

Q4 L12 - Deuteronomy in the New Testament - 2021-12-18

Luccas Rodor: Hi, friends, welcome to our Sabbath School Study Hour where we'll be studying our Sabbath School lesson of this quarter, which is studying the book of Deuteronomy. It has been such a great pleasure to study this book and today we'll be studying Lesson 12, and thank you for investing this time with us. I'd like to welcome you, I'd like to welcome our local community. We have a few people here tonight. A lot of people are traveling because of Thanksgiving, but thank you so much for being here, those that are here.

And before we continue and go into the study of our lesson, I would like to invite you to take advantage of our free offer. The name of this free offer is "Down From His Glory," and if you would like it, you can-- and you live in continental North America, you can call the number 866-788-3966 or you can call 866-Study-More and ask for Offer number 154. If you're in the USA and you want a digital download of this offer, you can text "SH139" to the number 40544. But if you live outside of North America and you would still like this study, you can go to study.aftv.org/SH139 and you could acquire this-- you could have for free, really, not acquire. You can have this free offer, and I'm sure that it'll be great for you and for your family.

Before we begin the study of this week's lesson, I'd like to say a word of prayer with you. Let's bow our heads and pray. Dear Lord, thank You so much for Your love, thank You so much for Your grace, and thank You so much for the providence of giving us Your Son and so much for the Bible, the providence of the Bible, Lord, the whole Bible. Thank You so much for the lessons that we learn in the Old Testament and the convergence points that we find in the New Testaments and we see, Lord, that You are so intentional and You are so wise. Thank You for these lessons. As we study this lesson today, allow us to understand Your heart and Your will and allow us to not only understand this mentally, but also practically, and allow us to transition this to our day-to-day lives. I thank You for this in Jesus's name, amen.

Now, the title of this week's lesson is "Deuteronomy in the New Testament." Now, this is a very important lesson. I would say that it's perhaps one of the central lessons in this quarterly for a few reasons. Now, one of the reasons, one of the main reasons, is because in the Protestant world around us today, we find a very big narrative. We find a very big belief among many people, which is that the Old Testament, it doesn't really matter anymore. It's been done away with. It's--it was crucified on the cross with Jesus. And there are so many different terms that a lot of people apply to the truths and to the stories contained in the Old Testament.

But the reality is that if I'm to take God seriously and if I'm to take the New Testament seriously, then there are a few foundational things that need to be understood by the Old Testament. And so that's what we're going to be talking about today. Now, in general, the Old Testament is the story of a people. It's the story of a nation, the nation of Israel. And the New Testament is the story of a man, the Man-God, Jesus Christ. But the context between these two, the Old Testament, the New Testament, between ancient Israel and the new Israel, it is--it's absolute and it needs to be understood in our study of the Bible.

We need to understand that one cannot exist without the other and that, truly, the New Testament finds its foundation, its baseline, on the pages of the Old Testament. And so, in spite of the difficulties that we may have in reading the diverse topics found in the Old Testament, we find, for example, history, dramas, songs, and poems. We find proverbs, essays. We find prophecies. While it may be a little bit difficult to understand these things sometimes, we can be certain that the authors and the writers of the New Testament, all of them, including Jesus Christ Himself, held the Old Testament as the fundamental authority.

So you're going to see that I'm going to spend some time tonight--that I'm going to spend some time today talking about the introduction of this theme. And you'll see that we'll go through some of the days of the lesson, some of them a little bit quicker and some of them we're going to dive in a little bit more because there's more to be extracted there. But what was found in the Old Testament is the confirmation of the New Testament that was dawning upon them. The Old Testament confirms the covenants found in the New Testament, and that's what the people, the Church, the Christians living in the times of the New Testament were understanding and were beginning to see that these truths were converging on their lives and in the future of the Church. To them, the New Testament was never entirely new.

The themes found there were never entirely new, but a reinterpretation and perhaps a contextualization of what had already been indicated, what had already been suggested and anticipated and awaited by the Old Testament. Jesus Himself declared in John chapter 5, verse 39, He said, "You search the Scriptures," and at the end of the verse He said, "And these are they which testify of Me." "You search the Scriptures." And He's talking to the Jews, He's talking to the Christians of that time. He's saying, "You look in Scriptures, you read it, you analyze it and study it, and it is the Scriptures that speak of Me."

But the true question here is what was the Bible? What were the Scriptures that those people had at their disposal? Was it the entire Bible as we have it today? It was not, they didn't have the New Testament. The people living in Jesus's day, they did not have the New Testament available to them. Their Scriptures, the Scriptures that Jesus is talking about is the Old Testament. And so that is, to me, that is fascinating. Another example of this reality is that the apostle Paul, he rested his arguments on the authority of the Old Testament, and that was always enough. You never see anyone questioning the arguments of Paul when he's quoting Scripture and he creates his entire arguments based on the pages of the Old Testament.

