

# Bible Challenge 2018

## Week 7: February 11-17

### **Outline:**

Chapter 1: Reestablishing the Covenant  
Chapter 2-3: Reminder of God's Faithfulness  
Chapter 4-5: Obedience to the Covenant and the Decalogue  
Chapter 6: Prologue to the Covenant  
Chapter 7-11: Nature of the Covenant, a People Holy to the Lord  
Chapter 12-16: Worship  
Chapter 17-26: Assorted Laws of the Covenant  
Chapter 27-28: Curses and Blessings from Ebal and Gerizim  
Chapter 29-30: The Covenant Finalized  
Chapter 31: Joshua to Succeed Moses  
Chapter 32-33: Moses' final Words to the People  
Chapter 34: The Death of Moses

Deuteronomy literally means, "Second Law," and that is very much what the book is about. It is a second-giving of the law. Remember, the generation who was present at Sinai to receive the Law has almost completely died off in the wilderness, thus the people have heard it in part, but here it is designed to put it together as a whole. This is also a turning point in the history of God's covenant people. Leadership is changing from Moses to Joshua and the people will soon transition from being wanderers in the wilderness to settlers (and conquerors) of the Promised Land. It has been said that Deuteronomy will function essentially as the Constitution for the people of Israel as they establish a nation and it is structured in much the same way as are many ancient covenants that have been preserved through the ages.

In the Hebrew Bible, this book is entitled, "These are the Words," which is appropriate, given that this book really constitutes a series of sermons, given by Moses, on the plains of Moab, just before entering the Promised Land. It should be noted that Moses here, essentially gives two sermons on the Law of God, one on a mountain (Sinai) and one on a plain (Moab). Interestingly, Jesus, the greater Moses, also has two sermons recorded where he preaches on the Law of God...one given on the mountain (Sermon on the Mount: Matthew 5-7) and one given on a plain (Sermon on the Plain: Luke 6:17-49). There are no coincidences in the plan and design of God.

### **Reestablishing the Covenant**

It is the pattern in ancient cultures to renew covenants at key times in the life of the body. This is not unlike the practice of renewing wedding vows that couples will often do. Thus, as leadership is instituted, Israel is reminded of their disobedience to God which led to the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness. Such is God's righteous judgment on those who would break the covenant.

### **Reminder of God's Faithfulness**

In these chapters there is a recapping of the history of God's deliverance of his people. The emphasis of this recounting is on the faithfulness of God and the faithlessness of God's people. The scriptures repeatedly uphold God as the faithful deliverer, keeping his covenant promises, yet we constantly fail. Such is the character of our God.

### **Obedience to the Covenant and the Decalogue**

In chapter 5 we have a recap of the Ten Commandments. We should note, the lead-in though, an exposition reminding the people of their responsibility to pursue God alone and to reject any form of idolatry. Much like what Jesus will later say, "if you love me you will obey my commandments" (John 14:15), God is saying through Moses that our highest calling in life is to worship the God of heaven and to obey his commandments.

### **Prologue to the Covenant**

Arguably the most significant passage in the Old Testament is found in Deuteronomy 6:4-9. It is the "Greatest Commandment" (Matthew 22:36-38) and is the summary of our obligation to God. We are not only to love our God with the totality of our being, but if we would be faithful, we must teach our children to do the same.

### **Nature of the Covenant, a People Holy to the Lord**

As the "constitution" moves from its prologue into its contents, space is committed to define the nature of the people and their relationship not only to God, but also to the surrounding nations. God has set apart his people as holy, marked for his use and not for worldly or profane things. Yes, we do many trades that are "earthly" in nature — we farm, we build, we manage money, etc..., but as Christians even these things are to be done in faith to the glory of Christ (Romans 14:23; Colossians 3:17).

### **Worship**

As a people chosen and set apart, we are a people made for worship, thus, we should not be surprised when space is set aside to focus on worship. Perhaps the most important line, though, come from 12:8,32. "You *shall not* do according to all that we are doing here today, everyone doing whatever is right in his own eyes" ... "everything that I command you, you shall be careful to do it. You shall not add to it or take from it." Sobering words indeed, in a culture that takes great strides toward human innovation in worship.

### **Assorted Laws of the Covenant**

We have a reiteration and clarification of many of the laws found in the books of Exodus and Leviticus. One of the most interesting sets of laws comes in the form of the rules that are meant to govern kings. It is interesting to note that when the people protested with Samuel that they did not have a king, it was not because they were never to have a human king; they just wanted a king after the design of the pagan nations around them...and oh how they got one in Saul. Here, in Deuteronomy 17:14-20 we are told what Israel's kings are supposed to be like and even in David, we do not have a record of any of the kings obeying the command to transcribe for themselves a copy of the Law to keep with them every day. How differently things in the nation might have gone were the kings to have done this.

### **Curses and Blessings from Ebal and Gerizim**

Mount Ebal and Gerizim, located in what would later be known as Samaria, the central part of the Promised Land, are two mountains that are designed to remind the people of their covenant obligations. An altar would be built on both mountains and a portion of the people would stand on each of the two mountains, from Gerizim pronouncing blessings for obedience and from Ebal, curses for disobedience. Here are the stipulations of the covenant, stipulations that the people ultimately could never fully meet (hence our need for a Savior) but that they never really tried to meet... at least not for that long. How sad it is when the people of God, knowing the ramifications of disobedience, make a choice to disobey anyway. How often such is the case not only in the Old Testament, but in Christ's church as well.

