

Deuteronomy 5:23-33

Now, Therefore, Why Should We Die?

In today's passage, the leaders of the people – having received the Ten Commandments and knowing that more laws are coming – present themselves to Moses. They have seen the terrifying display of sight and sound, and they no longer want to experience it.

They have an immense fear because of what they have seen and heard. And so, they ask that the words of the Lord will come through Moses rather than directly. Without a doubt, this is in hopes that it will lessen the effects of fear upon their lives.

But what difference does it really make? What is it about receiving the law through Moses that will make any difference at all? Today we will consider that in hopes of understanding what is being conveyed to us in this – and I mean this sincerely – really marvelous passage.

Text Verse: “Do you look at things according to the outward appearance? If anyone is convinced in himself that he is Christ's, let him again consider this in himself, that just as he *is* Christ's, even so we *are* Christ's. ⁸ For even if I should boast somewhat more about our authority, which the Lord gave us for edification and not for your destruction, I shall not be ashamed— ⁹ lest I seem to terrify you by letters. ¹⁰ ‘For *his* letters,’ they say, ‘*are* weighty and powerful, but *his* bodily presence *is* weak, and *his* speech contemptible.’ ¹¹ Let such a person consider this, that what we are in word by letters when we are absent, such *we will* also *be* in deed when we are present.” ²
Corinthians 10:7-11

The people at Corinth had made the error of thinking that Paul's words in his letters were not a reflection of who he was as a person. When he was present with them, he appeared like a weak person, and his speech left a lot to be desired.

He also worked making tents to support himself, instead of insisting that those he ministered to support him. Everything about Paul seems unimpressive. However, when he wrote them letters, he was always much more authoritative.

Because of this, they began to think his letters were not a reflection of who he was as a person. In his words here, he corrects them of that thinking. Just because he came to the people in a timid manner did not mean he could not present himself with the commanding authority of an apostle.

In correcting them, he says that what he says in his letters when absent from them is exactly how he can be when he is with them. In fact, he had already said that to them in his first letter when he said, “What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of gentleness?” (1 Corinthians 4:21).

His words were a reflection of who he was, whether he displayed himself with power or not. This is what Israel, in our passage today, and throughout the rest of their history, has failed to understand about the Lord.

It is not how one appears at any given time that people need to be concerned with. It is who the person (or in the case of Israel – the Lord) is by nature that needs to be considered. The Corinthians attempted to disassociate Paul from his words. Israel will attempt to do that today as well. But it doesn’t work that way.

Stay tuned for another exciting adventure into God’s superior word. It is coming right now. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. From the Midst of the Darkness (verses 23-27)

Moses has just finished recounting the Ten Commandments. After repeating them, he finished up that portion of the narrative with, “These words the Lord spoke to all your assembly, in the mountain from the midst of the fire, the cloud, and the thick darkness, with a loud voice; and He added no more. And He wrote them on two tablets of stone and gave them to me” (5:22).

With that fresh on our memories, we start into what occurred after that awesome display. The words of the passage ahead are an expansion of what was seen in Exodus 20. There it said –

“Now all the people witnessed the thunderings, the lightning flashes, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw *it*, they trembled and stood afar off. ¹⁹ Then they said to Moses, ‘You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die.’”
Exodus 20:18, 19

Moses will take that short narrative, and he will go into more detail than Exodus did. It is for good reason too, as we will see. And so, he begins the passage with...

²³ “So it was, when you heard the voice from the midst of the darkness,

v’hi ke-shameakhem eth ha’qol mitok ha’khoshek – “And it came to pass when you heard the voice from midst the darkness.”

Four times in the previous chapter, and four times in this chapter, the text says that the Lord God spoke *mi’tok ha’esh*, or “from midst of the fire.” In fact, that was said in just the previous verse, and it will be said again in the next verse to come. And yet, here it says, *mi’tok ha’khoshek*, or “from midst of the darkness.”

There is no contradiction here. In verse 5:22, which we just cited, it said the voice came “from the midst of the fire, the cloud, and the thick darkness.” Therefore, the voice resounded from out of the

entire display – both fire and darkness. But it has been the fire that has been the main source of focus. Now it says only “the darkness.”

Such a change is not without purpose, and it shouldn't be passed over without a careful analysis of why it has been introduced. And yet, I found no commentary on the reason for the change – as if it had no bearing on the narrative.