An example of this is when he argues that we are justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law. Now, many people would think that this is a theme of the New Testament. This is a reality of the New Testament, justification by faith. But the--and this here appears in Romans chapter 3, verse 28. But the thing is that, for Paul, when he is arguing this, he uses the Old Testament, he uses stories of the Old Testament, to prove justification by faith. So, justification by faith is not found only in the New Testament, it is also found in the Old Testament. The story that he uses or the argument that he uses in this example is the story found in Genesis of Abraham who was declared just before he was circumcised. Now, to make a case for a topic as sensitive as justification, faith, or tradition, Paul always depended entirely upon the authority of the Old Testament that was also accepted by his opponents, because you remember, who were Paul's opponents? It was the Pharisees, the rabbis of his day. It was his old--his old colleagues, right? And so they also accepted the pages of the Old Testament. They also accepted the arguments found therein.

And so, this way, friends, the New Testament doesn't really stand on itself or by itself, it never has. It does go beyond the Old Testament, because we know that our God is a God--He is a systematic God in the sense where things happen in an order. I mean, you look back at the Old Testament and the story of the creation of the world, God could have snapped His fingers and the whole world would have been created at one moment, or in one moment, but that's not what He does. On the contrary, what He does is He goes one day at a time, building blocks. Our God is a God of order. He is a God that reveals things progressively and so that's why, as a church, we believe in something called progressive truth or present truth. Our God is revealing things progressively.

And so, in that way, the New Testament does go beyond the Old Testament progressively, but it never--but it never transcends it and what I mean by this is that the New Testament does not make the Old

Testament obsolete. On the contrary, it continues, it fulfills, it incarnates the great themes found in the pages of ancient Israel. Jesus, God, the Man-God, confirmed the complete authority of the Old Testament during His lifetime. And to the Christians living today and throughout history, that has always been decisive.

The fact that Jesus confirmed and that Jesus reiterated the Old Testament is absolutely decisive. There is nothing that He made clearer or that He emphasized more strongly than the fact that His teachings did not substitute or repel the ancient inspired teachings. Now, you might be saying, "But Pastor, you're just going--this is about Deuteronomy in the New Testament. You're just going--you're just making this whole walk-around about the Old Testament."

Well, friends, the book of Deuteronomy is found in the Old Testament, first of all, and secondly, the truths that we find in Deuteronomy echo and resonate throughout the whole Old Testament and the New Testament, as we're going to see today. Jesus in Matthew 5:17 said, "Do not think that I came to destroy the law or the prophets. I did not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, 'Til heaven and earth pass away, not one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law 'til all is fulfilled.'"

Friends, that Jesus held the Bible in the highest regard is above any dispute. There is no way for you to deny this by reading the Bible. Whichever may be the differences in the descriptions of the four Gospels and we know that they had different perspectives, they were written for different target audiences, in this there was perfect harmony. In the fact that Jesus upheld Scripture as the foundational and authoritative source of truth, that is not in dispute. His constant use and unquestionable endorsement of the authority of the Old Testament is obvious to any serious and sincere reader, anyone that's reading. In all occasions, in any occasion, where He could say, "It is written," He said it. And that was always the defining word in any of His arguments, "It is written." And no one disputed that, that always silenced His opponents. "It is written, it is written," or "Have you not read?"

The answer, "It is written," friends, it only makes sense under the presupposition that what was written in the Scriptures was a final and trustworthy word. The fact that that was the conclusion of His arguments, "For it is written," or "Have you not read," the fact that these were always the epitome, the climax, of His arguments, again, undisputed. Jesus referred to the Old Testament to answer both malicious and sincere questions. He referred to the Old Testament to instruct His disciples, even when they were already ready to accept His authority. He wouldn't have had to quote the Old Testament for them to accept what He was saying, but He always did.

So you see how, to Jesus, it was foundational. He referred to the Old Testament in His prayers. Alone in the presence of the Father, He refers in quotes to Old Testament. He quoted it from the cross. He quoted--He died with a Psalm on His lips. He quoted it when He resurrected. And so, friends, Jesus's constant use of Scripture of the Old Testament represents His unquestionable endorsement of its authority. And finally, Jesus places His imprint or His seal precisely on the crucial events of the Old Testament.

It even seems that, through prophetic anticipation, He mentioned those events that would later on be questioned, events that later on, people would have a hard time believing it. Those were ones that Jesus frequently mentioned and quoted. For example, the creation of the world. Jesus mentions the creation of the world. Monogamous marriage, He quoted the Old Testament against the whole idea of gender ideology where He simply and unquestionably declared, "Man and woman He created them." The flood, Sodom and Gomorrah, Jonah, the purification of Naaman, the law. He appealed to the prophecies of Daniel regarding the destruction of Jerusalem.

