

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

1) 01 Dec 2019.....	Numbers 01-09.....	God Leads
2) 08 Dec.....	Numbers 10-14.....	God Judges
3) 15 Dec.....	Numbers 15-20.....	God Requires
4) 22 Dec.....	Numbers 21 / Matthew 1.....	God Saves
5) 29 Dec.....	Numbers 22.....	God Calls
6) 05 Jan 2020.....	Numbers 23-27.....	God Commissions
7) 12 Jan.....	Numbers 28-36.....	God Expects
8) 19 Jan.....	Deuteronomy 5 & 19.....	Valued
9) 26 Jan.....	Deuteronomy 1-4.....	Honored
10) 02 Feb.....	Deuteronomy 5-6.....	Loved
11) 09 Feb.....	Deuteronomy 7-18.....	Revealed
12) 16 Feb.....	Deuteronomy 19-30.....	Chosen
13) 23 Feb.....	Deuteronomy 31-34.....	Promised

INTRODUCTION

- More diverse commands – eliminate evil; where to worship; how to handle false prophets; foods to avoid; tithing; canceling debt; lending to the poor; releasing slaves; appointing judges and officials
- In these chapters, if the Jews obeyed God, they would be blessed in their economy, in their progeny (a lot of kids), in their land (good weather for crops), and they would continually get better & better. If they failed to obey, they would receive diseases, mental illness, war, and famine to the point they would eat their own kids.
- What has more impact on us – Positive or Negative reinforcement?
 - ♦ For example, “If you obey the speed limit you will live long in the land” or “if you disobey the speed limit, you will eventually die”
 - ♦ There is a time and place for Negative Reinforcement – especially when people stop listening to Positive Reinforcement
 - ♦ When Negative Reinforcement no longer works, the next step usually is physical discipline – Ratchet up the tough love factor

Passage	Comments
Deut 19:1-21	<p>Eliminate Evil from the Land and You Will Prosper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v13. Again, show no mercy/no grace/no exceptions/no compromise for those who shed innocent blood <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Do we do this TODAY? Should we do this today? • v18. Again, Judges were to investigate sin thoroughly • vv19-21. WHY be so ruthless with administering the death penalty (i.e., “purge evil, showing no mercy”)? DETERRENCE – “Then everyone will hear and be afraid, and they will never again do anything evil” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Have we lost this in our modern judicial systems? ♦ According to the U.S. Bureau of Justice and Death Penalty Information Center, the average time from sentencing to execution is around 16 years
20:1-20	<p>More Rules of War Beginning With “Be Not Afraid”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv1-4. The High Priest played a big role in the military by motivating the soldiers to fight with all their might – because God would grant them ultimate victory • vv5-9. Then the officers would thin the ranks by sending home those who just got married, built a new house, planted a new crop – less they DIE in Battle – Even if God brought victory, good men died in war – Also, with fewer soldiers, Israel trusted God more • vv10-15. For cities surrounding the Promised Land, Israel could take war booty (women, kids, animals), but the males (young and old) had to be slain • vv16-17. For cities within the Promised Land, every man, woman, child, and animal had to be destroyed completely for their unrepentant atrocities (bestiality, homosexuality, child sacrifice) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Again, WHY? So, Israel would not fall into their sins • vv19-20. For tree-huggers, they could delight in the fact fruit trees could be spared

Passage	Comments
21:1-9	<p>Unsolved Murders – Bring in the Cow</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv1-9. Here is a tale of a victim lying between 2 cities. Not knowing who killed the victim, the city closest to the body had to make an animal sacrifice to be absolved of responsibility for shedding innocent blood <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Why didn't God reveal who the killer was? ♦ Why couldn't the discerning abilities of the Ephod, or the Urim & Thummim be used to find the killer? ♦ Why didn't God answer the prayers of the priests, the city elders or the victim's family to find the killer? ♦ Just like today, there are 1'000s of cold case files. ♦ God expects the country's judicial system to “investigate thoroughly” such crimes, but since we live in a sin-cursed world, there will always be some tough, nearly unsolvable cases where the righteous victims seemingly get what the wicked deserve and the wicked get what the righteous deserve .. Ec 8:14
21:10-14	<p>Captured Women Had Rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other nations treated captured women deplorably, as sex slaves. Jews, if they married a captured woman, had to treat them respectfully as a Jewish-born wife. • God's word elevates women back to their rightful place as a joint-heir and equal with men before God
21:15-17	<p>Polygamous Relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polygamy was a fact of life. God works with our flaws. • An unfavored/unloved wife still had rights
21:18-23	<p>Evil Must Be Removed To Preserve Family & Nation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv18-21. Unrepentant rebellious sons (not young kids) were taken before the elders to be stoned. Parents could not stone their own children – No honor killings – The evil had to be purged or worse things happened – Parents were not at fault for their son's bad behavior – Good parents can have bad kids • vv22-23. If a person was guilty of a sin deserving death, he was killed for his crime, and then his corpse was publicly displayed as deterrence for others. Hence, he was cursed of God – like Christ..... Gal 3:13 – The body was left up till sundown – presumably that was enough time to instill proper respect and fear for the laws of the land (as a deterrent from sin) and not turn the corpse into a gruesome spectacle

THE BACK PEW - JEFF LARSON

Golly!!.. a murder mystery and they need my help! Geepers of course I will.



