

December 22, 2019 - Deut. 10:1 – 11:9 - A Call to Obedience
Torah Reading: Deuteronomy 10:1 – 11:9 - A Call to Obedience
Psalm 119:25-48
Haftarah: 1 Kings 8:9-18

A Call to Obedience

Moses is still relating to the new generation, the children of the generation that died in the wilderness, events that occurred previously since the Exodus.

Deuteronomy 10:1-2 - "At that time the LORD said unto me, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first, and come up unto me into the mount, and make thee an ark of wood. And I will write on the tables the words that were in the first tables which thou brakest, and thou shalt put them in the ark."

Rashi - This was not the ark that Bezalel made, because the Israelites did not occupy themselves with the Mishkan until after Yom Kippur [which was forty days later], for when Moses descended the mountain, he commanded them regarding the construction of the Mishkan . [Then] Bezalel made the Mishkan first, and only afterwards the ark and the [other] furnishings (Ber. 55a). It follows, therefore, that this was another ark, and that was the one that went out with them to battle, but the one Bezalel made did not go out to battle except in the days of Eli, and they were punished for it, and it [the ark] was captured [by the Philistines]. — [Yerushalmi Shekalim 6:1]

The tables of the law placed in the ark is a type of Christ, who as the ark contained and fulfilled he Law.

Deuteronomy 10:6-7 - "And the children of Israel took their journey from Beeroth of the children of Jaakan to Mosera: there Aaron died, and there he was buried; and Eleazar his son ministered in the priest's office in his stead. From thence they journeyed unto Gudgodah; and from Gudgodah to Jotbath, a land of rivers of waters."

Rashi explains that listing this itinerary was to remind them of all the rebellious acts they did at these locations.

A Hanukkah Connection

Deuteronomy 10:8-9 - "At that time the LORD separated the tribe of Levi, to bear the ark of the covenant of the LORD, to stand before the LORD to minister unto him, and to bless in his name, unto this day. Wherefore Levi hath no part nor inheritance with his brethren; the LORD is his inheritance, according as the LORD thy God promised him."

This refers back to the consecration of the Levites described in **Numbers 8**. The lighting of the Golden Lampstand preceded their separation. It has a special significance today, since we're celebrating Hanukkah and the miracle of the eight days of oil lighting the lampstand.

- **Numbers 8:2-3** - "Speak unto Aaron, and say unto him, When thou lightest the lamps, the seven lamps shall give light over against the candlestick. And Aaron did so; he lighted the lamps thereof over against the candlestick, as the LORD commanded Moses."

- **Numbers 8:5** - "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Take the Levites from among the children of Israel, and cleanse them...."

Requirements

"And now, Israel..." - Here Moses seems to say, "let's start all over again"

Deuteronomy 10:12 - "And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee..."

- but to fear the LORD thy God,
- to walk in all his ways
- and to love him
- and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul
- To keep the commandments of the LORD, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?

i.e. these are the requirements for those who fear God.

Rashi - Our Rabbis derived from this verse ["And now... what does... God demand of you"] that everything is in the hands of Heaven except the fear of Heaven (Ber. 33b). [i.e. which is up to us]

The 613 commandments have been condensed into five commands here. Then to three in Micah:

- **Micah 6:8** - "He hath shown thee, O man, what is good: and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

- Jesus reduced it to two :

- **Mark 12:29-31** - "And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."

Even when Paul reduces it further to faith alone, humans fail and cannot comply. It is only by the power of the Holy Spirit, and salvation is a gift of grace.

Chosen People

Deuteronomy 10:14-15 - "Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the LORD'S thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is. Only the LORD had a delight in

thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day."

Israel is God's "treasured possession" (**Exodus 19:5, Deuteronomy 7:6**) Abraham was first chosen, so that "all families on earth will be blessed" through his seed. That seed is Christ, according to Paul:

- **Galatians 3:16** - "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."

Jesus' conception at Hanukkah resulted in his arrival as a "light to the nations" (Isaiah 42:6) and the "light of the world" (**John 8:12**).

Now anyone who believes joins Israel as "a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession" (**1 Peter 1:9**).

Repentance

Deuteronomy 10:16 - "Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked."

- **Isaiah 48:4** - "thou art obstinate, thy neck is an iron sinew"

Here we are told to do the circumcising. But in **Deuteronomy 30:6** it is God who does it. Both are true.

Circumcision of the foreskin was only a picture of this. To remove what is blocking your heart from responding to God. But the image of a circumcised heart would mean the person would have to die. A new heart is required.

- **Romans 2:29** - "But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."

- **Colossians 2:11-12** - "In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead."

Justice

Deuteronomy 10:18-19 - "He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment. Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt."

This seems out of place, except that repentance always has a component of love toward God AND your fellow man in need, loving "your neighbor as yourself." Real faith always results in deeds.

- **Psalm 68:5-6** - "A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation. God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains: but the rebellious dwell in a dry land."

Deuteronomy 11

Deuteronomy 11:2 - "And know ye this day: for I speak not with your children which have not known, and which have not seen the chastisement of the LORD your God, his greatness, his mighty hand, and his stretched out arm,"

At the time of the curse against the generation in the wilderness, Levites those younger than 20 were exempted (**Numbers 14:24**). Moses is talking to this new generation, but they also have children themselves, and some grandchildren, who do not recall any of these things. He is here speaking to those who do remember.