Now, what this means is that to Jesus, the prophetic events of the Old Testament are not merely fictitious, or fictional stories. To Christ, the Scripture cannot be broken, according to John 10:35. Instead of quoting the rabbis of His days or the ancient rabbis such as Hillel or Shammai that were the two greatest rabbis in the history of ancient Israel, or any other school of thought of the ancient Jews, Jesus consistently and constantly quoted the Bible. In Matthew chapter 22, for example, Jesus refutes a deduction from one of His opponents from Deuteronomy chapter 25 with a valid explanation from Exodus chapter 3.

Now, couldn't Jesus have just answered this, and we're not going to be able to read it tonight--we won't be able to read it today because of time, but couldn't Jesus have just refuted the argument found there with His own words? I mean, He's God. Why didn't He? He used the Bible. He used Scripture. And so we discover that Jesus never quoted anyone except Himself in the pages of the Old Testament. Now, we transition into Sunday's law, or Sunday's lesson, that is entitled, "It Is Written." Sunday's lesson takes us to the desert where Jesus was taken to be tempted right at the beginning of His ministry, and I find it--I find it central that Jesus, He goes into the desert to be tempted at that moment, at the very beginning of His ministry. He goes from--if you remember clearly, Jesus, the previous chapter, the very previous chapter in the book of Matthew, Jesus was just being baptized. So Jesus goes from the baptismal waters of the Jordan River straight into the fire of temptation. He goes from the Father's declaration, "This is My Son, in Whom I am greatly pleased," to the ferocious assault of doubt coming from the devil that said, "If Thou art the Son of God."

So you see how Jesus, He transitions here from one moment to the next. "You are My Son, in Whom I'm greatly pleased," right to "If Thou art the Son of God," do you see? Jesus goes from one extreme to the other, and He does this on purpose, this was not a coincidence. And in this--and in this example, in this story that we find here in the book of Matthew, we find three basic temptations that involve the entire essence of temptation, bread and all that it represented to Jesus in that moment. And so what we define this as is the lust of the flesh and everything that our body wants. The next one was the search for affirmation, right? "Are You the Son of God?" And there we have the lust of the eyes and that's what, usually, we call that temptation.

And finally, the last temptation, which is idolatry, a shortcut that excluded the cross and we would call that the pride of life. And so, right here, Jesus, He faces in these three temptations, He faces the essence, the very core, of temptation, the pride of the flesh, or the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. But as an answer to this formidable dream team of temptation, how does Jesus answer? How does He react? Does He argue with the devil? Does He fight with the temptation? Does He struggle with it? No, Jesus quotes Scripture.

And the question is, from where in Scripture? From the book of Deuteronomy. More precisely, Deuteronomy chapter 6 and chapter 8. Now, what's curious about this section in the book of Deuteronomy is that it's really a story, it's really registering all the failures of Israel, everything that they had gone through, their fails, their sins, and the things or the moments where they had failed. But here, Jesus, as the new Israel, He overcomes the tempter, He overcomes Satan, the enemy, precisely where the ancient Israel had failed. So these chapters where Jesus quotes from to combat, to fight away temptation, are quotes that are coming directly from a portion of Scripture where Israel had failed and Jesus is bringing a convergence to, "Yes, they failed, but I will not fail." And that is what we believe and that's what we have in Jesus Christ.

There are several applications that could be made here, several. But the truth is, friends, confronted by the reality of Jesus in the desert, that we are facing an enemy that is a malignant being. That's what Jesus was facing then, that's what ancient Israel always faced, and that is who we are facing today, a malignant being who is not a mythological, fictional entity. He is not a negative energy, he is not a

legend or a religious invention or merely the dark side of human nature. No, he is a concrete reality. Jesus spoke of him as a fallen angel. In the Bible, he has many names, many titles, Satan, the devil, the serpent of old, the roaring lion seeking whom to devour, the tempter, thief, murderer, accuser, father of lies, god of this world, enemy, destroyer, prince of darkness. These are all titles that appear, attributed to our enemy in Scripture. According to the Bible, this enemy does not even act alone.

On the contrary, he has at his disposal an army. Paul calls the demonic host, "the power of the air," a colossal, invisible army. And, friend, this is an enemy that you cannot detect, you cannot see, and that is always the most dangerous kind of enemy. They are powerful, they're organized, and they're numerous. They do not get tired, they do not take time off, they do not sleep, they do not retire, they do not respect holidays like Thanksgiving or Christmas, they do not rest. They work 24/7, 365, all the time, day in and day out. Their purpose is to find a chink in our armor and to destroy us, to make us fall, to make us doubt, to shame us, and to defeat us. It is personal to them, you are dealing with an enemy that has made this great controversy personal because they know that their time is short.

Now, while the enemy has already been defeated in heaven, as we find in Revelation chapter 12, on the cross, as we find in the Gospels, he's been defeated virtually on all his encounters with Jesus Christ, as we see in the New Testament, and he is altogether a collector of defeats, there is yet one place where he can defeat Jesus, and that is in our heart--in your heart, if we allow him.

