

Lesson 64

The first comment I wanted to make was I asked Erin Wilson who's now in Uganda actually in a poverty type of culture; and I asked her in light of the Deuteronomy study that the cause of poverty. We've talked about that as we've gone through the statutes and judgments that endemic chronic poverty is not because the people who are poor are stupid. Chronic poverty in the world is usually caused by sin; and it's an effect of corruption.

So I asked Erin a couple of weeks back - I said, "As you go around the villages of Uganda," - and she's boots on the ground because she's dealing with it.

She said in answer to my question - here's what she said

I asked her about how as a Christian would you think about growing the economy in that kind of culture because you've got people on starvation level and you have the people that are higher.

"You've been there. What is your impression?"

Interestingly, without any prompting she says, "I think there are a few keys to growing the economy. The obvious first one is better governance. There's a lot of corruption in the government just like most other African countries; and the government has not really taken serious responsibility for its people."

Then she goes on to describe some other causes - education problem and the fact that because the government doesn't govern well you can't expect businessmen to invest in projects. Businessmen aren't going risk money investing in projects when the government can't keep the order. This is a cascading affect that leads to chronic poverty. It gets back to biblical principles.

Then in another note a person who is an interesting commentary on the occupy Wall Street movement. I've said that socialism basically violates - when I went through the statutes and judgments - it violates at least 3 of the Ten Commandments. It violates the 8th commandment because it basically confiscates property of the people who are productive; the 9th commandment because it falsely represents value (economic value); and the tenth commandment because it teaches envy and covetousness.

I thought this comment was interesting by this columnist.

He says, "Economic envy may cloak itself in rhetoric about inequality or egalitarianism or redistribution of wealth; but its oldest name is covetousness. That is the sin enjoined by the last of the Ten Commandments."

Then he quotes the Ten Commandments.

"After all the other nine commandments concern behavior. But the Tenth Commandment is indispensable. Covetousness particularly when it takes the

form of class hatred is the root of enumerable other evils. From the belief that you don't have enough because others have too much; it isn't that great a stretch to the belief that those who have too much should be forced to make do with less. It shouldn't be surprising that when a movement obsessed with what rich capitalist earn rather than with what they produce starts treating other people's property and person with contempt."

That's a very good exposition of this whole kind of movement that you see aggravated by the politicians themselves that keep talking about the economy.

I am reminded of two books one by a Christian evangelical socialist called Rich Christians in an Age of Poverty and another one by a conservative Christian called Productive Christians in an Age of Guilt Manipulators. Those two books kind of give you a collision point between this way of looking at life.

Lets go the Word in Deuteronomy 29; and then we'll have a word of prayer to start with.

(Opening prayer)

We've looked at the chart in the handout; we've moved now to chapter 29. With this we're in the 4th exposition. So this book is a series of expositions by Moses. The fourth one concerns basically the prophetic fore view of covenant performances. This is where we start looking into the future. Moses is going to amplify these sorts of things. He does. In chapter 29 he sets it off by dealing with the past, the present and the future of Israel. This is interesting because like other passages that we've noticed there are lessons to learn about history. This isn't just a little Bible story; and it's not just a little local address by Moses that is fitting for that 1400 B. C. period of time. Rather because he did it back then in real history, we can peer through his words at how God works in history.

So that's why on the outline I want to spend some time reviewing again the protocols of the covenant inauguration at Shechem. We need to look at the text and learn from the text the kind of history that the text presupposes.

So we made the first point was that the commitment that to Yahweh's kingdom is comprehensive and deep. Remember we went through chapter 27, the oaths of malediction. It's so comprehensive and so deep that no one could keep it apart from spiritual assets derived by faith from God's grace through the Abrahamic Covenant. In other words the relationship between Old Testament saints and the Lord was based on faith just like Abraham.

That's what Paul keeps pointing out. The law did not save them. The law just exposes the holiness of Jehovah such that I would have to - you would too- take a time machine and go back into the theocracy we would be faced with these laws that expose our sin all the way down into our hearts. So it's not just social justice up here. It's far deeper than that. That's the convicting power of the statutes and judgments.

It was intended as the New Testament says to be a pedagogue to drive us to Christ. In the Old Testament they didn't have Christ; but they had the promise of Him through Abraham. So the idea was in one sense to frustrate people to make the sense that you can't meet these holy standards. You're always going to find yourself transgressing some. So now what do you do with that? That is to make people sin conscious in order to anticipate grace and to solve the sin problem.

