

## **Bible Study – Deuteronomy Chapter 7 & 8 – The Second Commandment**

In the last study, we looked at God being the only one true God and that we are to love Him with all our heart, soul, and strength and this was to be taught to the following generations. Today, we are looking at the second of the ten commandments from God and the examples that are shared to the Israelites in relation of they are to take and live in the Promised Land that God is giving them.

### **Read Deuteronomy 7:1 – 11**

Moses tells the Israelites to clear the land of all the nations that currently inhabit the Promised Land. They are not to make a covenant with these people nor to give their children away in marriage, but rather put them to utter destruction because these people will tempt them to worship their gods and draw them away from the one true God. Moses reminds the people why they were chosen by God, not because of anything they have done, but because of His love and promises to the patriarchs.

**Q.** When Moses commands that the inhabitants are to be put to death and exterminated, what do you think the justification is? (cf. Deuteronomy 9:4-5; Genesis 9:25-26, 10:15-18; Exodus 23:23). In your experience, how challenging has it been to exterminate certain sins from your life? What are some of the reasons for the difficulty? Why is it important to take drastic measures? (cf. James 1:13-15)

**Q.** Moses tells Israel "...you are a people holy to the Lord Your God." (v.6). What does it mean for the Israelites to be "holy to the Lord" and what is the implication for Christians? What is the purpose of God's holy people? (cf. 1 Peter 2:9-10; Matthew 28:19-20; Ephesians 3:10)

### **Read Deuteronomy 7:12-26**

Moses continues his encouragement to the Israelites by telling them if they obey God's commands, they will have an abundance of blessings and a rich life. He warns they are not to pity the people they are to conquer, lest these people lead them astray. The Israelites are fearful of the people that God will give over to them, but Moses reminds them of God's protection and deliverance of His people, reassuring them they have nothing to fear with God on their side. He ends by giving them an additional instruction; to burn and destroy their 'gods' in fire, including the silver and gold that adorn these images, for these things are detestable to God.

**Q.** The Israelites are fearful of their enemy, even when God promises to deliver them into their hands. If you are a Christian, what are some things that make you fearful when obeying God's commands? Is it because you don't know the promises of God or are you afraid of the world 'attacking' you?

**Q.** God instructs the Israelites to destroy the Canaanite's carved god images by fire as these were detestable to Him. Nothing was to be salvaged, not even the gold and silver that adorned these images because the Israelites would be ensnared by these objects. How is this instruction similar to the warning in 2 Corinthians 6:14-18?

### **Read Deuteronomy 8:1 – 20**

Moses reminds the Israelites of how God took care of them during their wilderness wanderings by providing for their basic need of food and clothing. He also reminds the Israelites that God is the one providing for them and that they should not forget Him when they have thoughts that their wealth is by their own hands. He also reiterates the need to follow the commandments of the Lord by walking in His ways and by fearing Him, reminding them they are not to forget these things.

**Q.** God tests the Israelites so he can know if their heart is obedient to His commands. How is God's testing different from Satan's testing? (v.3, 5; 1 Peter 5:8) How do we tell the difference between God's and Satan's testing in our lives? (James 1:2-4, 12-15; John 8:43-44)

**Q.** Moses asks the Israelites to "remember" (v. 2, 18) and to "not forget" (v.11, 14, 19) several times in this chapter. When he says to remember, the focus is on God's provision for them. When he says not to forget, the focus is on His commands (cf. 1 Corinthians 3:12-15). When you look at the blessings in your life, do you attribute it to God? When you go about your daily life, do you ensure that God's commands direct you?

The second commandment tells us that the Israelites (and Christians as well) should not make any carved images for themselves and that those who disobey would be punished, to the third and fourth generation, but those who love God and obey his commands would be shown love to a thousand generations. God tells the Israelites how they are to deal with the idols they will encounter in the Promise Land, which is to destroy these things completely. The main reason is because the Israelites are the chosen people of God, who are set apart for Him and to be the priestly people that would bring the other nations to holy worship of God. This applies to Christians as well. In order to be effective for God, our lives must mirror that of God's, where we love what he loves and hate what he hates, meaning that we need to eradicate any idols in our lives that would threaten to take God's rightful place in our lives.

The second part of the commandment is a promise to those who love Him and to keep his commandments. God is testing the Israelites to know whether they would keep His commandments or not (v. 2). In doing so, He is trying to ensure they do not stray and become self reliant, but rather that they would depend on God and know the blessings He has promised to them. God also does this with Christians. He tests them to refine and sanctify them so they can enjoy a closer relationship with Him. Though it may be painful and unpleasant at times, it should be a comfort that God cares for His children's well being and does what is needed to ensure that.