But please understand this truth, failure in Christian life is not a consequence of the presence of the devil. That's already guaranteed, while--as we're here in this world, the devil will be around. Sin will be around. But the fallen Christian life, a failure in Christian life, instead of depending on the presence of the enemy, really is represented by the absence of Jesus in our life. When we don't have Christ in our life, that's where we fall, that's where we fail. Jesus's temptation in the desert was not an accident. It wasn't a coincidence, as I said before, it was scheduled.

Right at the beginning of His public ministry, Jesus made it clear what kind of Messiah He was going to be. It is said in the Gospel of Luke that Satan departed from there until an opportune time. But the almost comical thing is that there was never really an opportune time for the devil. Jesus consistently defeated him in all his temptations without drawing away even a millimeter from His purpose here on planet Earth. Jesus's experience in the desert teaches us three crucial lessons among others, but three crucial lessons regarding temptation and the tempter. First, the strategy, he appears when Jesus was hungry, in His weakest moment. The devil is an opportunist, friends, and he will await for you in your weakest moment. He will come to you when you are the weakest, the most vulnerable. In general, though, he takes advantage of the greatest vulnerability.

At this level, we learn that we are tempted on what matters to us and on what we are most likely to fall. The devil works hard and he works smart. Have you ever heard anyone saying, "Don't work hard, work smart"? Well, the devil doesn't work. He works both hard and smart, because again, he knows his time is short. To Jesus in this situation it was food, but it can be anything else. The question is what do you desire most? What are you vulnerable to? Power, money, success, recognition, prestige, pleasure? The devil usually scratches right where the itch is. He knows that a fish isn't attracted by an empty hook. And so the first thing we need to learn is the strategy.

Second lesson, the method. Since Christ answered the tempter with God's Word, we--that was in the first temptation. He replied with "It is written." Who said that the devil isn't a very eloquent theologian? He knows the Bible. He knows Scripture. And so he comes to Jesus in the second temptation with Scripture saying, "It is written, He shall give His angels charge over you." Bible in hand, he attempts to gain victory by quoting God's own words.

It is said that the devil was the first liberal theologian of history. He's a specialist in twisting God's words. Truly, every temptation, every evil thing in this world, it's not a natural, organic, or original creation of the enemy. The enemy is not very original. He is really good at twisting what God has created. God is love, the devil and sin brought hatred. God is life, sin and the devil brought death. God created beautiful sexuality in the confinements of marriage, look at what the enemy has done in this world in that regard. He is not very original. He's good at twisting and perverting God's beautiful creations. But now, by using Scripture, he attempts to induce Jesus to presumption, to exhibitionism, and to deviate Him from the Father's will by using the Bible.

Friend, don't count on divine protection when you voluntarily and consciously expose yourself to the enemy. When we make the decision, the intentional decision to go our own way and to do what we want, well, that's where things go awry because God, above all else, He won't violate our free will. And if we make the choice, He will honor that choice.

I remember many times when I was a chaplain, and back in Brazil you have very big classrooms with many students and I remember, you know, classes with 40, 45 children, you know, and I had 50 minutes with them and I would go through 6 or 7 of these a day. It was--it was a very interesting time in my life. But I remember, you know, a few times where there were especially rowdy groups of kids that would not be quiet and, you know, I'd call them--I'd ask them to be quiet and they say--you know, I'd say, "Look, if you're not quiet, if you don't--if you don't behave, I'm going to have to send you to the principal."

And so, since they didn't want that because the principal would call their parents and they were scared of that, they said, "No, teacher," you know, "No, no, we'll behave." But they would continue just the same way. And I would call them again and say, "No, teacher. Look, don't send us to principal, we don't got-- want to go out."

That's when I would tell them, "Look, I'm hearing the words coming from your mouth, but your actions are speaking that--otherwise. They're saying that you do want to go out, and so you're going--I'm going to honor your decision to leave." And so, sometimes, it's not really the words that you're saying, it's your actions, it's your life, it's the choices that you make, and God will honor that decision. God will honor that, but the enemy's method is exactly that. He will many times use Scripture. He will try to justify in your mind and in your life certain decisions. And so that is the second lesson here.

And thirdly and finally, the promises. Finally, Satan is a specialist in making empty promises. In the desert he promised Jesus, "All this I will give You if You bow down before me." He tries to promise Christ the world without going through the hardships of the cross. To you, he will also make promises without revealing the results of disobedience. But Jesus overcame with the clear, "It is written," and, friend, since He overcame, our victory is guaranteed in Him. Revelation 12:11 says, "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony and they did not love their lives to the death."

I don't know if you know this, but Revelation 12:11 that I just read, it is the geographical center of the book of Revelation, and it appears in the context of the battle with the dragon. Friends, we do not overcome by our own intelligence, by our own abilities and strength. We overcome in Christ, in His victory, because He won. What does that old hymn say? "Because He lives, I can face tomorrow." The followers of Jesus need to learn to see the tempter that lies behind the temptation. And then the temptation will lose its appeal.