The symbolism of the fire is obvious. The words are words of law, and with the introduction of law comes the knowledge of sin. With the introduction of that knowledge, the act of sinning becomes a foregone conclusion. With the act comes a violation of the law, and with the violation comes judgment. The voice out of the fire is one of judgment.

However, the darkness implies obscurity and a lack of understanding. There is an inability to properly comprehend. Darkness also signifies a lack of fraternity. The Bible puts light as revelation and understanding. But it also gives the sense of friendliness and a right relationship for those who draw near to it.

What this means, then, is that there is the lack of a close relationship between the voice and the hearers of the voice. And more, there is a lack of understanding by them as well. In seeing this, the words of verse 27 are explained. The people will say to Moses, “You go near and hear all that the Lord our God may say.”

As soon as that became evident, it was pretty obvious there would be a chiasm to reveal this more fully. Having laid out the verses to see if there would be one, sure enough... this is what came up –

Deuteronomy 5:23-5:27 – A Consuming Fire
When God Speaks with Man (06/22/20)

- a. “So it was, when you heard (*shama*) the voice from the midst of the darkness,
- b. while the mountain was burning with fire, that you came near to me (*qarav*)
- c. His voice from the midst of the fire. We have seen this day that God speaks with man; yet he *still* lives.
- d. Now therefore, why should we die?
- e. For this great fire will consume us;
- d. then we shall die
- c. the voice of the living God speaking from the midst of the fire, as we *have*, and lived?
- b. You go near (*qarav*) and hear all that the LORD our God may say,
- a. and tell us all that the LORD our God says to you, and we will hear (*shama*) and do it.’

The people heard, but the display was terrifying and unfriendly. Therefore, they asked to hear through a mediator only. They came near to him in order to have him go near to the Lord. This is exactly what a mediator does. He is the access point between two parties that lack a close bond which would make a mediator unnecessary.

The entire passage opens us up to what is going on, simply because of a change from the words “from the midst of the fire,” to “from the midst of the darkness.”

23 (con’t) while the mountain was burning with fire,

v’hahar boer baesh – “and the mountain was burning in the fire.” While the voice proceeded from the darkness, the mountain was in the fire, and it was burning with the fire.” The mountain is a place of authority, as in a government seat. Therefore, the symbolism is that of an authoritative place of judgment.

The people grasped this. There is no sense of fraternity between the issuing forth of the law. Rather, there is only a state of

judgment and of being consumed because of the words of authority issuing forth in the frightful display. And so, Moses recalls...

23 (con't) that you came near to me,

va'tiqrevun elai – “and you came near to me.” The same word, *va'tiqrevun*, was seen in verse 4:11, which said –

“Then you came near and stood at the foot of the mountain.”

The people had drawn near to the place where the Lord sat and where He issued forth words of law, and that didn't go over too well. The people were overwhelmed and could not bear up under the terror of the fearful display their eyes had beheld. Because of that, the people now approached Moses. It was...

23 (con't) all the heads of your tribes and your elders.

Here, the word *shevet*, or tribe is used. There are other words translated as tribe as well, but this word looks to the political aspect of the tribe. In this, it includes the heads and elders.

In other words, it wasn't just the common folk, the women, and the children who were afraid of what they saw, but even the tribal heads and elders in the community. All of them had seen what they saw, and all were filled with terror, thus...

24 And you said:

va'tomeru – “And you said.” Moses had just said that it was the heads of the tribes and the elders. Now, speaking to those gathered before him, he says, “And you said.” What was spoken by the leaders of Israel is as if it is spoken by all of Israel, for all time.

If Moses were alive today, he could say the exact same thing to the people of Israel, and it would have exactly the same effect. They could say, “We weren’t there at Sinai. This doesn’t apply to us.” If so, Moses could say, “Yes, you said this is what you wanted, and so this is how it is.”

The giving of the law, and everything associated with it, is a one-time and for-all-time event for the people of Israel. Until the covenant is annulled in Christ for them, they are bound to it.

24 (con’t) ‘Surely the LORD our God has shown us His glory and His greatness, and we have heard His voice from the midst of the fire.

These men – speaking for Israel – acknowledge that what they have seen was from *Yehovah Elohenu*, or “Yehovah our God.” There can be no denying this afterwards, as if the source of the law was out of Moses’ own head.

They further acknowledge that the voice was accompanied by His glory, His greatness, and that it issued forth from the fire. These things are remembered to impress upon the minds of the new generation that Moses was not the source of the law.