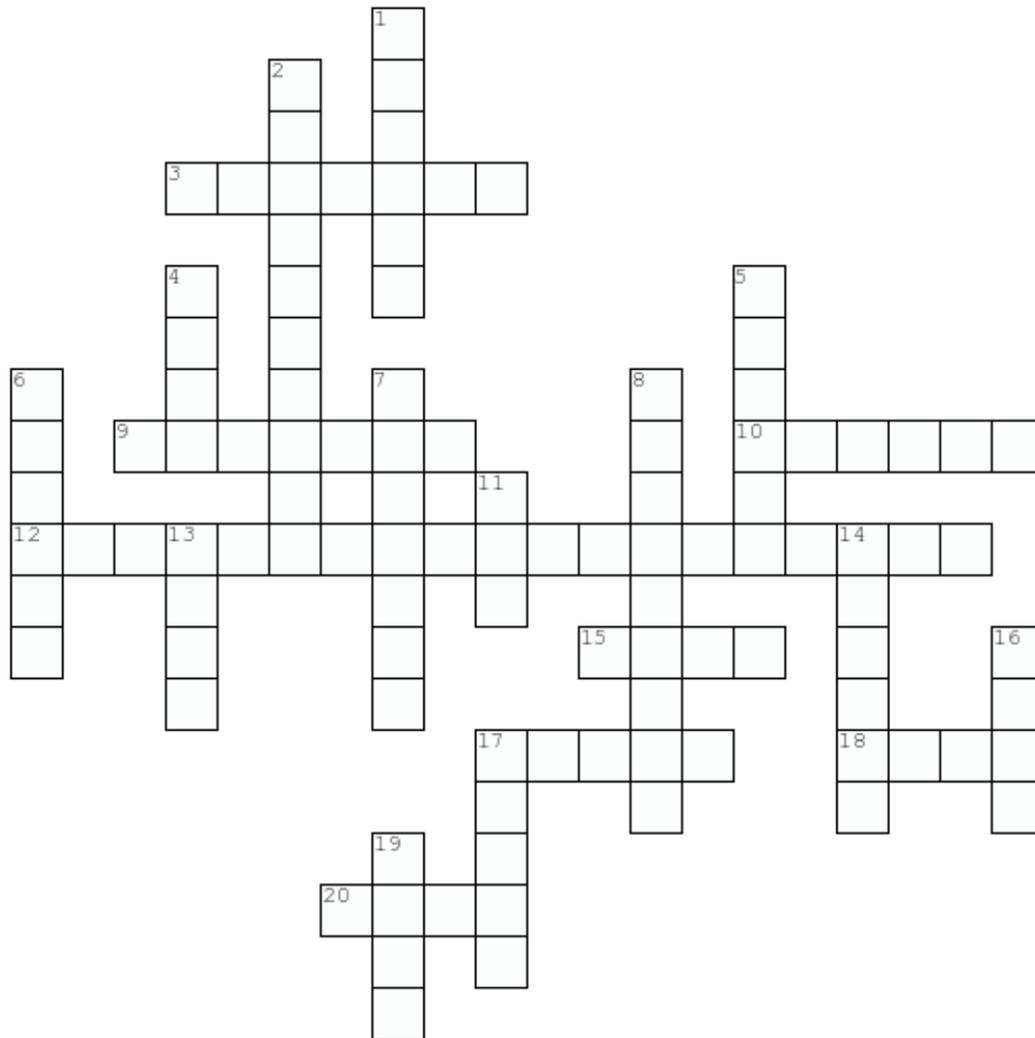
### **The Covenant Finalized, Joshua Succeeds Moses, and Moses' final Words**

Here we have a covenant commitment ceremony and the mantle of leadership is transferred from Moses to Joshua. Then we see a sermon/song of Moses as he closes out his ministry (he is about to retire from his labors).

### **The Death of Moses**

Some people think it sad that Moses is not permitted into the Promised Land. Yet God is very clear about the obedience of his prophets and leaders. Yet, what we have here is what I consider one of the most touching scenes in all of the Scriptures. Moses is taken to the top of Mount Pisgah and given the permission to look across the land the people will soon enter. Then, God takes Moses to a secluded spot and remains with Moses, comforting him as would a friend as Moses takes his last breaths. Then God is described as personally taking Moses' body and buried him (keeping the Israelites from making an idol from this great prophet). Could there be a better way to breathe your last?

# Week 7: Deuteronomy



Created with [TheTeachersCorner.net](http://TheTeachersCorner.net) [Crossword Puzzle Generator](http://TheTeachersCorner.net)

## Across

3. God expects his \_\_\_\_\_ to be done by his instructions.
9. From this mountain, blessings are pronounced on the people for obedience.
10. 'We were Pharaoh's \_\_\_\_\_ in Egypt'
12. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and might is known as the \_\_\_\_\_' (2 words)
15. The covenant was renewed on the plains.
17. This New Testament Prophet also preaches a sermon on the Law of God from a Plain.
18. From this mountain, curses are pronounced on the people for disobedience.
20. Our God is a 'consuming \_\_\_\_\_'

## Down

1. He succeeds Moses.
2. '\_\_\_\_\_ the foreskin of your hearts...'
4. 'Therefore, choose \_\_\_\_\_ that you and your offspring may live.'
5. '\_\_\_\_\_ is a man hanged on a tree' see Deut. 21:23.
6. From the top of which mountain did Moses get to see the Promised Land?
7. 'For the Lord your God is he who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies and give you \_\_\_\_\_.'
8. Another name for the Ten Commandments.
11. Who buried Moses?
13. This celebration was on the fourteenth day of this month.
14. It took 40 years for Israel to cross a distance that should have taken this many days (because of their disobedience).
16. God calls us and sets us apart as \_\_\_\_\_ to himself.
17. This New Testament author affirms Deut. 27:26, 'Cursed is anyone who does not confirm the words of the law by doing them.'
19. This person is supposed to transcribe a copy of the Law for himself.