And so that leads us into Monday's lesson that has the title, "Lifting Up Faces." "Lifting Up Faces" is the literal language found in Deuteronomy 10:17 through 19 that says, "For the Lord your God is the God of gods and the Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality nor takes a

bribe. He administers justice for the fatherless and for the widow. He loves the stranger, giving him food and clothing. Therefore, love the stranger for you were strangers in the land of Egypt." Friends, here we find judicial, legal terminology and it means to act with partiality. So this is proving that God does not act that way, that God does not do that.

Texts, for example, in the New Testament such as Acts chapter 1, verse 35 through 36, and Romans chapter 2, verse 11, make it clear that God is not a partial God. He is not a God that acts duplicitly. He does not favor anyone above others. Galatians chapter 2, verse 6, tells us that God does not show personal favoritism to anyone based on their appearance, based on what lies externally. Galatians 2:6 says, "But from those who seemed to be something," the appearance, "from those who seemed to be something, whatever they were, it makes no difference to me, God shows personal favoritism to no man." Ephesians chapter 6, verse 9, "And you masters do the same thing to them, giving up threatening, knowing that our own Master also is in heaven and there is no partiality in Him." That was Ephesians 6:9.

Colossians 3:25, a beautiful text in the context of the divine judgment says, "But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done and there is no partiality." All these texts, friends, found throughout, interwoven through the New Testament, echo Deuteronomy chapter 10, verse 17, where the fundamental revelation is that God does not show favoritism. He doesn't treat anyone with partiality. The cry for justice is one of the greatest cries in our world, not only today but throughout history. Justice that is not corrupted by the powerful, by the important, by the rich. Justice that cannot be bribed or bought.

It's extremely difficult to find integrity in humans nowadays. All we have to do is look around, on the news, in the social world, and the political world, it's extremely difficult to find people that you can put your trust in. That's why the Bible says don't trust people. Don't trust people, trust God.

Perhaps you've heard of a group, and this is a good human example perhaps, but perhaps you've heard of a group that was led by Federal Agent Eliot Ness, and he was appointed by the North American president of the time, a few decades ago, really. In the midst of the vast and generalized corruption of the police and the judges in Chicago, he was appointed with a team to lead the investigations mainly against Al Capone, and he and his team became known as The Untouchables.

Now, the reason why they were known as The Untouchables was because of their character. It wasn't because they were connected to the president or because they were connected to the heights of power in the country. No, it's because of their character. They had no price. They could not be bought. They did not accept bribes, and thus they were able to fulfill their mission. Now, this is in the human context, but Scripture also provides a list of God's untouchables in the Bible. For example, Job, Noah, Joseph, Moses, Daniel. But above all, God Himself is untouchable. He does not treat anyone with favoritism or with partiality. He judges with justice and He cannot be bought or swayed. You can not put God in your pocket and praise Him for that. Praise God that God cannot be bought. But the thing is, is that that's what He expects from His children also. And so, for us to be that way, for us to be just and fair, for us to be an extension of God's character of justice, we need to be close to our God. Deuteronomy 27, verse 25 says, "Cursed is the one who takes a bribe to slay an innocent person and all the people shall say 'Amen.'"

Friends, God is the God of justice and impartiality. In the judgment scene of Daniel chapter 7, we find that the Ancient of Days was seated and the books were opened. No more immoral courts, fraudulent judges, corrupt and money-driven systems. The Ancient of Days was seated and the books were opened. What a formidable scene when all lies, all disguises, all ambiguities, all excuses, all hypocrisies, all duplicities, and pretensions and justifications will be removed before the One who sits upon the Great

White Throne of the universe. Everything that is hidden will be seen. The spectacle will by no means disappoint. The God of justice and impartiality of Deuteronomy and the entirety of Scripture invites us also to be like Him, just and impartial.

That's a hard one, sometimes we want to favor our friends, our family. No. So here we're looking at several lessons that find echo, that converge between the book of Deuteronomy and the New Testament. The next one that the lesson presents is on Tuesday, "Cursed on a Tree." And this whole lesson revolves around Galatians chapter 3, verse 1 through 14. I'm not going to read it from here. You could read it from home, I hope you've already read it, as you studied your lesson.

But in this section of the book of Galatians, Paul is condemning not the obedience to the law as many would think, but he's attempting to--he is not attempting. He is condemning those who attempt to be saved by their works of the law. What is condemned is not the law itself, but the incorrect use of the law, the wrong use of the law. Unfortunately, many people do exactly that. They sway so far on the pendulum to the other side of liberalism, you know, many--so there's a pendulum. You have, you know, absolute extreme liberalism on one side. You have absolute extreme legalism on the other side, and sometimes when people leave one side, they'll--it's hard to stay in the middle and they'll swing to the extreme opposite. Unfortunate that that happens, but it does happen. And when that happens, these people then try to seek salvation by what they do and that is incredibly unfair to the law. The law was never created for that purpose.