Then point 2 as we said last time there is a larger truth here. We mustn't as Christians just think in terms of law and grace. This 900-year period of history was real history. It's hard for some of us to grasp this because our secular education has filtered this all out. You don't learn about this 900-year period in secular courses so it's foreign to us to think of these Bible stories as history - real history. But, this 900-year history refutes all attempts by man to erect the perfect society. Think about it. Here God intrudes history. He sets up a contract unique in all of human history with one nation. He outlines policies and regulations, and it fails.

Now isn't that an argument that no policies and no law and no legalistic force can create a perfect society. It's all refuted here. By the time you come to the end of the theocracy 586 - 600 B. C. - by the time you get to that point, any other attempt in history from 586 and beyond to create a perfect society is a joke. It can't be taken seriously because it's already been refuted by 600 B. C. So that's why - remember last time we dealt how the Asians tried to look work systems karma and other things.

The Western people we try we're still doing it utopian political revolution idea that somehow it's not sin that's the problem. It's something other than sin. It's an economic issue. It's the way we distribute political power. It's always something else apart from sin in the human heart.

Then the third one which is contemporary now is Islamic Sharia. This is an issue in our country. Right now we are voting in several states on shall we make it explicit that we will not allow Sharia Law in the United States because it's contrary to the Constitution. So this is a contemporary issue.

What is Sharia? Sharia is an attempt to create a theocratic perfect society. It's all been refuted. I mean this thing is coming along in 2000 so you add 600. It's 27 centuries too late. There is no excuse for Sharia. The whole idea has been refuted.

I wanted to show you this quote in the Greatness of the Kingdom. Alva McClain for many years was one of the great traditional dispensational theologians. He taught many years at Grace Seminary in Indiana at Wenonah Lake. In my sense I think he wrote one of the finest books on traditional dispensational theology called the Greatness of the Kingdom. Well worth it if you can find it on the Internet somewhere. But here's what he says and this is a nice way of showing the lessons we are learning with these blessings and cursings and how God administers history.

He says:

The well being of man is morally and spiritually conditioned by a principle confirmed by divinely imposed sanctions. Now this principle generally holds good in all nations of every age; but its operation has often been obscured to human eyes by the time lag between moral breach infliction of the sanction. While it is always true that the nation which has sown the wind certainly reap the whirlwind the harvest is generally and mercifully long delayed. And for this very reason men often fail to see the causal connection. But in the case of Israel...

And this is the difference. Here is the theocracy. This is why this whole Deuteronomic code and ensuing prophetic superintending of the code - why it's so important.

But in the case of Israel in mediatorial kingdom history, the moral government of Jehovah was not only declared at Sinai but was also confirmed spectacularly in the recorded history of that kingdom by means of divine sanctions immediately imposed.

In other words the prophets announced that you had these sanctions that are in the text of the contract are actually literally coming to pass. So you have Elijah dealing with the drought. What's the drought? It didn't come out of the clear blue. The drought was part of the sanctions. So David had a problem. Remember David and the drought?

He immediately sensed this.

"Something's wrong here. We've sinned. This drought is abnormal so we gotta think about what have we done wrong."

It's that kind of thinking. That's the view of history that the Bible teaches; and that's the view of history that the secular mindset refuses to accept. Secular historians will not agree that the ultimate issue is ethical because they don't think of there being a God over history to enforce moral sanctions. They think in terms solely of man trying to enforce some sanctions. But this is a larger game. This is the lesson in chapters 27, 28 particularly when you deal with these sanctions. The sanctions are happening because of moral ethical reasons. They're not random. They're not accidents.

These aren't saying, "Gee, why is this happening?"

These are all rational outworking of an ethical choice and its consequences. That's the big idea of history.

Now we come to another interesting thing because now we're going to look at the first few verses in chapter 29. Let's look at verses 2 through 9. Follow with me. As you look at this text try to think - we started Deuteronomy 2 years ago. There is a review in here from verses 2 through 9. We want to look at that review to find out - why does Moses do this right at this point. He's preparing the people for covenant renewal. So why does he do this?

