

# Deuteronomy 11-13 • The Physical Mosaic Covenant

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Deuteronomy chapter 11. We're continuing our study here in Deuteronomy and Moses is speaking to the nation of Israel here in the Book of Deuteronomy. This is his swan song. These are the last messages that Moses shares with the nation of Israel before he goes home to be with the Lord. And the Lord has made it clear to him that after he gives these messages, he's going to climb up the mountain, see the promised land from a distance, and after that, the Lord will gather him to his fathers, as the euphemism goes, which means that he will die.

So, Moses is continuing to exhort the nation of Israel to be faithful to the covenant that God had made with him. And by the way, before we get into this, I don't know how many of you saw the latest, one of the latest, Q&A's that I published just in the last 24 hours, I actually published two of them. One of them had to do with the question of the promises that we see in the Old Testament and how applicable those promises are. Such as the promises that God made to Israel.

And the question that was posed was, are those promises that you and I, can accept, are those promises that you and I can just say, hey, that's for me. And if you didn't see it, it's on our Facebook page and I also sent it out to Calvary mail so, you can check those places if you haven't already. Those are important questions. When we go through the study of the Old Testament, it is so important for us to understand what is part of the Mosaic Covenant that God made with Israel. And the reason that's an important question is because you and I aren't under the Mosaic Covenant.

We're under a covenant of grace. We're under a covenant that God prophesied during the Mosaic Covenant saying there's coming a day when I'm going to make a new covenant with the nation of Israel. And He even said in that, and by the way, that's in Jeremiah 31, He said, it's not going to be like the Old Covenant that I made with them. Why? Because they broke my covenant. The Mosaic Covenant was, we call it Mosaic because it was given to us through Moses and the Mosaic Covenant, as you know, was the covenant that was between God and Israel, and it made promises concerning the land that God was giving to them.

God said I'm giving you this land and here's the covenant. If you will follow my commandments, if you'll be obedient to my precepts I'll bless you in the land. In fact, I'll bless everything. I'll bless your homes; I'll bless your wombs; I'll bless the fruitfulness of your fields; your enemies won't be able to stand up to you. I'll even keep diseases that you've seen rampant in Egypt from getting to you. There won't be any blight, there won't be any plagues, I'm going to make sure that I watch over you. There will be just an abundance in the land. That's the Mosaic Covenant.

God never said in the Mosaic Covenant, keep my Law, and you'll go to heaven. Never once. He said, keep the Law, and I'll bless you in the land. So, in other words, the Mosaic Covenant was a physical covenant. It had physical promises. There was a physical land, the land of Israel, that God promised to the nation of Israel, beginning through Abraham, then Isaac, and then Jacob, whom he renamed Israel. And that promise goes to all of their descendants. But it's a physical covenant. Here's the land. Here's the boundaries. The covenant promise is from here, to here, and there, to over there.

And this is the land, and wherever you walk, it's yours. Right? So how does that differ with the covenant that you and I have? Well, ours is a spiritual covenant, not a physical covenant. God didn't give the church any land. He didn't give us America, He didn't give us Europe, He didn't give us Asia. He didn't give us land. We don't have a physical covenant. Ours is a spiritual covenant. That's what Paul talks about in the first chapter of Ephesians. He talks about, here are all your spiritual blessings in Christ. We don't have physical blessings. We haven't been given a promise that says, if you obey me, this won't happen to you.

We haven't been told that. God didn't promise us this, or there's a lot of things God promised to Israel that He did not promise to us. There are a lot of covenant regulations that He gave to Israel that He did not give to us. The Christian Church over the years has tried to adopt some of the things that are part of the Mosaic Covenant into the Covenant of Grace. And they've tried to make them fit. I'm going to push it in there. Like Sabbath keeping or various other elements of the Mosaic Covenant that God made with Israel. The problem is, it's a different covenant. We're under a different covenant.

God even said, again in Jeremiah 31, It's not going to be like the covenant I made with their forefathers. It's not going to be like it. It's going to be different. And our covenant is very different. One thing I love about the covenant that we're under today is it's a one-sided covenant. See, under the old Mosaic covenant, the Jews were told, you obey, and here's what you get. Our covenant

is based on the obedience of Jesus Christ, not our obedience. We are able to embrace our covenant through faith. And that's the beauty of it. Jesus really did all the work. And when he had finished that work on the cross, He said, "It is finished."

It's done. It's over. The work's been done. So, incredible differences between the Mosaic Covenant and the Covenant of Grace through Christ. But as we go on here, Deuteronomy chapter 11, Moses is reminding them of the Mosaic Covenant.

