine. Never were people so well helped. If in danger of any harm, or in want of any good, they had an eternal God to go to. Nothing could hurt those whom God helped, nor was

it possible the people should perish who were saved by the Lord. Never were people so well armed. Those in whose hearts is the excellencies of holiness, are defended by the whole armor of God, Ephesians 6. Never were people so well assured of victory over their enemies. Thus shall the God of peace tread Satan under the feet of all believers, and shall do it shortly, ~~16:20~~ Romans 16:20. May God help us to seek and to set our affection on the things above; and to turn our souls from earthly perishing objects; that we may not have our lot with Israel's foes in the regions of darkness and despair, but with the Israel of God, in the realms of love and eternal happiness.

CHAPTER 34

Moses views the promised land from mount Nebo. (1-4) The death and burial of Moses, The mourning of the people. (5-8) Joshua succeeds Moses, The praise of Moses. (9-12)

Deuteronomy 34:1

Vs. 1-4: Moses seemed unwilling to leave his work; but that being finished, he manifested no unwillingness to die. God had declared that he should not enter Canaan. But the Lord also promised that Moses should have a view of it, and showed him all that good land. Such a sight believers now have, through grace, of the bliss and glory of their future state. Sometimes God reserves the brightest discoveries of his grace to his people to support their dying moments. Those may leave this world with cheerfulness, who die in the faith of Christ, and in the hope of heaven.

Deuteronomy 34:5

Vs. 5-8: Moses obeyed this command of God as willingly as any other, though it seemed harder. In this he resembled our Lord Jesus Christ. But he died in honor, in peace, and in the most easy manner; the Savior died upon the disgraceful and torturing cross. Moses died very easily; he died “at the mouth of the Lord,” according to the will of God. The servants of the Lord, when they have done all their other work, must die at last, and be willing to go home, whenever their Master sends for them, ⁴⁰¹³Acts 21:13. The place of his burial was not known. If the soul be at rest with God, it is of little consequence where the body rests. There was no decay in the strength of his body, nor in the vigor and activity of his mind; his understanding was as clear, and his memory as strong as ever. This was the reward of his services, the effect of his extraordinary meekness. There was solemn mourning for him. Yet how great soever our losses have been, we must not give ourselves up to sorrow. If we hope to go to heaven rejoicing, why should we go to the grave mourning?

Deuteronomy 34:9

Vs. 9-12: Moses brought Israel to the borders of Canaan, and then died and left them. This signifies that the law made nothing perfect, ^{<8076>}Hebrews 7:19. It brings men into a wilderness of conviction, but not into the Canaan of rest and settled peace. That honor was reserved for Joshua, our Lord Jesus, of whom Joshua was a type, (and the name is the same,) to do that for us which the law could not do, ^{<8188>}Romans 8:3. Through him we enter into the spiritual rest of conscience, and eternal rest in heaven. Moses was greater than any other prophet of the Old Testament. But our Lord Jesus went beyond him, far more than the other prophets came short of him. And see a strong resemblance between the redeemer of the children of Israel and the Redeemer of mankind. Moses was sent by God, to deliver the Israelites from a cruel bondage; he led them out, and conquered their enemies. He became not only their deliverer, but their lawgiver; not only their lawgiver, but their judge; and, finally, leads them to the border of the land of promise. Our blessed Savior came to rescue us out of the slavery of the devil, and to restore us to liberty and happiness. He came to confirm every moral precept of the first lawgiver; and to write them, not on tables of stone, but on fleshy tables of the heart. He came to be our Judge also, inasmuch as he hath appointed a day when he will judge all the secrets of men, and reward or punish accordingly. This greatness of Christ above Moses, is a reason why Christians should be obedient and faithful to the holy religion by which they profess to be Christ's followers. God, by his grace, make us all so!