Deut. 21:1-9 It's a Murder Mystery Take one young cow and break his neck!

Passage	Comments
Deut 22:1-30	<p>Sexual Misconduct is Worthy of Death</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv1-4, 6-12. Principles to look after your neighbor and his possessions. We are our brother's keeper. Gen 4:9 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Other principles regarding the life of animals, safety around the home, and even a modest dress code • v5. No cross-dressing allowed. This was considered an abomination or a detestable act, which often warranted the death penalty (Ex 31:14)WHY? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Consider this. We are to be holy as God is holy (1Peter 1:16). This involves righteous living ♦ How serious do we take God's holiness? • vv13-21. A man could never divorce his wife if he accused her of infidelity and his accusations proved untrue. If she was guilty of infidelity, divorce still was not the answer, because she was to be stoned <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Today, divorce is rampant, even within the church (>50% divorce rate) – HOW CAN WE REVERSE THIS TREND?
23:1-25	<p>God's Temple Complex – Only for the Pure & Whole</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv1-2. The handicapped were forbidden to worship in God's temple. And illegitimates were forbidden to worship in God's temple down to the 10th generation • vv3-6. The descendants of the Ammonites and Moabites were NEVER to enter God's temple for their forefathers' inhospitable acts against Israel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Israel was never to seek their peace or prosperity ♦ Is this principle applicable for us TODAY against any people group or a type of individual? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – If God shows no pity to wicked orphans & widows (Isaiah 9:17), should we? Wicked/Prodigal behavior is the determinant factor. • In brief, God constantly conveyed to the Israelites His holiness could not entertain any imperfections before His presence. Physical handicaps, illegitimacy, and sinful behavior were part of those imperfections. Only the atoning blood of the most perfect sacrifice, Jesus Christ, could break that barrier • Note: One day, the handicapped will have a name better than sons or daughters (Is 56:3-5). In other words, those who have it rough down here will be more than properly compensated in the New World <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ We are also told in Micah 4:6-7 that God will assemble the lame (i.e., the handicapped) and outcasts, those whom He has afflicted, into a strong nation; and Zephaniah 3:19 says God will greatly honor the lame and outcasts in all the earth • vv9-14. Cleanliness is Next to Godliness. Again, God's holiness commanded the Jews to implement good hygiene practices – “for God walks throughout your camp to protect you, so your camps must be holy or clean, or He will turn away from you.” • vv17-18. Tithes from ill-gotten gain were forbidden! A pimp or a prostitute could not tithe their income. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Are there other professions God and His church should refuse receiving tithes and offerings from? – How about gambling/lottery winnings, or stock dividends from companies which promote abortions? – How legalistic should we be with this? • vv19-20. No interest charged to fellow Jews. The welfare of a fellow Israelite had priority over profit

Passage	Comments
24:1-22	<p>More on Divorce and Debt Collection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv1-4. Divorce was not granted for infidelity because the unfaithful spouse was to be stoned. Moses, as Jesus said in Mark 10:5, granted divorce due to the hardness of the men's hearts against their wives. Divorce brought some mercy into a wife's situation who was falsely accused of adultery • v7. Even kidnappers were to die – Purge the Evil • vv10-15. Treat the poor with respect – even pay them daily, if possible • v16. Timeless principle that everyone is accountable for their own sins, BUT generations can suffer for years (e.g., Ammonites & Moabites & illegitimates)
25:1-19	<p>More Diverse Laws</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v4. Don't muzzle the ox while threshing. Principle used in NT to teach adequate payment for spiritual teachings..... 1Cor 9:9; 1Tim 5:18 • vv5-10. The Levirate Marriage – where a man fathered a child with his dead brother's wife. Only applicable to the Jews to protect their land ownership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Successfully used in the marriage of Boaz & Esther • vv11-12. If a woman grabbed a man in a very sensitive place to seriously hurt him, she was to have her hand cut off – without pity! (only incident of mutilation in the Bible) – God took Israel's procreative ability seriously • vv13-16. God takes business ethics seriously. Do we? • vv17-19. Annihilate the Amalekites see 1Samuel 15
26:1-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v12. A special tithe in the 3rd year was given to the local Levites, any poor foreigners, the orphans and widows instead of taking it to Jerusalem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - God wants us to look after the poor as He does
Deut 27:1-26	<p>Positive vs Negative Reasoning or Reinforcement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv1-8. Commemorative stones were set up with the commandments inscribed in them • vv9-10. Moses said “SHUT UP AND LISTEN” to these negative reinforcements – “Cursed is he who commits idolatry, is disrespectful, is a scoundrel; who denies justice; who sleeps around; who murders; who accepts a bribe; who disobeys God's commands