Rather, its source is not only a god, as if some unseen entity, but the God, who provided a majestic display to reveal His greatness. In doing so, He has thus revealed the greatness of the law which proceeds from Him. Everything spoken here is connected to the law which is to guide Israel throughout their history.

24 (con’t) We have seen this day that God speaks with man;

Here it says that God speaks with *ha’adam*, or “the man.” It is a way of referring to humanity. There were men and women, young and old – all gathered before Him and hearing His voice. All of them came from their first father, the man, Adam.

It is a way of verifying the Genesis account to the people where the Lord God spoke to Adam in the Garden of Eden. But it also surely brought up the memories of what happened after the fall. There was no longer worry-free conversation, but fear. After they had eaten of the fruit, it said –

Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, “Where *are* you?”
¹⁰ So he said, “I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.” Genesis 3:9, 10

The people sense what Adam also understood. This is certain because they next say...

²⁴ (con’t) yet he *still* lives.

v’khai – “and lives.” And yet, all of them lived. The people appear to have been familiar with the Genesis narrative, even at such an early time after being brought out of Egypt. If so, they knew that Adam was told that on the day he ate of the fruit, he would die.

Adam was afraid, but Adam didn’t die. At least not physically. The people have made the assumption that the record was speaking of physical death, something they now also feared. But the Lord was speaking of spiritual death. Those who heard the law spoken out were already spiritually dead. The law could not fix that.

In their lack of understanding, they equated what was spoken to Adam as what would also occur to them – physical death. In order to avoid that, they continue...

²⁵ Now therefore, why should we die?

This is the center of the chiasm, and it shows the terror of being in the presence of God without an appropriate covering. Adam was in

the Lord's presence covered in fig leaves. The fig signifies a connection to God, or its lack thereof. They had sewn the leaves themselves, signifying their own works. In this, they were afraid.

The people of Israel were in the same position. They heard the words of law, they were not covered in the Lord's holiness, and they knew that they would die because of it. Concerning the words, "Why should we die?", Charles Ellicott notes –

"The instinctive dread of death awakened by the Divine presence, and especially by the declaration of the Divine law, bears eloquent testimony to the truth that man was made to bear the Divine likeness, and to live a holy life." Charles Ellicott

He is correct in this. But what is more, is that the people realized that the words of the law would, in fact, bring death, and that by the law they could not live the holy life they were called to. In adhering to the law, it would be possible, but they would not be able to do so.

Thus, even at this moment in their history, only minutes after receiving the Ten Commandments, it was evident that the law was to be a tutor to lead man to Christ. In reality, nothing more could be expected of the law than that. Without Christ, there is only the anticipation of judgment. They even acknowledge it openly...

25 (con't) For this great fire will consume us;

We saw in a couple of sermons from Chapter 4 that the fire, the cloud, the darkness, and the other events the people heard and saw were only displays of the Lord's power, they were not actually the Lord. Rather, He was hidden from their eyes.

Thus, it isn't the really the fire that they should have feared, but the Lord who called out from the fire. Though it will be seen that they

partially understand this, they don't fully. Israel's attention was focused in the wrong place. That continues to be seen from the next words as well...

²⁵ (con't) if we hear the voice of the LORD our God anymore, then we shall die.

The people understand that the voice of the Lord God is the Source of what is to be feared. They have equated the voice of the Lord with the terrible display their ears heard and their eyes beheld. However, they will misunderstand what that means.

If the voice of the Lord was accompanied with that terrifying display, and if the voice of the Lord is a reflection of what the Lord expects, then it doesn't really matter if they actually hear the voice of the Lord or not. It is what the voice conveys that is actually to be feared. The people have only partially grasped what they needed to grasp.

And that continues on to this day in Israel. For now, the elders there before Moses continue on in their lack of fully grasping the situation by saying...

²⁶ For who *is there* of all flesh who has heard the voice of the living God speaking from the midst of the fire, as we *have*, and lived?

The question of the men there before Moses demands a negative answer. There is no one who had heard such things. And yet, because these things are written in the law, it is actually irrelevant if the voice of the living God speaking from the midst of the fire is literally heard or not.

In the Talmud, it is said that when the Ten Commandments were spoken out, all of the nations of the world heard the words of the law – all in their own language. There is nothing to substantiate this outside of the Talmud.