He says, *"You shall therefore love the LORD your God and keep his charge, his statutes, his rules, and his commandments always. <sup>2</sup> And consider today (he says in verse 2) (since I am not speaking to your children who have not known or seen it), (He says) consider the discipline of the LORD your God, his greatness, his mighty hand and his outstretched arm, <sup>3</sup> his signs and his deeds that he did in Egypt to Pharaoh the king of Egypt and to all his land, <sup>4</sup> and what he did to the army of Egypt, to their horses and to their chariots, how he made the water of the Red Sea flow over them as they pursued after you, and how the LORD has destroyed them to this day, <sup>5</sup> and what he did to you in the wilderness, until you came to this place, <sup>6</sup> and what he did to Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, son of Reuben, how the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households, their tents, and every living thing that followed them, in the midst of all Israel. <sup>7</sup> For your eyes have seen all the great work of the LORD that he did."* (ESV)

Stop there please just for a moment. Moses is doing what he's been doing really since the beginning of this book and that is he's calling to remembrance the incredible works of the Lord, so that the nation of Israel would be reminded. But he uses a different word here, you'll notice, rather than just being reminded.

Did you notice what he said here in verse 2? He says, *"consider today, since I'm not speaking to your children who have not known or seen. Consider the discipline of the LORD your God."* Now, that's an interesting word. And the word discipline is one that you and I often think about or, we use to describe punishment.

If a child is receiving some kind of punishment, we might say, well, he's being disciplined. Or if somebody did something at work that broke a rule, they might be under some disciplinary action, meaning that there's some kind of penalty. But you have to understand that the word discipline also means training. It's really where we get our understanding of what it means to be a disciple. Okay? And a disciple is a follower. One who's learning, who's following in the path of

the teacher who's being taught and who's learning things that are important to learn. So, discipline is just as much training as it is punishment, right?

Notice what God says here now, or excuse me, Moses says, actually, it's the Lord speaking through Moses. But he's saying, so consider the discipline or the training, or instruction, if you will, of the Lord. And then he begins to describe all of these things that happened. How God delivered them from Egypt, how God destroyed the Egyptian army. And by the way, did you notice he said, "*as it is to this day.*" This is 38, 40 years later. The Egyptian army still hadn't recovered. Takes a long time to build an army. They had their whole army destroyed 40 years earlier, and it still was in disarray.

And then he goes on to talk about how the Lord, kept them through their time in the wilderness. And then he talks about the judgment that fell upon the homes of Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, how they rebelled against the Lord and the earth opened its mouth and literally swallowed them up and consumed them and they died because of their insolence and their rebellion against the Lord. What is Moses saying? Consider the training. Consider the instruction. But it's not instruction in the sense of somebody sitting down and saying, all right, take out a piece of paper and a pencil and I'm going to give you a test and we're going to see what you've learned.

It's not that kind of instruction, but it's instruction through experience. Do you understand that God is teaching us all the time through experience? The things that we see, the things that we experience in our daily lives, how God works and moves and deals with situations, how He answers prayer. How many times have you seen God answer prayer? I was just, I was meeting with the staff here, just last week and we were talking about some answers to prayer that we had seen take place and I was like, hey guys we need to be sure and thank the Lord because we've been praying for some things and we've seen some answers, that it's exactly what we were praying for.

And that's God instructing. He's instructing. What's He saying? I'm faithful. I love you. I'm listening. I'm responding. We're being instructed when we see things happen like that. Are we accepting it as instruction? Did the nation of Israel accept it as instruction? Being taught. We're being taught every day. It's not just when we open up our Bibles. That's a great time to be taught. But when we look with our eyes at the world around us. Do you know that when you fail, this is one of those instructions we often don't think about. But you know, when you fail, and what I mean by that is you fall flat on your face in some area of sin.

Maybe it's an area of weakness in your life. And it could be anger, it could be jealousy, it could be some issue related to the flesh or financially, you just get, have a meltdown, whatever. Some weakness in your life just gives way, and you just, blah. And what do we see? Failure, disappointment, struggle, discouragement, guilt, regret, right, right? Sorrow, and where there is a need for Godly sorrow related to our mistakes. But you know what we often don't get out of it? Instruction! God is instructing you. He's saying, my child, I've just shown you an area of your life that is an area of weakness. I did this for a reason.

That you would bring that to me on your knees and trust me with it so that you would say, Lord, you've just really shown me, in no uncertain terms, this is an area of weakness in my life. Thank you for the instruction, right? How often we don't do that. And it's really too bad. So, I really like the fact that Moses speaks of all of these things and says, consider the instruction, the discipline, the training of the Lord.

And that's what he says in verse 7, *"for your eyes have seen it."* Your eyes have seen this work of God, you've seen your failures, you've seen your weaknesses, you've seen answers to prayer, you've seen these things.