Passage	Comments
28:1-68	<p>God Uses More Negative Reasoning to Motivate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv1-14. God uses 14 verses to elaborate on His promised blessings for His people – if you obey you can expect a strong economy, grandkids taken care of, a full refrigerator, and pleasant environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ v13. God would be PLEASED to make every day better than the day before • vv15-68. God uses 54 verses to highlight curses to come if His people disobey – disease of the body and mind; nothing works out for you; no one offers to help; you will have no options to change your situation; you will have no joy in life; you will be full of self-doubt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ v63. And seemingly, God will take pleasure in causing you this pain ♦ v53. This includes cannibalism being a result of Israel’s continued sins • v58. Of course, what God actually wants from His people is for them (and us) to willfully observe/obey His Law and to fear and honor Him, for even His name is AWESOME

Where Do We Stand with Fearing & Honoring Our God?

- Do we willingly, intentionally, and immediately obey God’s commands or do we procrastinate or grudgingly obey?
 - ♦ Remember, delayed obedience is disobedience
- Do we get up each day eager to learn about our God and to serve Him wholeheartedly?
 - ♦ Or are we more concerned about surviving the day?

29:1-29	<p>The Secret to Success for God’s People – OBEY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is it soooo hard to obey? • v4. “...the Lord has not given you a mind to understand, eyes to see, or ears to hear” • Calvinists jump on this passage to point out people cannot understand spiritual things without God giving them the ability to do so <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ This is very true, AND scripture is also very clear God gave the Israelites (and all able-minded souls) the ability to choose whom to serve – God or something else – and He holds each of us accountable for our choices ♦ In this context, Israel were witnesses to God’s miracles, signs, and wonders – Yet, most Israelites opted to chase after sensual pleasures – food, sex, wealth, and not after the things of God – holiness, justice, loving-kindness ♦ And REMEMBER – Though God took the initiative and gave us able-minded people the ability to understand, reason, perceive, and make intelligent choices, even wooing us or drawing all men to Him, especially through the Gospel of Christ – He now waits for us to “draw near to Him, then He will draw near to us” (James 4:8) – “Choose you this day whom you will serve!” • vv5. Their clothes and sandals did not wear out – a unique miracle not to be repeated until the Millennial Kingdom when God’s chosen ones will outlive the works of their hands (Isaiah 65:22) • v9. If Israel had obeyed God’s commands, then they would have succeeded at everything • v29. The hidden things belong unto God, but we have sufficiently revealed knowledge from God to make sound decisions for all eternity
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Passage	Comments
30:1-20	<p>Promises Galore for the Repentant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv1-3. Israelites will eventually come to their senses and return to God and have their fortunes restored after they first hit rock bottom and lose everything <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Reminiscent of the Prodigal Son who came to his senses and humbly went home with the right servant’s attitude after being at rock bottom and realizing no one was helping himLuke 15 • v6. After they repent and return, then God can remove their stony heart and give them a heart to know Him with all their heart and soul – so they might live <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Recall Deut 10:16 where we are commanded to circumcise our own heart • vv8-10. The Lord will abundantly prosper them after they return to Him (draw near to Him)James 4:8 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ But it is not a casual return to God, it is with all their heart and soul <p>CONCLUSION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv11-14. God’s commands are not too difficult or beyond our reach to comprehend and live by • v15. We have a choice to make – life or death • vv19-20. Choose life (obey & remain faithful) and live!

CONCLUSION/APPLICATIONS

- Again, the “show no pity” treatment was reserved for sinners of the worst sort (unrepentant abusers of mankind)
 - ♦ We should not be taking the law into our own hands and stoning anybody, but rather uplift those who despitefully use and abuse us in prayer; praying for God’s kingdom to come; praying for true justice in the land to prevail, praying that God’s justice would eventually be delivered; and praying that mercy and grace be available and rendered to the repentant – like you and me
- **Trivia on Mating for Life.** Wolves, coyotes, beavers, pigeons, bald eagles, albatrosses, and gibbon apes have a 100% success rate in mating for life. Humans come woefully behind this power curve. Atheists have a better record than Baptists for staying married.

NEXT WEEK: Deut 31-34. Joshua takes Moses’ place and Moses delivers one final set of blessings and cursings Israel needs to heed