It is probable that whoever wrote that had heard about the Day of Pentecost, and how the believers in Christ spoke in all of the tongues of the peoples. In hearing that, he simply coopted the account and made the same claim about the giving of the law at Sinai. But more to the point, the law was only given to Israel – not any other country. But, as I said, it is actually irrelevant.

The words of the law are recorded – not just the Ten Commandments, but all of those received by Moses from the Lord as well. They are no less the words of the Lord, and how they are received is of far less importance than what the words say.

The display was only intended to alert the people to this fact. But it didn't sink in as it should. They only picked up on the importance of the transmission of the words, but not on the importance of the Source of the words, or of the words themselves. That continues to be evident from their next words...

²⁷ You go near and hear all that the LORD our God may say,

These words correspond to what was said in verse 23. There, the people came near to Moses. Here, the people ask Moses to go near the Lord. They wanted to distance themselves from the Source of the words they heard. Thus, Moses was to function in a mediatorial role in receiving the words of Yehovah.

And so, there is supposedly safety both in distance and in how the words of law are transmitted to them. But, if the Lord is God, there is actually no distance between Him and the people.

And more, if the Lord is God, there is no difference in how the word gets to them. The Source is the same, and so the weight of the law remains wholly unchanged.

Remember what Paul told the Corinthians in our opening today. He is the same person, whether he is present or whether he is writing them a letter. His apostolic authority remained unchanged.

If you think about it, the people there with Moses would have been better off to have the words transmitted directly to them by the Lord. The terrifying effect would have remained, and thus the desire to not violate His word would have been ensured.

How can we know this is so? Because the cloud remained atop Sinai while Moses went up to receive the rest of the law from Him. But without being spoken to directly, they assumed that they could do as they wished. The people who received the law were the same people who made a golden calf to worship while the cloud remained right there in full view.

They asked for breathing space. Moses was to receive the words of the Lord...

27 (con't) and tell us all that the LORD our God says to you, and we will hear and do *it*.'

These words end the chiasm which began in verse 23. The people heard the voice of the Lord “from the midst of the darkness.” There was no light, no friendliness, and no comprehension transmitted to the people, only words of law.

They are asking Moses to bring back the word in hopes of there being light, affability, and understanding. This is what a mediator is chosen for. When parties cannot meet personally, they will have a mediator to go between them.

When parties have no mutual friendliness, they will have a mediator to bring about harmony. And when parties have no ability

to harmoniously communicate their words, they have a mediator to bring about peace between them.

This is all hoped for and anticipated, but they are not sending words to the Lord. Rather, the covenant is one-sided. They agreed to whatever the Lord would say. It is His covenant, and they had bound themselves to it. They were obligated to simply “hear and do” what the Lord spoke forth.

Despite this, and knowing all that would lie ahead, the Lord responds according to their words...

*When God speaks to man, “It is man’s duty to obey!”
Whatever the precept that is given, so shall it be
We are to observe all the Lord does say
And it will go well with us most certainly*

*When He says, and He does mean, “You shall not eat pork”
That is the command for that particular time
But if He later says, “All foods are clean,” stick in your fork
The previous law is no longer a crime*

*When the Law of Moses is fulfilled in Christ, it has met its end
Now a new reality for God’s chosen has been found
Because from heaven, God – His grace in Christ did send
We are now free from the law, because that grace does abound*

*Thank God for Jesus Christ our Lord
From Him God’s infinite grace is outpoured*

II. That You May Live (verses 28-33)

²⁸ “Then the LORD heard the voice of your words when you spoke to me, and the LORD said to me:

The expression, “heard the voice,” signifies more than just hearing the sound. It is a way of saying, I hear, understand, and have

processed what is being conveyed. The people made a proposition to Moses. The Lord both heard what they said, and the intent of the words was understood by Him. In response to this, He says...

²⁸ (con't) 'I have heard the voice of the words of this people which they have spoken to you. They are right *in* all that they have spoken.

The Lord's response here cannot go without being combined with what is said in Deuteronomy 18 –

“The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear, ¹⁶ according to all you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, nor let me see this great fire anymore, lest I die.’

¹⁷ “And the LORD said to me: ‘What they have spoken is good. ¹⁸ I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him.

¹⁹ And it shall be *that* whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require *it* of him.” Deuteronomy 18:15-19

Unlike Israel who has only looked at the effects of the giving of the law – meaning the terrifying display, the Lord has looked upon the entire matter. He not only gave them the effects to see and fear, He gave them the words which issued from Him – who is to be feared.