NKJ Deuteronomy 29:2 Now Moses called all Israel and said to them: "You have seen all that the LORD did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, to

Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land --

3 "the great trials which your eyes have seen, the signs, and those great wonders.

4 "Yet the LORD has not given you a heart to perceive and eyes to see and ears to hear, to this very day.

5 "And I have led you forty years in the wilderness. Your clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandals have not worn out on your feet.

6 "You have not eaten bread, nor have you drunk wine or similar drink, that you may know that I am the LORD your God.

7 "And when you came to this place, Sihon king of Heshbon and Og king of Bashan came out against us to battle, and we conquered them.

8 "We took their land and gave it as an inheritance to the Reubenites, to the Gadites, and to half the tribe of Manasseh

9 "Therefore keep the words of this covenant, and do them, that you may prosper in all that you do.

Then he goes on. He's going to start the present. Verses 2 through 9 deal with the past. Now he's talking about the present - the thing that is very eminent in verse 10.

NKJ Deuteronomy 29:10 " All of you stand today before the LORD your God: your leaders and your tribes and your elders and your officers, all the men of Israel,

11 "your little ones and your wives -- also the stranger who is in your camp, from the one who cuts your wood to the one who draws your water -

12 "that you may enter into covenant with the LORD your God, and into His oath, which the LORD your God makes with you today,

So obviously verses 2 through 9 are preparatory to a decision. The decision in verse 10 involves every individual in that nation. There is a time of decision. There is an invitation that's being given here. So whatever verses 2 through 9 are to do, obviously verse 2 through 9 are there to prepare every individual for what they have to do when they go to Shechem and they reenter into the contract with God. This is preparatory. He's going into their past. He keeps reciting their past.

So again to think about this I put up here some of the elements that you see in the book of Deuteronomy that seem to be parallel with the suzerain vassal treaties of the second century ancient Near East. These treaties were found only within I guess the last 50 years or so.

Liberals in the 19th century they were taking Deuteronomy apart and saying, "Oh, this is D and then we have a little P in here and J."

This is how they disassembled the Bible.

People who went to school in 1890, 1900, 1920, 1930 - my parents, that's the kind of Bible they learned. That's what was always taught in university - that it was a scissor and paste job.

Well, what happened then the Lord in His providence allowed archeologists to discover these treaties. These treaties have different forms. In the first millennium they have a certain kind of form. In the second millennium they have a certain kind of form. Those in the second millennium have this kind of form. It's this kind of form that Deuteronomy seems to follow.

So let's explain these and then we'll go to the structure of Deuteronomy. The first part is the preamble. The treaties would have a preamble and the function of the preamble was to identify the suzerain.

Now let me define terms. Suzerain-vassal - suzerain means the powerful king. Think Pharaoh, for example. Vassal would be some little king in Canaan, for example. So you'd have pharaoh as the suzerain meaning he's the great king. He's the powerful superpower. He would make a treaty with a lesser power - hence, suzerain-vassal. When they wrote the treaty up they had two copies, at least two copies. The first part of that was a preamble and that preamble was an official statement of the titles of the suzerain.

Then following that there would be a historical prologue. This historical prologue's function in the treaty was this.

The great king would talk to the lesser king; and he'd say, "You owe me one."

You say, "What's the little king supposed to say?"

"What do you mean I owe you something?"

"Well, you owe me because I've done this and this and this for you."

Usually it was a military rescue mission to help him against somebody who was bullying him.

"See little king; I have done this for you. Now you enter into a relationship with me and do what I tell you."

So that's the way the relationship was defined.

The historical prologue was a recitation for what the suzerain had done for the lesser king.

Then we come to the stipulations. Now you can begin to see how this is parallel to Deuteronomy because you start off the book of Deuteronomy or you start off the Ten Commandments. Think of the Ten Commandments.

"I am the Lord your God. How am I characterized? I got you out of Egypt, didn't I?"

So there we go. We identify God, the great king over Israel. And then we

start immediately - this is what I have done for you. This is interesting because this same kind of thinking carries over into the New Testament epistles

So you start here; you have the preamble. You have the historical prologue. Then you have the stipulations.

"This is what I want you to do. These are the commandments."