Imagine going to a car dealership and, you know, it's a, I don't know, a really good car. I am horrible, I don't know that much about cars or anything like that. I'm one of those people that is--I'm-- I don't know about that world. But let's say it's a Ferrari, right, dealership and you're going and you're asking all the questions, you know. This thing has 2000 horsepower. I don't know if that's a thing, all right? Horsepower, I don't even know what that means. Does it mean that a horse can pull the car and then you have 100 horses pulling and that's the fourth-- I don't know, there's probably something in there.

But any case, all right, and you're getting all the specs of the car, the engine, it's a V16. I'm just making stuff up, okay? And it's--it goes low and it's fast and it turns really well. It has good traction. I'm pulling up these words. And you're super-interested. I'm super-interested in buying that car, and the salesman, you know, he's, "I've made this sale." And then I ask the unexpected question, "How fast can it fly?" And I can imagine that, if that question is asked there, you know, the salesman, he's going to go, "Well," you know, he's going to chuckle, maybe, "Is this a joke?" You know, he's going to think it's a joke, but then I'll be serious, "No," you know, "how fast does it fly?" At that point, he'll be wondering about my sanity, right? And he'll say, "But look, Lucas, this is a great car, but cars weren't made to fly."

How unfair is it for me to judge my desire to buy or not buy this car, this beautiful masterpiece of human ingenuity, by something that it wasn't designed for? It's the same thing with the law. The law was designed for a specific purpose, specific reason. But when people apply the wrong reason to this thing, well, that is completely unfair. The law was never created to be a measure of salvation or a method of salvation, never, but people try to do that. And that's what Paul is fighting against here in this chapter. Here he is agreeing with what he writes in 1 Timothy chapter 1, verse 8, where he says, "But we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully."

Well, that's just obvious. It's incredible that Paul had to make such an obvious statement. We know that the law is good if someone uses it correctly, lawfully. The law is good if you use it lawfully. In other words, good things can be used incorrectly. They can be used wrongly. Is "wrongly" a word? I hope so. Okay, it's used incorrectly or wrongly. I just made it up if it isn't a word. But that use still doesn't need to discourage, destroy, or condemn its good or intended use.

It's not because the Ferrari doesn't fly that it's not a perfectly, very good car, all right? Perfect, good car that is intended to be driven around and, you know, I think it's because I think I saw--I think I saw a Ferrari today and that's just stuck in my head because it's a pretty cool car, or it was a Mustang, I don't know. In any case, they both have horses on it so I get confused. In any case, what we know is that it's still a drivable car. You can go somewhere, you can use it in its correct form.

So that's the lesson here. That's what Paul's trying to bring across. Now, the question that remains is why don't we seek salvation through our works? Well, it's because salvation was guaranteed in Jesus, and when I try to guarantee salvation by any other means except Jesus, I am then practicing idolatry. I am attributing to something created, to something that is not God, an ability that only God has, which is to save. That's the problem with salvation by any other means except through Jesus Christ, it becomes idolatry. And that is precisely where Paul uses the verse of Deuteronomy chapter 27, verse 20 and 21, verse 22 and 23, which declares a curse from God on all who hang from a tree.

On the cross, Jesus became cursed, friends. Jesus became cursed. He became sin for us. Now that's kind of--that seems kind of wrong, doesn't it? Seems kind of harsh. He became sin? He became accursed? Yes, for you and for me. 1 Corinthians or 2 Corinthians chapter 5, verse 21, one of my favorite Bible verses, says, "For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us."

Jesus became sin for you and for me. To Paul, the cross was initially a contradiction, an oxymoron, precisely what made Christianity unacceptable exactly because of Deuteronomy chapter 21, verse 23, "He who is hanged on the tree is accursed of God." To the apostle, it was unacceptable that the Messiah, Israel's most glorious hope, were crucified because of this text found in Deuteronomy. It was not only inconceivable and complete insanity, but it completely disqualified Jesus as the Messiah because what kind of Messiah is accursed of God? What kind of Messiah is made sin? It made no sense to him. But later on, Paul understood that the Messiah was indeed hung from the tree and became sin for us, guaranteeing salvation for whomsoever believes. An all-inclusive word, "whoever believes," can be saved by the accursed man on the tree.

Wednesday's lesson, "A Prophet Like Unto Thee," another converging point. Now, I've been mentioning this word a lot. Let me explain it a little bit more. Part of the beauty of the Bible is that convergence. And what convergence means is that you'll find bridges in the Bible, one point that has everything to do with this point. Messianic prophecies, for example, that are fulfilled in the life of Jesus Christ. That's a converging point, and the Bible is simply interwoven with this, through and through. God had always told Israel that they were an exclusive people, set apart, and different from the other nations around them. These other nations were absolutely vile and wicked, committing barbaric and unspeakable acts, all in the name of religion.