The leaders of Israel assumed that in the removing of the effects, the terror of the law would be lessened. The Lord knew it would not. Therefore, on the VERY DAY the law was given, the Lord is acknowledging that not only was the display needing to be changed, but the entire covenant was as well.

The Mosaic Covenant, by its very nature – with or without the display – was a covenant of death. Therefore, a New Covenant was

needed – a Christ covenant. This isn't seen now in Chapter 5, but it is seen by including the words of Chapter 18.

Moses' mediation of the Law could not remove the terror of the law. Only in Christ's coming, fulfilling the law, and establishing a New Covenant in His blood could the terror be removed. It is that, not obedience to the law which was now being given, that the Lord next speaks of...

²⁹ Oh, that they had such a heart in them

It is the heart that the Lord evaluates. This is evident throughout Scripture. The Pharisees did the things of the law, but they didn't care diddly about the Lord who gave the law. That is evidenced by Jesus' own words.

The people observed the law, added in their own commands which twisted the law, and it didn't bother them a bit to do so. In response to this, and citing Isaiah, He said –

“These people draw near to Me with their mouth,
And honor Me with *their* lips,
But their heart is far from Me.
⁹ And in vain they worship Me,
Teaching *as* doctrines the commandments of men.” Matthew 15:8, 9

The Lord recognized that the people feared the Lord as they stood before Moses, but He also knew that this fear was not based on who He was, or what His word (which reflects His nature) said. Rather, it was based on how He presented Himself when He spoke out His word. In removing the terrible display, their hearts would no longer be moved to fear Him.

Is this so? Of course it is. The same Lord who gave this law came and dwelt among them. He also spoke out to them His word. And

yet, they rejected who He was and what He said. Hence, the Lord continues, knowing it would be so...

²⁹ (con't) that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments,

The words of Chapter 18 are exactly what the Lord is referring to here. Again...

“I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. ¹⁹ And it shall be *that* whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require *it* of him.” Deuteronomy 18:18, 19

The Lord, in the Law of Moses, *commanded* the people to listen to the Prophet like Moses. That IS a part of keeping all His commandments which He now refers to in Chapter 5. To fail to fear Christ Jesus, is to fail to fear the Lord. And to fail to obey the words of Christ Jesus is to fail to keep the commandments of the Lord. One plus one will always equal two in proper theology.

It is with this thought in mind, and while citing Hebrews 12, that Charles Ellicott rightfully and beautifully states what is going on – right here in Deuteronomy 5:29 –

“But it must not be forgotten that He ‘whose voice then shook the earth’ is the very same Person who ‘speaketh from heaven’ now. He who pronounced the Law in the letter writes it on the heart by His Spirit. The Angel of the covenant and the Prophet like unto Moses are one. He who gave the Law on Sinai died under it on Calvary, and provided for its observance for ever.”
Charles Ellicott

What Ellicott means is that in coming to Christ, the law is observed by us in Him. We are merited with perfect adherence to the law because Christ perfectly adhered to the law. What He did is

imputed to us, and its effects are forever. We are not under law, but we are in Christ, and thus under grace.

For those in Christ, all is well. For those who do not come to Christ, such is not the case. That is why the Lord adds in this qualifier...

29 (con't) that it might be well with them and with their children forever!

It can only go well when one's heart fears the Lord and observes His commandments. But one cannot fear the Lord, nor can he observe His commandments if He doesn't obey His commandments – all of them.

As heeding the Prophet like Moses, meaning the Lord Jesus, is such a commandment, then only when one directs his heart to Jesus can it go well with him and his children forever.

As a point of clarity in the Hebrew, a literal translation of this verse is a bit different than the English. It says, “Who will give, and become heart this in them, to fear Me, and to keep all my commandments all the days.”

In other words, they have at this moment a heart that fears the Lord, but He knows that will not continue. And so, He rhetorically asks, “Who will give them such a heart that will be like this forever?” If they refuse such a heart, it cannot occur.

It is a marvelous verse that demonstrates the freewill of man. Israel rejected such a heart, and they set their course for the time being. However, it will happen. The answer to the question is found in Jeremiah 31, and which is then cited by the author of Hebrews –

“For this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on

their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ¹¹ None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. ¹² For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.” Hebrews 8:10-12

It is the Lord who will do so, giving them what they have lacked for so long when they call out for it. It is a marvelous promise of future restoration for Israel. For now, the Lord next says...