Verse 8, *"You shall therefore keep the whole commandment that I command you today."* (Why? So, I can make your life miserable. No, that's not what God says, look what He says) *"That you may be strong and go in and take possession of the land. That you are going over to possess, <sup>9</sup> and that you may live long in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers to give to them and to their offspring, a land flowing with milk and honey."*

You guys remember when you were growing up and mom and dad gave you rules and regulations and things that you just really bristled under. And whether it was a curfew. Hey, I know you're going to that school dance tonight, or I know you're going to the football game, but I want you back by 10 o'clock. Your curfew is 10:30. I want you in the house. If you're not in the house you're in trouble right or something like that and as a kid we usually, "Oh, mom, you're always trying to make life hard for me. You're always trying to, it's like you're always raining on my parade."

We never saw it as a good thing. We only saw it as a restriction. I want you to see here that God says concerning the things that He's telling them to keep. The commands that He's telling them to follow. Why? First in verse eight, He says that you may be strong and go in and do what I've called you to do, which is take possession of the land. Now, again, you and I don't have promises of land. But we have been given spiritual promises, and if we're going to take those

promises, take hold of them, we have to pay attention to what God's Word says, right?

I can't just ignore the Word of the Lord. And He says, if you want to walk in any kind of success related to walking out my promises in your life, then pay attention to my Word. But I'm giving you the instruction in my Word, not to make life hard for you, but so that you'd be strong, right? I'm not here to make things, I'm not here to make you unhappy.

Look at the next thing in verse 9. Why does God say keep the whole commandment? *“That you may live long in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers.”* Now again, this isn't a promise that you and I have.

Ours is not a physical promise. God never promised you and I that if we kept certain aspects of His Word, that we would live long in the land. Right? We've already been given eternal life. We have that right now. So, we've been given eternity, and He's basically told you and I, listen if you drop dead today, all you're going to do is pass from life to real life. Eternal life. So, I've already given you that. But you know the point of what He's saying to Israel here is, keep my land, or keep my commandments rather, that you may live long in the land. This is for your benefit.

He says in verse 10, *“For the land that you are entering to take possession of it is not like the land of Egypt, from which you have come, where you sowed your seed and irrigated it, like a garden of vegetables. (or like they do in eastern Oregon and western Idaho) <sup>11</sup> But the land that you are going over to possess is a land of hills and valleys, which drinks water by the rain from heaven,”*

By the way, do you know that until I moved out west here, I had never seen irrigation. Never ever seen irrigation on a farm field. And I grew up in an agricultural area of Minnesota, but I had never ever seen farm irrigation. First time when I came out here.

Anyway, he says, verse 12, regarding the land of promise. It's, *“a land that the LORD your God cares for. The eyes of the LORD your God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year. <sup>13</sup> “And if you will indeed obey my commandments that I command you today, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul, <sup>14</sup> he will give the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the later rain, that you may gather in your grain and your wine and your oil.”*

Because there were really two growing seasons in Israel. An early growing season and a later growing season. One for the grains and one for the wine and stuff like that. The vineyards.

And it says in verse 15, *“And he will give grass in your fields for your livestock, and you shall eat and be full. (But here comes the warning) <sup>16</sup> Take care lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them; <sup>17</sup> then the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you, and he will shut up the heavens, (meaning there will be a time of drought) so that there will be no rain, and the land will yield no fruit, and you will perish quickly off the good land that the LORD is giving you. <sup>18</sup> “You shall therefore lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.”*

By the way, the Jews took these commands literally. They literally bound the Word of God on their hands, on their heads, between their eyes, and so forth. But then this is very important too, verse 19, we get into parenting.

*“You shall teach them to your children, talking of them when you are sitting in your house, and when you are walking by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.”* This is almost verse, or word for word, what He had said earlier in the book of Deuteronomy, concerning the responsibility to pass this along to their children.

He says, *“<sup>20</sup> You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, (Why?) <sup>21</sup> that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers to give them, as long as the heavens are above the earth.”*

So how long did God swear to give them the land? As long as the heavens are above the earth. Yeah, it's one of the reasons why, as the Christian Church, we support Israel in the land. Because God gave them the land as long as the heavens are above the earth. That promise has not been rescinded. In fact, in 1948 He even brought them back to the land. The only nation to have ever been completely swept away from their land and then found it once again and brought back to that land. Israel is a miracle.

But the point is, God gave it to them. He gave them the land. It's theirs. How long is it theirs? As long as the heavens are above the earth. By the way, there's coming a day when the current heavens and the current earth are going to be destroyed. You do know that, right? The Bible tells us very clearly in the book of Revelation that the current heaven and the current earth are going to be

destroyed and God is going to remake heaven and earth and then He's going to join them.