Then followed by witness because these treaties would be witnessed like we witness documents today. They would be witnessed, and they would be listed who the witnesses are. Then we have the sanctions. Usually the cursing preceded the blessing because the great king would have the threat. There would always be the threat first. That's why I said when you look at the book of Deuteronomy 28 that's not what happens is it? In Deuteronomy 28 which comes first? The blessings.

So it shows you God that God is not a god who loves to threaten people. God more willingly wants to bless us. That's important. That compares when you compare the scriptural text with the contemporary thing. You see a reversal.

You say, "Gee, what lessons do I learn from this reversal?"

Then we have after that the procedures of ratification and maintenance. Now you can sense that there is a parallel going on in Deuteronomy.

Hold the place a moment and turn to chapter 1 where we started a year and a half ago. You remember when we did that in verse 5 this was the first exposition. Verse 5 of chapter 1 puts you in the location and gives you the circumstances of that first exhortation.

NKJ Deuteronomy 1:5 On this side of the Jordan in the land of Moab, Moses began

It says this side because the author, the perspective of the author is east of Jordan.

Then it says and there's a key verb here.

to explain

We would translate that today as "he persuasively exegeted the Law." That's what characterizes Deuteronomy from Leviticus and the other books because Deuteronomy is addressed to the average person. Leviticus with all the little fine points of protocols and this is what you do for this sacrifice and this kind of sacrifice and how many days you do this and that. That's all those details.

Leviticus means it was for the Levites. It was the official handbook for the protocols for the priests. The average Joe (Joe the Plumber) in ancient Israel wasn't reading Leviticus. He trusted the Levites to take care of that problem. But Deuteronomy was addressed to Joe the Plumber. This is Moses expounding the meaning of the Law.

So now we have - you'll see that - remember chapter 1. We looked at chapter 2; we looked at chapter 3. Those are just the recitation of the 40 years from the Exodus actually all the way up to the giving of the law. What is that there for? That is historical prologue.

Now we come to Deuteronomy 29. We ended last night or last week with verse 1 which we attached to chapter 28 which the Hebrew text does, and we noted that again the word contract or covenant is mentioned. In your notes where you see it says Deuteronomy 29:1 covenant equals contract. Again I just reviewed this the point; but it's missing in our contemporary culture. Our contemporary culture does not understand this.

As a Christian we're at odds with our culture here on how we understand what personal relationship means. God's relationship with man is contractual as all real relationships are beginning with marriage. Any unbounded relationship that is not pinned down to an agreement is superficial and casual. That's why we have everybody living together, living together couples because they don't want to be bound. That's why they're living together without marriage. They do not want to be bound together for one reason or another that are given. The point is that that's unbiblical.

If God Himself when He enters into a relationship enters into a covenant with human beings - who are we in the whole universe? The God of the Universe if He can tolerate being pinned down a covenant with these little ants called people; then doesn't that say something about personal relationships?

There is a principle. The other example today is where we have a contract nationally. The Constitution of our country is basically a contract. The Founding Fathers wrote that Constitution as an agreement with coming generations. So you can see it's legitimate upon the Constitution as a contract.

But what do we have today? We have a living contract that basically is remade every time the Supreme Court meets. So we have a judicial oligarchy that is really running the country not the contract itself. Here again we have a relationship that's ruptured.

To be fair the people that are for this oligarchy, the people who are for a fair a living Constitution say you can't pin down people in the 21st century to what the Founding Fathers did in the 17th -18th century because society evolves. So here we have the Darwinian influence affecting jurisprudence.

I can show you quote after quote. In fact Andy Woods a fellow just got his doctorate from Dallas Seminary who is also a lawyer has written wonderful series of papers Chafer Theological Journal entitled "Enthroning the Interpreter." That's his point. If you are going to take a liberal greasy hermeneutic to a text, then you the interpreter become the text. The text is no longer the text. This is happening in law; and here's why it violates how history is made.

We're not here to discuss a conservative preference to a liberal position. We are talking about reality. That's why in this little box I've tried to

spell this out. It sets us up for chapter 29. There's a principle here. Personal relationships entail trust. Trust requires trustworthiness. Trustworthiness needs to be recognized. So you can't get a relationship that is going to endure if you do not have trust and you can't have trust if the object of your trust isn't trustworthy or worthy of that trust. You need to find out if that object is worthy of trust. How do you do that without a contract? The contract is the tool of measurement in order to perceive trustworthiness. That is the whole Bible.