³⁰ Go and say to them, “Return to your tents.”

The people had been called from the dwellings to stand before the Lord. The Lord spoke, the people feared, and the leaders came to Moses on behalf of the people and made their petition. The Lord agreed to their request, and so the Lord now instructs them to return, once again, to their tents...

³¹ But as for you, stand here by Me,

Only Moses remains to hear the word of the Lord. And so, he is instructed to *amad*, or stand, there by the Lord. Thus, it signifies that he is to receive what the others cannot. They stood before the Lord, but they will do so no longer. Only Moses will stand...

^{31 (con’t)} and I will speak to you all the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments

The translation is incorrect. It says, *kal ha’mitsvah v’ha’khukim v’ha’mishpatim* – “all the command (it is singular) and all the statutes and all the judgments.” The law is a codified body which is to be dutifully obeyed. It is a single command which is then defined by the statutes and judgments of which it is comprised.

^{31 (con’t)} which you shall teach them,

These are to be taken down from the mouth of the Lord and transmitted to the people for their observance. Thus, he is fulfilling the role of both receiving and instruction. It is a mediatorial position as an appointed lawgiver.

³¹ (con't) that they may observe *them* in the land which I am giving them to possess.'

With the record of the Old Testament and the gospels complete, we can see what Israel could not see. The record stands that they were given the law, they did cross Jordan, and they did not observe the law. This is evidenced all the way through until the work of Christ was complete.

Thus, this verse can only truly be appreciated in the knowledge of Christ. The land anticipates a return to paradise. The Jordan anticipates the life and work of Christ. Thus, observing of the law is anticipated in what Christ accomplishes.

This takes us back to Ellicott's words, "He who gave the Law on Sinai died under it on Calvary, and provided for its observance for ever." Thank God for Jesus Christ.

³² "Therefore you shall be careful to do as the LORD your God has commanded you;

The words now return from the Lord speaking to Moses back to Moses speaking to the people. He is imploring them to do as the Lord had instructed a full generation earlier.

Again, like the previous words, what is stated here can only be appreciated in Christ's fulfillment of these things. The record has been faithfully written down – from the time of Joshua, even

through the words of Malachi. They were not careful to do what they had been commanded...

32 (con't) you shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.

This must mean more than just doing as commanded, but it surely includes not adding to what has been given. In other words, to turn one way would be to disobey the law, but to turn another would be to add to the law that which was not law. It is what Jesus really got down on the leaders for at His time.

The people failed to do as the Lord commanded, they turned aside with almost every turn of the page, and they walked in a crooked and contrary manner to the word and will of the Lord. They were not careful to do as they were so instructed, and they added instructions that then twisted the law.

Again, thank God for Jesus Christ. Israel is merely a template of each of us – wandering through our lives completely disconnected from the reality of God. And yet, He intervened in time and did what Israel could not do, and – indeed – what we have each failed to do. Thank God for Jesus Christ.

33 You shall walk in all the ways which the LORD your God has commanded you,

Once again, Moses implores his audience to conduct their lives according to that which the Lord has commanded. In both testaments, the idea of the word “walk” is one which signifies to conduct one’s affairs.

To walk in the ways the Lord has commanded, is to conduct one’s affairs according to the commands of the Lord. And like in the giving of the Fifth Commandment, Moses adds on a note of promise for those who do so...

*³³ (fin) that you may live and that it may be well with you, and that you may prolong your days in the land which you shall possess.

The words here are similar to those of verse 4:1—

“Now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I teach you to observe, that you may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers is giving you.” Deuteronomy 4:1

However, there is a difference in the word “live.” An additional letter, a nun, is affixed to the end of it in this verse. Instead, of *tikhyu*, it says *tikhyun*. The addition of this letter gives fuller sense of the word so that it means something like “that you may have abundant life.”

Therefore, Moses is speaking plainly to the people about real life in Canaan. To be observant to the laws will bring about prosperity and abundant life, and it will bring about an extension of their time in the land without fear of exile.

But that brings us to the obvious picture of Christ. If our observance of the law is found not in ourselves, but in Christ, then it is – even from an evaluation of the Law of Moses – a note of the eternal joy and the eternal security of the believer.