We talked about this a few weeks ago. God warned Israel not to imitate them, not to do as they did, but we know the story. We know what ended happening, and Israel not only did what they did, Israel became worse than them. Now, today's lesson brings forth the convergence of Deuteronomy chapter 18, verse 15 and 19, where that is the context, where Moses provides a Messianic prophecy and then the converging point that we find in the New Testament is where Peter and Stephen connect Jesus with that figure already foreshadowed by Moses's prophecy.

And so, this lesson right here, this day's lesson, it provides the converging point between these two moments, where twice, really, Moses foreshadows or foretells as a Messianic prophecy that God would rise up a prophet such as him. Now, this is a very well-known text in the book of Deuteronomy quoted often by--in other moments of the Bible, but it's applied in the book of Acts, twice, also twice. In the same way in which Moses mentions it twice, the New Testament emphatically, intentionally, mentions it

twice, by two great leaders, Peter and Stephen, where they point to Christ as the fulfillment of this prophecy, as the intercessor of whom Moses was a type.

Two aspects really, here, need to be considered. There are two things that we need to consider in this story, which is, first of all, the acceptance of the book of Deuteronomy as an authority. And so, you'll remember the situation here. Both these men are making cases for Jesus as the Messiah, both of them.

Now, the more extreme of them, which is Stephen, which is making the case and you'll find this in the book of Acts where you have Stephen bringing the entire history of Egypt, making a very eloquent argument, a very eloquent case for Jesus as the Messiah when he's being tried right there and we have Stephen dying as the first Christian martyr, and he mentions this text where Jesus is the fulfillment of that prophecy, and this is what we find right there.

Now, the authority of the book of Deuteronomy is unquestioned by those who are accusing him. No one stands up right there and questions the authority of the Old Testament, it is a valid source. That happens here with Stephen and it also happens with Peter when he's making his case also. And so, these two things need to be considered. The first one is right--that one, and the second one is the fulfillment in Jesus Christ, a prophet like unto Moses, the true intercessor of God's people.

So not only is Deuteronomy in this prophecy already foreshadowing Jesus and the opponents of these two men, especially Stephen right there, they accept it, but it is fulfilled in Jesus. And that is something that could not be questioned. From all of the prophecies of the Old Testament that are fulfilled in the life of Jesus, I once read this, I think it was in the American Christian Society--Scientific Society. The American Scientific Christian Society. I think it's something like that. And I remember them making a calculation about how many prophecies were fulfilled in the life of Christ, right? What were the chances of all the prophecies, all the Messianic prophecies, being fulfilled in the life of only one person, of one single human. And the number is just staggering. If my mind, if my memory doesn't mistake me, doesn't--is not mistaken, it was one followed by sixteen zeros. The probability of all the Messianic prophecies being fulfilled in the life of one single human is one followed by sixteen zeros. So that is simply incredible. It's incredible.

And so, actually, this is one of the things that when I was diving deep into not only Adventism, but Christianity, it made all the difference for me. I understood that there was no other way. There was no one else. Jesus is the Savior of humanity. And so, these two things appear in the eloquent cases brought forth by Peter and by Stephen, by using Deuteronomy when Moses says that one day an intercessor just like him, a prophet like unto him, would be raised up.

And finally, on Thursday's lesson, "A Fearful Thing," this one, this was a lesson that spoke to me. All of them spoke to me but this one was one that really made a difference because, right here, we find the use that the book of Hebrews makes of Deuteronomy. Now, when you ask many Christians around what is the characteristics, or what are the characteristics of the God found in the Old Testament and the characteristics or the description of the God of the New Testament, you'll find that most people will say that the Old Testament God is what? Severe, harsh, brutal, cruel, almost. Have you ever heard anyone say that? A lot of people, "You know, that God, He, you know, brutal, just severe dictator, tyrant." But the God of the New Testament, gracious, patient, loving, kind.

Now, I'm going to be absolutely open here and maybe a little bit blunt, but that definition of the God of the Bible, Old Testament, harsh, brutal, blunt, and New Testament, kind, gracious, it comes from an incorrect reading of the Bible. It's as simple as that, and an almost ignorant reading of the Bible. Because in the Old Testament, you will find masterpieces of literature describing the beauty, the glory, the

mercy, the patience, the kindness. God has been longsuffering. "Come reason with Me, even if your sins are as red as scarlet, we will--I will make them as white as snow."

That's one example of the God of the Old Testament. The God of the Old Testament is loving, is kind. And on the other hand, while, yes, the New Testament is full of examples of God's loving kindness, of His patience and mercy, the New Testament in my opinion contains the harshest quote, or the hardest quote to digest in the entire Bible, and that is precisely what this lesson today mentions, which is found in Hebrews chapter 10. And it's a text, we're going to read it here. I just want you to get a small sample of this to see what I'm talking about.