God says, "I am going to do this, this, and this."

After centuries of time the Bible says, "Did He do this, this, this and this?"

Yes He did. Is He going to do that, that and that? Yes, because He's trustworthy. He's already proved Himself over there. In a nutshell that's the whole Bible. You can't have that if you don't have a verbal announcement ahead of time of intent. That's what a contract is. It's a verbal declaration of behavioral intent to act as a ruler so you can then measure trustworthiness. That's why you don't have trust in God outside of Israel. That's why the pagans are going around cutting themselves and going through all kinds of hoopla because they don't have any kind of word from their god or gods about what their gods are supposed to be doing if they don't how can you tell whether the gods and goddesses have done their job? There is no way to do that.

What I'm trying to show you here is that there is a structure to the Word of God from beginning to end. We can't abandon that structure.

So when you hear some person like myself, a fundamentalist, who says, "I believe in a literal interpretation of the Scripture..." I'm not trying to be a nitpicker here. These are the bolts that hold the whole thing together. There is a structure to the Word of God whole thing together. If you don't believe that you throw the whole thing out. You've got to have a literal hermeneutic for the text or you can't tell what the measurement tool is to measure God's trustworthiness. That's why when we were going through the Ten Commandments I showed you that from the liberal theologian temple.

I forgot his first name. Remember what he said?

"We believe in revelation but not words of revelation."

Huh? You mean the feeling of revelation? Yeah, that's basically what it means.

So now we have in verse 2... You have "you have seen." That's the major verb here This whole section from verse 2 through 9 "you have seen." This was public performance of God according to what He has done, according to what He said He would do.

Years ago Frances Chafer one of his staff told a story - told this parable. Why he was telling this parable he's trying to get across the need to trust and how every man/ woman - really we do this. So it shouldn't seem so strange that God does it. It's called the Parable of the

Resistance Fighter. Its setting is in World War II France. The Nazis have occupied France. So the French underground has to meet. You're put in the position of being part of the underground movement inside France; and you are threatened by the Nazis because they control your country. They're out to kill you or any other Frenchmen that dares to stand up to them.

So one day in a caf  somewhere as part of your resistance, you meet this man - a strange man. You begin to talk to him. He quietly takes you over to a corner, and he starts talking to you about how we can organize the resistance in France. He begins to tell you what his plans are. You spend hours. Then it turns into several days where he shares with you plans of how to destroy the German occupation.

"We're going to do this, this, this and this."

Then you learn after talking to him some more that he in fact is a commander of a large contingent of resistance fighters. As you listen to him, it's intriguing. You gather notes. You take notes on what this man is saying he is going to do. Then he disappears. For the next year while you're fighting in some suburb of Paris, you never see him again except for the fact that some of your unit, some of the people in your unit see him. He's involved in the destruction of a German tank or destruction of trucks.

Then unfortunately you say one of the men comes to you says, "Yeah, but we saw that guy and he was wearing a German uniform, and he was arresting some of our people."

So now the thing is do you trust? How do you trust this guy? The only way you can trust him is his verbal actions - what he told you he was going to do - does it fit his behavior. From what he says, you understand he had to infiltrate Nazis themselves and to infiltrate the German Army he obviously had to wear a German uniform, how to speak German and so forth; and he had to pretend to the Germans that he was on their side.

The bottom line here is that you measure performance by words and by works. So you have the secular faith and you have a biblical faith. In the secular faith, the problem is this; you don't have any words from God. A secular faith has no verbal input regarding God and ultimate truth. So what it has is a feeling.

I cite the fact that Christopher Mathews on MSNBC when he was talking about Obama running; he said, "I felt a tingling in my leg."

This is what the non-believer has - basically is a subjective feeling because they don't have transcendent standard. Every standard they can quote is out of the mind of man, which is finite and fallen. Without that verbal revelation you're floundering around in feelings.

But in the Bible this is why again - see folks we're not trying to be nitpickers when we hold to basic truths. God spoke into history. That is a necessity - that is a necessity of my faith. If God did not speak words such that I could have tape-recorded them at Mt. Sinai, this whole thing is a farce. We might as well be liberals and be subjectivists.

But on the other hand if He has spoken in history; then those words are the standard - period. They are objective because it comes out of an omniscient mind not a finite one. Therefore it's loaded with a credible authority.