The commandments in Christ are found to be fulfilled by faith in Christ. In that faith, the law is fulfilled on our behalf, and in that fulfilling, true life is found. In that, the word calls us overcomers, and in overcoming, we are sealed with a deposit which is our guarantee of redemption from this world to the land which we will possess.

How anyone can read the Bible and find only insufficiency in the work of Christ concerning the salvation of man is almost

incredible. Is that what God promises us? Eternal insecurity because of the insufficiency of the cross of Christ?

No! Rather, God has done for us what we could not do for ourselves. And, all He asks us to do is to simply reach out, by faith, and accept it. Let us hold fast to the truth that what God has done is both complete, and it is fully sufficient to bring us home to Himself.

Israel was given a mediator for receiving the law of the covenant. He is a mediator that says, “You are to do these things that the Lord has instructed through me.” Israel was offered another Mediator for a New Covenant. He is a Mediator who says, “I have done all that was instructed for Israel to do.”

The question is, will you observe all those things that Israel was instructed to do, or will you trust that Christ Jesus has done them for you? Choose wisely. Choose Christ – to the glory of God and to the saving of your soul. Thank God for Jesus Christ. Great things He has done!

Closing Verse: “And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.” Hebrews 9:15

Next Week: Deuteronomy 6:1-5 *How does this sync with, “God gave His only begotten Son?”* (The Lord our God, the Lord is One) (23rd Deuteronomy Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. But He also has expectations of you as He prepares you for entrance into His Land of Promise. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Now Therefore, Why Should We Die?

So it was, when you heard the voice
From the midst of the darkness
While the mountain was burning with fire
That you came near to me, all the heads of your tribes
-----and your elders, me to address

And you said: Surely the LORD our God
Has shown us His glory and His greatness
And we have heard His voice
From the midst of the fire; we heard His address

That God speaks with man, we have seen this day
Yet he still lives, and is not taken away

Now therefore, why should we die?
For this great fire will consume us
If we hear the voice of the LORD our God anymore
Then we shall die; it shall be thus

For who is there of all flesh
Who has heard the voice of the living God
Speaking from the midst of the fire
As we have, and lived? Such a notion is flawed

You go near and hear all that may say the LORD our God
And tell us all that the LORD our God to you does say
And we will hear and do it
So we confirm to you this very day

Then the LORD heard the voice of your words
When you spoke to me, and the LORD said to me, so He did do
I have heard the voice of the words of this people
Which they have spoken to you

They are right in all that they have spoken
Oh, that they had such a heart in them; a heart so wise and clever
That they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments
That it might be well with them and with their children forever!

Go and say to them, "Return to your tents"

But as for you, stand here by Me
And I will speak to you all the commandments, the statutes
-----and the judgments
Which you shall teach them, speaking to them plainly

That they may observe them in the land
Which I am giving them to possess; so they will understand

Therefore you shall be careful to do
As the LORD your God has commanded you

You shall not turn aside
To the right hand or to the left, but the narrow path
-----shall be your guide

You shall walk in all the ways
Which the LORD your God has commanded you
-----so to you I address
That you may live and that it may be well with you
And that you may prolong your days in the land
-----which you shall possess

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

²³ “So it was, when you heard the voice from the midst of the darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire, that you came near to me, all the heads of your tribes and your elders. ²⁴ And you said: ‘Surely the LORD our God has shown us His glory and His greatness, and we have heard His voice from the midst of the fire. We have seen this day that God speaks with man; yet he *still* lives. ²⁵ Now therefore, why should we die? For this great fire will consume us; if we hear the voice of the LORD our God anymore, then we shall die. ²⁶ For who *is there* of all flesh who has heard the voice of the living God speaking from the midst of the fire, as we *have*, and lived? ²⁷ You go near and hear all that the LORD our God may say, and tell us all that the LORD our God says to you, and we will hear and do *it*.’

²⁸ “Then the LORD heard the voice of your words when you spoke to me, and the LORD said to me: ‘I have heard the voice of the words of this people which they have spoken to you. They are right *in* all that they have spoken. ²⁹ Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children forever! ³⁰ Go and say to them, “Return to your tents.” ³¹ But as for you, stand here by Me, and I will speak to you all the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments which you shall teach them, that they may observe *them* in the land which I am giving them to possess.’

³² “Therefore you shall be careful to do as the LORD your God has commanded you; you shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. ³³ You shall walk in all the ways which the LORD your God has commanded you, that you may live and *that it may be* well with you, and *that* you may prolong *your* days in the land which you shall possess.

