



#44 Devarim Deuteronomy 1:1-3:22
Torah Teaching
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Names

Devarim – the 1st portion in Deuteronomy
Kefa – Peter
Moshe – Moses
Og – one of the Nephilim
Shaul – Paul
Sihon – one of the Nephilim
Yeshua – Jesus
Yochanan – John

Terms

Haftarah – the weekly reading from the prophets
Nephilim – fallen angels, or giants
Parashah – one of 54 portions of the Bible from the Torah
Rabbi – Jewish leader
Rebbe (Rebbee) – Jewish spiritual leader
Shevat – a month on the Jewish calendar; our January or February
Torah – 1st 5 books of the Bible

The portion for today is Devarim and it means “words.” In Genesis, God created everything by His words by speaking them into existence. Also, God gave us His word in the Bible to instruct us. His word is precious and by implication, there is power in His words.

Keep yourself strong spiritually by continual practice.

For most of us, to be good at something we need to work at what we are doing and practice our skills. A simple illustration will work for this. Say we want to be good at playing basketball. We probably first practice making baskets and then go on to work on the other skills we need. One player I know of used to practice 6 hours a day while in college. He practiced all the skills he needed to be competitive.

While I am not suggesting that we spend all our time developing our spiritual life, we still need to make a daily effort and perhaps at times take extra time to make sure we excel in our relationship with God, in keeping His commandments, and in allowing the Holy Spirit to help us. When I first believed in God, I had the time to work on my spiritual life. I was excited about God and the Bible. I remember that at least for a while, I spent 16 hours a day studying the scriptures. During my life, I have made a considerable effort to know and understand the Bible.

Have you made an effort to learn about God and His commandments and apply them? I know of one person who read the entire Bible 3 times a year for a while. I have 2 degrees in Bible related studies, some work towards my doctorate, and extensive study into understanding the Jewish roots of our beliefs. I did all this because I want truth and I want to help people find truth. It is not that difficult to learn and keep God's commandments. You do not have to go through what took me lots of study to find out. I found out there are some key things to understand. I share these things in my teachings on a regular basis.

Here are just a few of the things I have learned. Most of Christianity ignores the Old Testament and interprets the Bible within the New Testament. Since they take the Bible out of its whole context, they come up with all kinds of different doctrines with different emphasis depending on

what they already believe. The Bible says that God's law in the Old Testament is doctrine. Proverbs 4:2 NKJV says, "For I give you good doctrine: Do not forsake my law." So, how can those who do not believe in keeping the Old Testament laws establish correct doctrine by ignoring the doctrine the Bible says is doctrine?

Another fundamental issue is the keeping of doctrine passed down from the pagan Roman Empire that invoked and undertook the replacement of the true faith with their own feasts and their own false doctrine that was infused with pagan practice. Take for instance the Sabbath which begins at sunset on Friday and ends at sunset on Saturday. They made Sunday the first day of the week and the day of the pagan Sun god their shabbat. How did we end up in such a mess?

There is actually no controversy in the Bible. The 7th day is the day God made holy from the time of creation. Genesis 2:2-3 NKJV says, "And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made."

Also, Exodus 20:8-11 NKJV says,

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

We plainly see that to keep the Sabbath refers to what God did at the time of creation and that the 7th day of the week is the Sabbath and not Sunday which is the day of the pagan Sun god. The controversy comes from some who maintain that we should keep the pagan tradition passed down to us from the Roman Empire. Who instituted that the day of the Sun god be kept?

The following is a quote from The Sabbath Truth online:

The Roman emperor Constantine, a former sun-worshiper, professed conversion to Christianity, though his subsequent actions suggest the "conversion" was more of a political move than a genuine heart change. Constantine named himself Bishop of the Catholic Church and enacted the first civil law regarding Sunday observance in A.D. 321.