So now we have truth tests. The people of the Bible were not some sort of naïve fools.

I've talked to some non-Christians years ago. It's amazing. They don't read the Bible carefully. I understand that.

But they come off with these stupid statements like, "Oh, those people were so naïve."

No, read the text. They were slow of heart to believe. Where did the expression "doubting Thomas" come from for heavens sake? It came a believer who was not believing. So ancient man was just as skeptical as people are today. So they had to have truth tests. We covered these two in our statutes and judgments.

Let's go back to chapter 13 because this was the first truth test. This is the test- is there self-consistency in teaching? The issue there was the trial of a prophet.

Chapter 13 says:

NKJ Deuteronomy 13:1 "If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder,

Deuteronomy 13:2 "and the sign or the wonder comes to pass,

See it looks like he's verified. He's made a prophecy and it's come to pass.

"Oh people are impressed with that."

Look at what it says.

of which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods'

So he has a non-orthodox theology that is going with miracles. Now we've got? Now we've got an inconsistency in the wording.

We have Moses who taught this, this, and this.

And we have this false prophet saying, "Well, you know. We've got to not offend the Canaanites. You've got to be open. They kind of worship god in their own way. That's Baal."

So he's not teaching what Moses taught. There is a logical contradiction and it's precisely the existence of a logical contradiction that leads to a sentence of capital punishment in verse 5. So these are instructions to the jury for procedures in a courtroom case of all places. Obviously if you're using this test to convict people of a capital crime you want to be

sure it's a good truth test. So this is the first truth test.
Deuteronomy 13 is a logical truth test.

Now I want to show you a little diagram here. Take a minute or two for this because Sunday one of our girls was telling me about a music professor at a local college who admitted in the classroom that you could have A and not A simultaneously.

I said to her, "This is so good because this guy just spilled all his beans on the table when he says that you can have A and not A - both A and not A."

So now I want to show you the proof that once you allow a contradiction you automatically have nonsense everywhere. You cannot have a contradiction without having nonsense immediately. Here's the proof. It's well-known. I mean I didn't come up with this.

Let's say P. In logic you use a letter to pick a sentence. It states something. It's called propositional logic. So each one of these letters means a sentence, a proposition. So let's let P be "I am a retired Air Force officer." Okay. I'm just putting that forward about myself, something personal. When you see that little tilde behind the P it means the opposite - not P. So not P is I am not a retired US Air force officer. Now either I am or I'm not. That's the law of contradiction.

Now this professor at a local college obviously is telling one of our gals that you can have both. He's referring in the area of music and art. Okay. So now let's take this one-step further. In logic if you take two statements and you hook them together with that sign, here's what it means. Either I am a retired Air Force officer either P or Q or the moon is made of cheese- (some nonsense statement.) You can hook those two together. This is a true statement if either one or the other is true. So now we've set it up as P or Q. Either I am a retired Air Force officer or the moon is made of cheese. However if we've allowed a contradiction then I can have not P and substitute right in there - I can plus in not P because after all the guy told me it doesn't matter if it's P or not P. But if it's not P; then this part of the statement is false. I am not a retired officer, which means the moon must be made of cheese.

So the point here is that when you allow a contradiction in your logic, when you allow two contradictory statements to coexist in the system; you immediately reduce the system to nonsense. So in one sense I'm so glad that the professor said that to his class. It's sad that 30 kids in the class didn't pick up on that - that basically everything he's teaching is nonsense. It has to be because he's allowed a contradiction. If you have A and not A, you immediately invalidate the system.

So that's why logic tests are so important. Deuteronomy 13 shows you 1400 years before Jesus and the Greeks (maybe 1,000 years before the early Greek philosophers) - they're talking about logical rules.

That's why the father of American archeology Dr. Albright said. "This is not mythological thinking in the Old Testament because it's dealing with thinking. It's dealing with logic. That's not true in pagan myth."

So now we come - Deuteronomy 18 was the second truth test. In that test if you go over to Deuteronomy 18:17 - we covered that. Again it was dealing with courtroom cases. It's dealing with tests to see if something is true except this one is not looking at logic per se; it is looking in fact at behavior - history, empirical things. So here we have the other test.

It says:

NKJ Deuteronomy 18:17 "And the LORD said to me: 'What they have spoken is good.