That's what Revelation tells us. Heaven and earth will come together. Right now, they're separate, but they're going to come together one day. Heaven on earth, if you will. Earth in heaven, if you will. That's what Revelation tells us. It's a wonderful, glorious promise that awaits us. But what that means is, the current heaven and the current earth, the Bible tells us, has been reserved for fire. It will be destroyed, and the new heavens and the new earth will then be created out of that destruction.

Verse 22 says, *“For if you will be careful to do all this commandment that I command you to do, loving the LORD your God, walking in all his ways, and holding fast to him, <sup>23</sup> then the LORD will drive out all these nations before you, and you will dispossess nations greater and mightier than you. <sup>24</sup> Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours. Your territory shall be from the wilderness to the Lebanon and from the river, the river Euphrates, to the western sea. <sup>25</sup> No one shall be able to stand against you. The LORD your God will lay the fear of you and the dread of you on all the land that you shall tread, as he promised you.”*

Now remember, these promises are contingent upon their obedience. <sup>26</sup> *“See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: <sup>27</sup> the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you today, <sup>28</sup> and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside from the way that I am commanding you today, to go after other gods that you have not known. <sup>29</sup> And when the LORD your God brings you into the land that you are entering to take possession of it, you shall set the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal.”*

What that means is, God told them when they came into the land they were to get on these two hilltops, and they're really more like hilltops than mountains, and there's a valley in between them. And the people would be in the valley. And they would be up on Mount Gerizim, some of them, and some of them would be on Mount Ebal. And they would read from one the blessings, and they would read from the other the curses.

And the people in the valley between those hills would listen and would hear again, these are the blessings, these are all the promises that God has given to you if you will obey. But over here, they would speak what God would say are the curses. This is what will come upon you if you choose to rebel and run after



other gods. And so, it was to be recited in the hearing of everyone. And he says in verse 30,

*<sup>30</sup> “Are they not beyond the Jordan, (He's talking about these mountains, Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim) west of the road, toward the going down of the sun, in the land of the Canaanites who live in the Arabah, opposite Gilgal, beside the oak of Moreh? <sup>31</sup> For you are to cross over the Jordan to go in to take possession of the land that the LORD your God is giving you. And when you possess it and live in it, <sup>32</sup> you shall be careful to do all the statutes and the rules that I am setting before you today.”*

And then he, now we're going to, as we get into chapter 12, he's going to talk about completely staying away from the religion of the Canaanites.

He says, *“These are the statutes and rules that you shall be careful to do in the land that the LORD, the God of your fathers, has given you to possess, all the days that you live on the earth. <sup>2</sup> You shall surely destroy all the places where the nations whom you shall dispossess served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree. <sup>3</sup> You shall tear down their altars and dash in pieces their pillars and burn their Asherim with fire. You shall chop down the carved images of their gods and destroy their name out of that place.”*

What is God telling them to do? Remember something. The Mosaic Covenant is a physical covenant. I've given you the land. You are going to go in there, and I'm going to go before you and chase those people out, and you're going to clear the land. But there's more than just the people that need to be cleared. There's all the accoutrements and all the things that go along with their religious practices that you will need to go in after those people leave and clear out of the land. And He says, I want you to break it down. I want you to burn it. I want you to destroy it and get rid of it.

Why? So, you're not drawn away after it. Now, how does that apply to you and I? We see in the world that we live in, the things that the world worships, don't we? So, are we supposed to go around and destroy those things? For example, the world worships money. So, we're going to get a rally together of believers, and we're going to march on Wall Street, and we're going to burn it to the ground. The world worships, well, the world worships all kinds of things. And I suppose you and I could come up with a rallying cry with torches and swords and say, let's go and we're going to burn it down.

Whether it's Hollywood or this, it's evil, and it's the things that the world runs after. So, is that what we're supposed to do as Christians? Listen, we don't have a physical covenant. Ours is not a physical covenant. You and I have not been called under the Covenant of Grace to go and destroy anything physically, like Israel was, but there is a spiritual counterpart, right? It's a spiritual counterpart. It is, remember when Jesus came to the temple? And He walked into the outer courts of the temple where the Gentiles were supposed to go to have their place of prayer.

That's as close as the Gentiles could get to the temple. They couldn't go past that outer court area. They weren't allowed. But that's where they were supposed to go pray. Well, the Jews had set up all kinds of buying and selling going on there. So, what did Jesus do on more than one occasion? He went into the temple area, and He chased everybody out of there. So, this place is supposed to be a place of prayer. What did He do? He cleansed the temple. Right? He cleansed the temple. Do you understand the picture of what that is for you and I? Where is the temple of God now? Where is the temple of God?