On the venerable day of the sun let the magistrate and people residing in cities rest, and let all workshops be closed. In the country however, persons engaged in agricultural work may freely and lawfully continue their pursuits; because it often happens that another day is not so suitable for grain growing or for vine planting; lest by neglecting the proper moment for such operations the bounty of heaven should be lost. - Schaff's History of the Christian Church, vol. III, chap. 75.

Also, the Sabbath is mentioned among God's feasts in the Old Testament portion which God says are His feasts. And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: Leviticus 23:1-2 NKJV says, "The feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts." The context goes on to talk about what some believe are the feasts of the Jews, but in fact it says they are God's feasts. It makes no mention of Christmas or Easter.

Constantine was a pagan Sun god worshipper, and he made the Day of the Sun, the star that makes daylight, our Sunday the day of rest. He obviously did not know the Bible.

Some also say that the Old Testament portion commandments are Jewish commandments and are harsh. They are God's commandments, and they are good!

Psalms 19:7-11 NKJV says,

The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever. The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them Your servant is warned, and in keeping them there is great reward.

The law is perfect, makes people wise, are right, enlightening, are forever, true, very worthwhile, warn us, and are rewarding. Notice it says that the law is God's law and not just Jewish laws. Abraham was not Jewish, and he kept the law. Genesis 26:5 NKJV says, "Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws." So, before the law was written down it was passed on through believers in God. Believers keep God's commandments. Noah kept God's law. Genesis 6:9-10 NKJV says, "Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God." The word "just" in this verse could be translated as "lawful" according to Strong's Dictionary. He walked with God it says. It is not talking about national law, but God's law.

We need to understand these things and there is more to understand that is important. It takes time to grow. Be patient, learn, grow, and apply what you learn. That does not sound too difficult, does it? Deuteronomy 30:10-11 NIV says, "Obey the LORD your God and keep his commands and decrees that are written in this Book of the Law and turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Now what I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you or beyond your reach." It is not hard so start keeping God's commandments. When you obey God's commandments you are obeying God.

Use sufficient means to keep yourself clean spiritually.

Do what you know to do and be committed to do the things that God teaches us to do.

1 Kings 8:61 NKJV says, "Let your heart therefore be loyal to the LORD our God, to walk in His statutes and keep His commandments."

Deuteronomy 10:12-13 NKJV says, "fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, 13 and to keep the commandments of the LORD and His statutes which I command you today for your good."

Self-correct in the moment and be determined to remember to keep God's commandments. Numbers 15:40 NKJV says, "Remember and do all My commandments, and be holy for your God." Leviticus 19:2 NKJV says, "You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy."

Have a I can do it attitude and ask God for help. Joshua 1:7-8 NKJV says, "Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success."

Find scriptures that apply to your situation and memorize them. Yeshua was our example, and He used the scriptures. Luke 4:3-4 NKJV says, "The devil said to Him, 'If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.' But Jesus answered him, saying, 'It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.'"

For those who have trouble with drugs or too much alcohol, Proverbs 23:30-33 NKJV says, "Those who linger long at the wine, those who go in search of mixed wine. Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it swirls around smoothly; at the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like a viper. Your eyes will see strange things, and your heart will utter perverse things." Getting stoned on drugs and getting drunk are wrong. Ephesians 5:18 NKJV says, "Do not be drunk with wine."

Plant yourself and position yourself to stay in place spiritually.

Develop routines in life that keeps God at the forefront of life. We all form routines. It makes life easier to manage. Take for example the virtuous wife. Proverbs 31:10-12 NKJV says, "Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies. The heart of her husband safely trusts her; so he will have no lack of gain. She does him good and not evil all the days of her life."

Be determined to do all that we are supposed to be doing as believers. Be an Abraham. Genesis 26:5 NKJV says, "Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws." Do what is right and good. Deuteronomy 6:17-18 NKJV says, "You shall diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, His testimonies, and His statutes which He has commanded you. And you shall do what is right and good."

Open yourself to God's blessings.