This is Hebrews chapter 10, verse 26, that says, "For if we willfully--if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins. But a certain fearful expectation of judgment and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. Anyone who has rejected Moses's law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses of how much worse punishment do you suppose will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood--counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing and insulted the spirit of grace. For we know Him who said, 'Vengeance is Mine. I will repay,' says the Lord. And again, the Lord will judge His people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

Now, if you asked anyone, if you read that text for someone without saying where it was, a lot of people would say that that was, you know, Old Testament. It's in the book of Hebrews. But what's interesting is that it's not entirely new. This isn't a new text, this isn't a new reality. This goes all the way back to Deuteronomy chapter 32, verse 35 and 36, that says, "Vengeance is Mine." We just read that there in Hebrews chapter 10. "Vengeance is Mine and recompense. Their foot shall slip in due time for the day of their calamity is at hand and the things to come hasten upon them for the Lord will judge His people and have compassion on His servants when He sees that their power is gone and there is no one remaining, bond or free."

Now, of the two, which one would you prefer to apply to you? Honestly, I would prefer the one in the Old Testament because at least it says He will have compassion on His servants, while the New Testament says it's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. And so here I'm not playing God against God or Old Testament versus New Testament. I just want you to understand the Bible needs to be ridden--or read as a whole. There are harsh texts in the Old Testament, there are harsh texts in the New Testament. There are sweet texts in the Old Testament, and sweet texts in the New Testament. And so, the Bible needs to be understood in its entirety. Now, how does this apply to us many years later? Well, it continues to be truth. This is still the truth.

Friends, divine judgment does not compromise with systematic rebellion and the disregard of God's offer. And here we understand that the theology that prevails around us of once saved, always saved, does not stand on its own two feet when confronted with biblical reality, as presented in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. Friends, God's patient is very great, but it does have a limit, it has to. Justice requires that it does.

Now, a lot more could be said about this subject and, perhaps in the future, we'll have a chance of touching more on this, but this text in Deuteronomy here and in Hebrews chapter 10 are some of the most foundational texts to understand the reality of God's grace. The fact that I can be in grace today, I can be saved today, but I might still lose it, according to my rebellion, according to my decision. Remember when I said that the devil is an altogether collector of defeats but there is one place where he can still prevail, and that is in the human heart. Because God accepts and God honors our freedom of will.

Finally, friends, at the end here of everything in the lesson, the conclusion is that we can certainly hold true that the book of Deuteronomy finds resonance throughout the great things of the New Testament, things such as the ones that we studied this week, Jesus's temptation in the desert, the divine norm of justice and impartiality, salvation offered by Christ as our representative on the cross, becoming accursed and becoming sin, the prophecy of the prophet likened unto Moses as an intercessor which was fulfilled in the life of Christ, and finally the absolute truth of divine justice and that it is never compromised by systematic rebellion.

But friends, I promise you that the converging points in the Old Testament, and especially in the book of Deuteronomy, are not exhausted by this week's lesson. The Bible is a treasure cove. The more you dig, the more you search, the more you will find.

And so my invitation to you today is to take advantage of your time, take advantage of your mind, take advantage of the Bible. So many people throughout history would have given everything to hold in their hands what you can have so freely. Sometimes, we have five, six, ten Bibles at home that are never opened. Or perhaps in some homes, you'll find the Bible open in the living room, beautiful, ancient Bible, opened in either Psalm 23 or John 3:16, but never read, never studied. My invitation is that you study it, is that you digest these truths, both Old, both New Testament, because both together composed are the Word of God. That is my invitation to you and I would like to pray with you right now. Please bow your head wherever you're at.

Dear Lord, thank You so much for life. Thank You so much for the Bible. Thank You so much for all the opportunities that we have, Lord, of getting to know You more and being closer to You. Please bless us, Father, as we search the Scriptures for we know that it speaks of You and in You we find eternal life. Father, bless those that are watching from home. Bless those that are here today, Lord. Imbue us with Your Spirit and allow us to have the mind of Christ, the mind of love, the mind of kindness, forgiveness, patience, the mind that we find beginning in Genesis and ending in Revelation. I ask You for these blessings not in my name for there is no authority or power in me, but in Your precious name. In the name of Jesus I ask and I pray, amen and amen.

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Female: I grew up in a family that was very saturated with God. We had morning worship, we had evening worship. We were taught from young children to have personal devotions each day. But for whatever reason I seemed to always find myself alone. I never really had a big group of friends and it always seemed to be, like, friends were just taken away from me. You know, I'd pray for friends and then I'd meet someone and six months later, they'd move to Washington, you know, across the United States.

And so finally, I was just like, "I'm not--I'm not going to pray for any more friends, because it hurts too much to lose them." But over the next two years as I got closer to God, I started to be able to be thankful for the alone times because I was forced in that aloneness to seek God. That is probably what has made me who I am and given me the experience with God that I have now. The place where I feel most comfortable is being alone with God.

I know a lot of people have questions about where is God when it hurts. If God is such a loving God, why is the world so bad. Embrace the pain, embrace the hard times, and let God reveal Himself through that. Because He has answers to questions you don't even know how to ask.