It's right here. It's right there. The Bible says you are a temple of the Holy Spirit, right? So, if there's cleansing that needs to be done. If there's something that needs to be destroyed related to sin and pagan worship. It happens in here. That's why Jesus said if your right eye causes you to sin gouge it out and throw it away. If your right hand causes you to sin, gouge it out or cut it off and throw it away, right? Not telling you to mutilate your bodies, but He's telling you to do the exact same thing that Moses was telling the nation of Israel to do once they got into the land.

Destroy those things. So, you see, we're not called to burn things to the ground. The nation of Israel was. They were to gather all that stuff that the pagans worshiped, and they were to burn it. Break it up, throw it in the dump areas and make sure it never rises again. But for you and I, it's an internal work, It's a spiritual work. It's spiritual promises that we've been given. It's spiritual things that we have to protect our hearts and so forth. So, God says destroy all of that stuff.

He says in verse 4, *“You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way. <sup>5</sup> But you shall seek the place that the LORD your God will choose out of all your tribes to put his name and make his habitation there. There you shall go, <sup>6</sup> and there you shall bring your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and the contribution that you present, your vow offerings, your freewill offerings, and the firstborn of your herd and of your flock. <sup>7</sup> And there you shall eat before*

*the LORD your God, and you shall rejoice, you and your households, in all that you undertake, in which the LORD your God has blessed you.”*

You see, the pagans believed in high places. The pagans were very geographically superstitious. They believed that to get closer to their deities they had to climb up onto hills. And the higher they got in elevation, the closer that they would be to their gods. I'm not sure why they ever wanted to be close to their gods because their pagan gods were, according to them, very cranky deities. I don't know why you'd want to be around them, but that's still what they believed.

That's why the Bible refers in the Old Testament to high places. Jews, you see, adopted pagan practices and they built high places. You'll remember as you read through Kings, it'll talk about the good things a particular king did. This king was good in that he followed the ways of the Lord. He did not stray. He built up the temple, he encouraged the people to worship the Lord God. However, he did not break down the high places. And those were some of those last bastions of pagan worship that the Jews were still using. Not necessarily to worship pagan deities, but they were worshiping the Lord in the high places.

And so, what God is saying here through Moses is don't worship the Lord in that way. In other words, don't go to the places they go to. Don't worship in the way that they worship. You worship where God tells you to worship. Now we know that eventually this is all going to be centered in Jerusalem. But you know that Jerusalem didn't become the center of worship until many, many, many generations later and David is the one who conquered Jerusalem even during the kingship of Saul. Jerusalem was under the control of the Jebusites.

And it was when David took over as king of Israel, that he conquered Jerusalem and made it the center of worship, which is where God said, now go and worship there at, eventually, the temple first, obviously, at the tabernacle and then later at the temple. But notice God is speaking through Moses here ahead of time saying the Lord is going to show you, He's going to tell you where you should go worship. That is to be the center of where you go, right? Don't go here, there, high places, low places or something like that, it's to go to Jerusalem.

So, there was a specific place. Now that doesn't apply to you and I. That's something that just doesn't apply to you and I. Under the New Covenant we have not been given a centrality of worship that is in a geographical place. Why? Because we don't have a physical covenant. We have a spiritual covenant, right? So, we can worship the Lord wherever because we are the temple of the

Holy Spirit. This building isn't special. It's just a building. We don't go careful in the church. Don't talk loud in the church.

Don't do it, because there's nothing holy about this place. It's a building. Right? You know what's holy? You are. You are holy. So, again, that's because we have a spiritual dynamic related to our covenant relationship with God. So, God is telling them where they are to worship.

Verse 8. *“You shall not do according to all that we are doing here today, (because) everyone doing whatever is right in his own eyes, (that’s not what we’re doing) <sup>9</sup> for you have not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance that the LORD your God is giving you. <sup>10</sup> But when you go over the Jordan and live in the land that the LORD your God is giving you to inherit, and when he gives you rest from all your enemies around, so that you live in safety, <sup>11</sup> then to the place that the LORD your God will choose, to make his name dwell there, there you shall bring all that I command you: your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and the contribution that you present, and all your finest vow offerings that you vow to the LORD.”*

God's making this pretty clear, isn't He? When you come into the land, God's going to make it clear where He wants you to go and worship, to do all your worship. Sacrifices, free will offerings, He's going to make it very clear. Guys, by the time Jesus came along, there were still people for whom it wasn't clear. You guys remember when Jesus is making His way from Judea up to Galilee? Normally Jews walked around Samaria. He walked right through it. And He comes, and He's tired, and He's thirsty, and He sits down at this well. And this woman comes to draw water. It says it's right around noon.