Life is a two-way street with God. God can and will do things for us, but we can go our own way and not God's way. Doing things our own way is like turning our backs on God. Keep God's counsel. Proverbs 12:15 NKJV says, "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but he who heeds counsel is wise." We do things His way and it brings a better life." Deuteronomy 10:13 NKJV says, "Keep the commandments of the LORD and His statutes which I command you today for your good."

Use the gift of the Holy Spirit and the associated gifts and manifestations in life. God is a good God who wants to help us in life. 1 Corinthians 14:1 NKJV says, "Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy. Yeshua said in Luke 11:11-13 NKJV, "If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"

Pray with expectation and keep praying. God gave us a prayer. He wants to bless us, be good to us, and give us peace. Numbers 6:24-26 NKJV says, "The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace." Wait on God with expectation. Psalms 25:4-5 NKJV says, "Show me Your ways, O LORD; teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation; on You I wait all the day." Pray much. Ephesians 6:18 NKJV says, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints."

Yeshua tells us to keep praying. Luke 18:1 NKJV says, "Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart." God is willing and able to do special things for us at times. Ephesians 3:20 NKJV says, "Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us." Be strong and trust in God. Psalms 28:7 NKJV says, "The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in Him, and I am helped; therefore my heart greatly rejoices, and with my song I will praise Him. Psalms 112:6-7 NKJV says, "The righteous will be in everlasting remembrance. He will not be afraid of evil tidings; his heart is steadfast, trusting in the LORD."

Yeshua's ministry is an example of God's love for mankind. Luke 6:17-18 NKJV says, "And He came down with them and stood on a level place with a crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and be healed of their diseases, as well as those who were tormented with unclean spirits. And they were healed." Isaiah talks about the Messiah Yeshua in Isaiah 53:5 NKJV, "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. Believe in Yeshua and God and in His ability to heal and help us.\

Torah Study

Devarim means, "words." This Torah portion begins by Moshe addressing Israel 40 years after the Exodus just east of the Jordan River on the first day of Shevat. He tells them to go take the land of Canaan and begins to review their time in the wilderness. This portion is the first portion of the book of Deuteronomy. Deuteronomy is an often-quoted book of encouragement.

In Deuteronomy, Moshe talks about someone coming who is like Moshe. Yeshua was a man like Moshe in many ways and we will talk about that more when we get to that portion. God says to Moshe in Deuteronomy 18:18-19 NKJV says, "I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from

among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him."

One of the ways that Yeshua is like Moshe is that Yeshua is our advocate if we repent of our sin. Moshe prays in Numbers 14:17-18 NKJV and is an advocate for Israel, "Now, I pray, let the power of my Lord be great, just as You have spoken, saying, the LORD is longsuffering and abundant in mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression." Yochanan says about the Messiah Yeshua in 1 John 2:1-2, "These things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world." Remember, forgiveness requires repentance. Do not live a life of sin.

In our portion for today, Moshe tells them why he picked leaders and about the incident of the 12 spies. The Amorites and King Sihon refused to allow Israel to pass so Israel attacked them. God was with Israel, and they defeated the Amorites. They also defeated King Og of Bashan who attacked them. He was a Nephilim and the brother of King Sihon, and it gives the details of his size; his bed was 9 cubits long, about 15 ½' long using the Egyptian cubit. The Parashah ends with Moshe addressing the issues regarding the tribes who would live east of the Jordan and encouraging Israel and telling them that God can deliver the land west of the Jordan into their hands.

It is interesting to note that some of the Nephilim survived the flood and there are some who think the Nephilim are behind some of the advances in our present-day technology. The Bible talks about spiritual powers at work against us and nothing about the possibility of the Nephilim still being around. Since some of them survived the flood, it is possible they are around too. A number of extra biblical sources talk about the Nephilim including Egyptian and archeological sources.

