

The Bible Story In A Year

Week 10

The Israelites were now on the doorstep of the land God had promised to give to them. The rebellious generation had died during the previous 40 years since leaving Egypt. Only Joshua and Caleb will be entering the land of that generation. Now, on the plains of Moab across the Jordan River from Jericho, Moses speaks to the remaining Israelites before his own death concerning things God wanted them to know before entering the promised land (Deuteronomy 1:3-5).

1) Learn from the past. Moses wanted the Israelites to remember their past. These lessons should have reminded them about the blessings involved in obeying God as well as the consequences involved in disobeying God. Consider some of the reminders given to the Israelites in Deuteronomy. First, when God spoke to them at Horeb (Sinai), He was ready to give them the land He promised to their ancestors (Deuteronomy 1:6-8), but they were afraid and refused to enter it (1:26-27). Consequently, all that generation would not go into the land (except Joshua and Caleb, 1:34-36). Second, God led them through a time of wilderness wandering until that entire rebellious generation died (2:13-15). Third, God led the new generation of Israelites in victory against King Sihon (2:24-25, 33-36) and King Og (3:1-6). Fourth, God took this land and gave it as an inheritance to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh (3:12-13). Fifth, God had led them on this journey to test them and so they would be humble enough to trust in Him (8:2-4, 15-18). Sixth, they had a rebellious history that caused the Lord to punish them along the journey from Egypt (4:3-4; 9:7-8, 22-24). Seventh, they had seen the Lord do great things (11:2-7). All these things should have been deeply implanted into their minds and should impact their lives moving forward and how they were to trust in God – and were to teach them to their children and grandchildren (4:9)!

2) Be careful to obey God. Moses wanted the people to learn from the past so they would recognize the need to carefully obey God as He brought them into the promised land. The concept of being careful to remember God is found often throughout Moses's speeches (i.e. Deuteronomy 5:32-33; 6:1-3, 17-19; 8:1, 6; 12:1). The nature of their careful adherence to God's laws was such that they were not to add anything to them nor take anything away from them (4:1-2; 12:32). These laws of God were to be deeply engrained within them so they would also teach them diligently to their children (6:4-9). If they would carefully obey God, they would experience His blessings (11:8-9, 13-15). In fact, when their children would ask about the meaning of these decrees and statutes of God, they were to remind them of what God had done for them (6:20-25). But, if they would forget God, there would be consequences (11:16-17). God even warned them about the potential dangers involved in forgetting Him whenever they were brought into the promised land and they experienced the good offered by the land (6:10-13; 8:11-20). These words of God were to be imprinted on their hearts and minds, taught to their children, and carefully observed so it would go well for them in the land (11:18-25). Therefore, they had a choice to make between receiving God's blessings or curses (11:26-32).

There were, of course, a variety of laws that God required the Israelites to obey (as we have seen through the books of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers). As it was summarized, however, Moses said God required them to fear Jehovah God by walking in all His ways, loving Him, and worshiping Him with all their heart and soul (Deuteronomy 10:12). They were to keep all these laws recognizing they were the ones who had been chosen by God (10:13-16). Throughout the book, Moses reminded the Israelites of specific laws God had given them, including the Ten Commandments (5:1-21), appointed times of festivals

(16:1-17), and many other laws they were to remember when they came into the land.

3) Other instructions concerning inhabiting the land. As Moses was not going to enter the land, he also gave clear directions regarding other aspects of inhabiting the land God was about to give them. For example, we have seen that Moses often instructed them not to forget to carefully obey God whenever they would come into the land and begin to receive the blessings of the land and were not to think it was because of their own righteousness that they inhabited the land (Deuteronomy 8:17-20; 9:4-6). When they came into the land to take possession of it, they were to completely wipe out the inhabitants of the land so they would not be tempted to worship their gods and participate in their evil ways (7:1-6). They were not to take anything detestable to God for themselves (7:25-26). They were not to fear the people of the land (7:17-19). They were not to worship God in the ways or at the places the people worshiped their gods (12:1-5, 10-14). They were not to inquire about the gods the people worshiped (12:29-32). Plus, God revealed instructions concerning what they were to do in a future time when they would desire a king to be like all the other nations (17:14-15).

The people God was preparing to bring into the promised land needed to hear all these reminders and instructions. For, if they would be like their ancestors and be rebellious, they would suffer the same fate as their ancestors. However, if they would carefully obey the ways of God, God would bless them and it would go well for them in the land!

Discipleship Questions

(2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Teaching: What did you learn from this lesson?

Rebuking: What are some ways this lesson challenges you to live differently?

Correcting: How does this lesson help you make positive changes for Christ?

Training & Equipping: How can you apply this lesson to be trained and equipped in God's service?