And Jesus starts this conversation with her where He speaks into her life prophetically. And she recognizes the prophetic element of His talking to her because He said to her, He says, go home, go back and get your husband and come back. She goes, well, I don't have a husband. He says, yeah, I know. Fact is you've had like five of them and the man you have now isn't even your husband. And she goes, Sir I perceive you are a prophet. And then what does she do? She immediately starts talking to Him about location. Let me put this on the screen for you. Just to remind you this is recorded in John chapter 4. She says,

**John 4:20-22 (ESV)**

*“Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.” Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.*

*“Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say (And she’s talking about Jews in general. You say) that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.” Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.*

What is He saying here? He's saying well, number one, you're wrong from an Old Covenant standpoint. You're wrong. But from a New Covenant standpoint, there's coming a time when it doesn't matter. It's not whether you go there, here or around the corner. What really is going to matter under the New Covenant is worshiping God in Spirit and truth. That's what matters because it's a spiritual covenant that you and I are under, not a physical one. So, interesting though, by the time Jesus comes along this issue still isn't settled with everybody like the Samaritans who were half Jew, half Gentile.

Let's keep going. Verse 12. *“And you shall rejoice before the LORD your God, you and your sons and your daughters, your male servants and your female servants, and the Levite that is within your towns, since he has no portion or inheritance with you.”*

And that was part of why God wanted them to go to the place that He told them to do their sacrifices. Why? The Levites were supposed to get a portion of those sacrifices, remember? That's how they were to be supported. You see, the Levites weren't given any land. So how are the Levites going to live? Their portion is the Lord. God says, listen, right now, He's saying to Moses, when you guys sacrifice, you just do it wherever you want. But there's coming, when you get into the land, God's going to show you where He wants these things to take place, and here's why. You need to take care of the Levites. It's your job. And your sacrifices are going to support them.

So, He says, verse 13, *“Take care that you do not offer your burnt offerings at any place that you see, <sup>14</sup> but at the place that the LORD will choose in one of your tribes, there you shall offer your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I am commanding you. <sup>15</sup> “However, you (can) may slaughter and eat meat*

*within any of your towns, as much as you desire, according to the blessing of the LORD your God that he has given you. The unclean and the clean may eat of it, as of the gazelle and as of the deer.”*

In other words, he's telling them, listen, I'm not telling you can't sacrifice or kill an animal and eat it anywhere you want. You can do it anywhere you want. You can have a barbecue anywhere you want. I'm talking about your sacrifices to the Lord. Those you must bring. But even when you do kill an animal and eat it in your own hometown or wherever you are out in the field.

Verse 16, *“Only you shall not eat the blood; you shall pour it out on the earth like water.”* Why? The blood was given for sacrifice. Remember? God said to the Israelites, the life of an animal is in the blood. And when you are being, when that animal is being sacrificed, it's life for life. And so, you're to honor that life that is being sacrificed. That's to look ahead to Jesus. The final sacrifice for our sins.

He says, *“<sup>17</sup> You may not eat within your towns the tithe of your grain or of your wine or of your oil, or the firstborn of your herd or of your flock, or any of your vow offerings that you vow, or your freewill offerings or the contribution that you present,*

*<sup>18</sup> but you shall eat them before the LORD your God in the place that the LORD your God will choose, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, and the Levite who is within your towns. And you shall rejoice before the LORD your God in all that you undertake.”* So you can eat the grain, but the tithe of your grain you must give where the Lord directs you.

And this is why, look at verse 19. *“Take care that you do not neglect the Levite as long as you live in your land.”<sup>20</sup> “When the LORD your God enlarges your territory, as he has promised you, and you say, ‘I will eat meat,’ because you crave meat, you may eat meat whenever you desire.”* If you want to have meat, eat it.

But He says in verse 21, *“If the place that the LORD your God will choose to put his name there is too far from you, then you may kill any of your herd or your flock, which the LORD has given you, as I have commanded you, and you may eat within your towns whenever you desire.”<sup>22</sup> Just as the gazelle or the deer is eaten, so you may eat of it.* (It doesn't matter if you're clean or unclean, doesn't, it's okay, you can eat of it, because it's not being offered to the Lord) *The unclean and the clean alike may eat of it.<sup>23</sup> Only be sure that you do not eat the blood, for the blood is the life, and you shall not eat the life with the flesh.*

*<sup>24</sup> You shall not eat it; you shall pour it out on the earth like water. <sup>25</sup> You shall not eat it, that all may go well with you and with your children after you, when you do what is right in the sight of the LORD. <sup>26</sup> But the holy things that are due from you, (Now he's talking about sacrifices. Things that are given to the Lord) and your vow offerings, (those) you shall take, and you shall go to the place that the LORD will choose, <sup>27</sup> and offer your burnt offerings, the flesh and the blood, on the altar of the LORD your God. The blood of your sacrifices shall be poured out on the altar of the LORD your God, but the flesh you may eat."*

So, you see, not every sacrifice was a whole burnt offering. Some of it they ate. They would offer an animal, and then they get to eat some of it. Some of it would be given to the priest.