Israel is told to go and take the land. Most certainly this required faith in God and bravery. Perhaps we can compare this to standing up bravely for the truth of the scriptures. Or perhaps we can compare this to the receiving of the Holy Spirit. Some are afraid of the Holy Spirit, but Yeshua said that God gives good gifts to us (see Luke 11:11-13). Since He is a good God, why would He give us anything bad? Those who have a bad attitude about the Holy Spirit are like those who had a bad attitude in the desert.

Kefa tells those in Acts 2 to believe and they will receive the Holy Spirit. The Greek word for "receive" that Kefa uses is to take in a literal sense as opposed to a mental sense. You can think about picking up an orange, but you can also literally pick up the orange and eat it. Just as Israel was to literally take the land, we are to literally take and use the Holy Spirit and the associated gifts of the Holy Spirit.¹ Some are listed as gifts in Romans 12:3-8 and Ephesians 4:7,11; in 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 they are called gifts and evidences. They are intended to help us. The Bible is clear that we are to do things God's way. Shaul says in the context about the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Holy Spirit that they, "Are the commandments of the Lord." 1

¹ g2983. λαμβάνω lambanō; according to [Strong's Enhanced Dictionary](#) it means to take hold of in an active sense (not a passive sense); in other words, to receive and use.

Corinthians 14:37 NKJV. I have run into believers who do not believe in the gifts of the Holy Spirit, yet they are commandments of the Lord. We are to accept all of God's word.

The Haftarah for Devarim is Isaiah 1:1-27. The Haftarah portion begins with Isaiah the prophet reproving Israel for their sins. God says that all their empty adherences and disobedience to God are a burden to Him and He calls on Israel to repent. Also, Israel is not attending to the needs of the widows and orphans like they are supposed to. Isaiah 1:16-18 CJB says:

Wash yourselves clean! Get your evil deeds out of my sight! Stop doing evil, learn to do good! Seek justice, relieve the oppressed, defend orphans, plead for the widow. "Come now," says ADONAI, let's talk this over together. Even if your sins are like scarlet, they will be white as snow; even if they are red as crimson, they will be like wool.

It was always God's will that we do what is good. Isaiah says stop doing evil and learn how to keep God's commandments (to do "good" in Jewish understanding). The world often does not have its roots in truth. God knows all, therefore His words in the holy scriptures are truth. Talking about the Old Testament, it says in Psalms 119:160, "The entirety of Your word is truth, and every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever."

Yeshua says the same thing about the Old Testament in John 17:17 NKJV (there was no New Testament at the time), "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth;" John 17:17 NKJV. To sanctify or make holy is to separate our lives from doing what is wrong, from doing what is profane. We live our lives in deep respect for God; we live by His words in the holy scriptures; and we keep His commandments.

Also, one translation of the Hebrew Matthew in Matthew 5:17-18 Yeshua says: "Do not think that I came to throw down the Torah and the Prophets, on the contrary, I came to confirm. I say unto you in truth, that not one word will be diminished from the Torah – that it would not be performed until the end of the world."² The Greek was evidently changed by heretics, so people didn't have to keep God's commandments, but to conform to what the Roman Empire wanted them to do.

If we do not listen to God and do what He tells us to do, we are not believing in Him and not respecting Him.

**Commandments, Implied Commandments, Permissions, and other Concepts.
(We can also understand commandments are being implied from other scriptures in the Bible. There are other possible concepts than what is shared here.)**

You shall not show partiality in judgment; you shall hear the small as well as the great; you shall not be afraid in any man's presence, for the judgment is God's. The case that is too hard for you, bring to me, and I will hear it. Deuteronomy 1:17.

² The Hebrew Gospels from Sepharad, The Gospel according to Matthew Version 2.2, March 2021. Translated from Vat. Ebr. 100 by Justin J. Van Rensburg. <https://www.hebrewgospels.com/matthew>.

The Aaronic Blessing.

In closing, let us say the Aaronic Blessing from Numbers 6:24-26:

Yě-hō-váh bless you and keep you.

Yě-hō-váh make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you.

Yě-hō-váh lift up His face upon you, and give to you peace. Amen.

Thank you for being with us today.