*"<sup>28</sup> "Be careful to obey all these words that I command you, that it may go well with you and with your children after you forever, when you do what is good and right in the sight of the LORD your God. <sup>29</sup> "When the LORD your God cuts off before you the nations whom you go in to dispossess, and you dispossess them and dwell in their land, <sup>30</sup> take care that you be not ensnared to follow them, after they have been destroyed before you, and that you do not inquire about their gods, saying, (So) 'How (exactly) did these nations serve their gods?—that I also may do the same.'*

*<sup>31</sup> You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way, for every abominable thing that the LORD hates they have done for their gods, for they even burn their sons and their daughters in the fire to their gods. <sup>32</sup> "Everything that I command you, you shall be careful to do. You shall not add to it or take from it."*

One more quick chapter. Check this out, guys. Hey, do you like, I mean, do signs and wonders kind of fascinate you? Not that we're supposed to run after signs and wonders, but, hey I don't mind a good miracle. But I want you to see the warning that God gives in the Word here. Look what He says.

*"If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, (and that means a genuine bona fide miracle takes place) <sup>2</sup> and the sign or wonder that he tells you comes to pass, and if he says, 'Let us go after other gods,' which you have not known, 'and let us serve them,' <sup>3</sup> you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams. (Why?) For the LORD your God is testing you, to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul."*

Or I'll add this, or whether you love miracles more. See, that's the problem with becoming so focused and fixated on miracles. Like I said, I love miracles. I

think God's a miracle working God, there's nothing wrong with that. But when we start looking to miracles, when we start following miracles to the exclusion of the Word of God we run into serious trouble. So, God says, through Moses to Israel, listen, let's say a guy comes along who claims to be a prophet and he says such and such is going to happen in 10 days from now, and then it happens, just like he said, and you're like, whoa, that was God.

There's no way. Or maybe a prophet comes, and he does, he does a miracle, a wonder. And it takes place. And then that same prophet or seer says, let's worship these other gods. God says through Moses here. That's not beyond the realm of possibility that that could take place. A genuine, bona fide miracle. But then this man comes along and says, let's go worship other gods. And that is a sign to you that God is testing you. In other words, God allowed that miracle to take place to see if you would follow the miracle instead of Him. That's the danger of being so fixed and focused on miracles that we ignore the Word of God.

And the body of Christ has traditionally done this. We've been guilty of this on many occasions, where we've seen something happen, or we hear that something's going on somewhere and we just, we're just so hungry for the supernatural, that they can be getting by with all kinds of, they can be saying really ridiculous things about God. And we'll just gobble it up, because there's miracles happening. You know, I've had people tell me in the past about how they went to a meeting and they're like; I was told to be careful about maybe going to this church or this meeting that was going on because I heard these people were maybe a little whacked.

But I've got to tell you, pastor, I went there, and they laid hands on me, and they prayed for me. And I mean, God supernaturally delivered me. He touched me at the very deepest part of my heart. And then they'll tell me something about how God delivered them from like cigarette smoking or addiction to prescription drugs or something like that. God just supernaturally delivered me. And then, you know what they'll say to me? So, you're telling me that that was a bad place? Look what God did! Look what God did. Now, this is an interesting sort of a phenomenon.

It's not exactly what he's describing here in Deuteronomy 13, but there's a similarity in that God graciously meets you at the place of your faith, right? Even though the place where He meets you isn't good. There may be unbiblical things going on there. You could go to a Bible study, for example, where they're teaching unbiblical things and have people pray for you and because your faith is genuine and you're truly anticipating God moving in your life, God moves in



your life. And what is our conclusion? Well, my Bible study must be good. It's a good Bible study. Why? Because God touched me there.

Do you think God's going to hold back his blessing in your life because you're in necessarily a questionable situation? God responds to faith. Sometimes I wish He would hold back. We've had a lot of movements happen here in the United States and other places that have been very unbiblical frankly, in the essence of the movement. But people will come from those meetings and talk about a genuine touch of the Lord in their lives. And I don't doubt the genuineness of those touches because God is good, and God is gracious, and He responds to the faith of an individual, even if they're in a bad situation.

I mean, how many of you, when you first came to Christ, were in a bad situation? Maybe you were in a bad, I've heard of a lot of people coming to Christ in the midst of really rotten situation. Well, do you notice God didn't pick you up out of that situation, take you into a completely different one, and then you got saved. He saved you in the midst of your sin. He saved you in the midst of sometimes some really dangerous circumstances. Does that mean that those, that sin is good that you are in, or those circumstances was good?

No, it just means God is merciful means He's gracious, right? We can't judge situations by the experience of what God is doing in our lives. We have to judge situations by the Word of God, right? God is gracious and He's going to love you, and He's going to bless you. Even if you have blundered into a bad situation, God's still going to bless you. He's still going to minister to you if you have a faithful expectation. So be careful how you judge things. He's telling them here, Deuteronomy 13, be careful when you see a miracle, because if the person who performed that miracle, the next thing they do is starts to draw you off after other gods. This is just me testing you to see if you're going to follow the miracle worker or the Word of God.

He says in verse 4, *"You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear him and keep his commandments and obey his voice, and you shall serve him and hold fast to him."*<sup>5</sup> *But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has taught rebellion against the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you out of the house of slavery, to make you leave the way in which the LORD your God commanded you to walk. So you shall purge the evil from your midst."* Now, it's even going to get more personal.

*"6 "If your brother, the son of your mother, or your son or your daughter or the wife you embrace or your friend who is as your own soul entices you secretly,*

*saying, 'Let us go and serve other gods,' which neither you nor your fathers have known, <sup>7</sup> some of the gods of the peoples who are around you, whether near you or far off from you, from the one end of the earth to the other, <sup>8</sup> you shall not yield to him or listen to him, nor shall your eye pity him, nor shall you spare him, nor shall you conceal him. (like hide him away)*

*<sup>9</sup> But you shall kill him. Your hand shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. <sup>10</sup> You shall stone him to death with stones, because he sought to draw you away from the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. <sup>11</sup> And all Israel shall hear and fear and never again do any such wickedness as this among you."*

Does this mean you should kill your friends who try to get you to sin? No, we're not in a physical covenant like Israel was. We weren't protecting the land in a physical way like they were. We're protecting our hearts. So, what do you have to do in your situation? You separate yourself. You separate yourself from those individuals who are trying to draw you and lure you away to worship other gods.

He says in verse 12, *"If you hear in one of your cities, which the LORD your God is giving you to dwell there, <sup>13</sup> that certain worthless fellows have gone out among you and have drawn away the inhabitants of their city, saying, 'Let us go and serve other gods,' which you have not known, <sup>14</sup> then you shall inquire and make search and ask diligently. And behold, if it be true and certain that such an abomination has been done among you, <sup>14</sup> then you shall inquire and make search and ask diligently. And behold, if it be true and certain that such an abomination has been done among you, <sup>15</sup> you shall surely put the inhabitants of that city to the sword, devoting it to destruction, all who are in it and its cattle, with the edge of the sword.*

*<sup>16</sup> You shall gather all its spoil into the midst of its open square and burn the city and all its spoil with fire, as a whole burnt offering to the LORD your God. It shall be a heap forever. It shall not be built again. <sup>17</sup> None of the devoted things shall stick to your hand, that the LORD may turn from the fierceness of his anger and show you mercy and have compassion on you and multiply you, as he swore to your fathers, <sup>18</sup> if you obey the voice of the LORD your God, keeping all his commandments that I am commanding you today, and doing what is right in the sight of the LORD your God."*

What's interesting about this is that we're still called to act harshly against sin. It's just in a different way. Because again, we're not dealing with the physical

covenant. So, we understand these things from the perspective of the covenant we're in. The Covenant of Grace rather than the Mosaic Covenant. So, that's where we're going to end here tonight and we'll pick it up right where we've left off in chapter 14 next time. So, let's pray.

Heavenly Father, we thank You for giving us this time tonight. We thank You for the power and grace that comes from your Word. We thank you for your Spirit who teaches us and illuminates our hearts to understand the teaching of the Scriptures, even the Word of the Old Testament and the Mosaic Covenant, we see Lord God and understand insights into the covenant of which we are now under through Christ our Lord. The Covenant of Grace.

We thank you Lord God for the spiritual blessings that are ours and we pray for your strength, Lord God, to stand against the temptations that come our way.

Just as the Israelites were called to deal harshly with those that would otherwise draw them into the worship of other pagan deities, let us, Lord God, be equally as aggressive to rid from our lives the things that draw us away from our devotion to the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. Father God, keep us from legalism.

May we continue to walk in grace through the power of the Spirit, recognizing that apart from you, we have not the ability to walk in victory, but through the power of the Spirit, we've been given everything we need for godliness. Be with us, we pray, Father. Through Jesus Christ, our Savior, amen.