17 "And the LORD said to me: 'What they have spoken is good.

18 '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.

19 'And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him.

20 'But

Now what do you do about a false prophet? If you're going to condemn somebody for not listening to a prophet you could get a manipulator and he could go around the country to be a prophet and therefore invoke the Mosaic Law code and say, "You're not listening to me. You're cursed by God."

Woe! Before we allow this we better have a check on whether he is a real prophet or not. Maybe he's mouthing orthodoxy. See? He passes the logic test. He appears to pass the logic test.

So now what other test do we have? We have this one.

NKJ Deuteronomy 18:20 'But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.'

21 "And if you say in your heart, 'How shall we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?' -

22 "when a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.

So that's a negative test - a negative empirical test. That test is why we fundies believe in an inerrant Bible because the Bible is convicted by its own empirical test if there is a false testimony in that. Where you see that in the New Testament is 1 Corinthians 15 when Paul says what about the resurrection?

He says, "If I have testified that Jesus Christ has risen from the dead and He hasn't; I have born false witness. I have violated the 9th commandment. I have committed an ethical error."

So the ethical package - the Bible is packed in an ethical package deal. You can't allow errors in the Bible without violating the ethic of the Bible. This is people's discussions. People don't catch on to this thing. That's why the ethical nature of the Bible is so important. So Deuteronomy 18 is the empirical test.

Now we are set up for Deuteronomy 29. So with all that in the background, verses 2 through 9 - let's read it again with these truth tests in mind with the idea that these people are going to have to commit their lives, their homes, their property, their whole modus operandi everything to Jehovah in this covenant. When they swear as they are going to have to Deuteronomy 27 and they say, "Cursed am I if I don't do this."

Man, they're signing on the dotted line. They're committing their lives to Jehovah. They need to be sure there are a lot of other gods going around besides Jehovah here in the ancient world. Now what is the deal here? Am I able to trust Him?

This is what we all as believers face all the time. Can we trust the Lord? Here is the lesson plan on how to increase your faith. This is how Moses increased faith in the believers of his day so they would trust the Lord at this critical moment of Shechem.

So what does he do? He says:

NKJ Deuteronomy 29:2 Now Moses called all Israel and said to them: "You have seen all that the LORD did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land --

Now it's not quite true that that generation saw everything. Some of them were born afterwards.

So when he says "You all have seen this," that implies transmission of truth from father to son, a generational thing - in other words, history, historical record keeping. Now in your notes I've listed several verses. You'll probably remember most of these because I highlighted these when we were going through it.

If you'll take a minute here, let's look at 3:11. Remember as we went through Deuteronomy there would be these little places where evidence would be pointed to. Here in chapter 3 after he's talking about conquering Transjordan and this giant.

People would say, "Oh well, you just thought that. There wasn't any real giant king there."

Moses knew that.

So he said, "Wait a minute. Wait a minute here. We were involved in a major battle with a giant. Now don't tell me we randomly did this thing. Whoopee! This was an act of God that protected us against this guy."

He wants people to remember this. So look what he says in verse 11.

NKJ Deuteronomy 3:11 "For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of the giants. Indeed his bedstead was an iron bedstead. (Is it not in Rabbah of the people of Ammon?) Nine cubits is its length and four cubits its width, according to the standard cubit.

What's that note in the Bible for? Because those people should be going back.

He said, "You don't believe me. Go back and look at the evidence."

The Bible is open that way to evidence. That's why history is so important.

If you have time read through those verses, the chain of verses that I give you there. Those are little tweets that are stuck in the text that obviously show you it's much on Moses mind as he's preparing people and getting them to trust the Lord and here's how you do it. You don't work up a feeling. It's not like some Buddhist monk contemplating his navel and going through deep breathing exercises. That's not how work up faith in the Scriptures. You work of faith in Scriptures by understanding what the Word of God says and seeing it verified - pretty simple in that sense.

Then he says, "You've seen it all land of Egypt - pharaoh, all the servants, all this land. This was the superpower of the day. It would be exodus of Jews from the Soviet Union in 1955 at the height of Soviet power. That's the magnitude of what he's saying here.

NKJ Deuteronomy 34:11 in all the signs and wonders which the LORD sent him to do in the land of Egypt, before Pharaoh, before all his servants, and in all his land,

Then he has this downer.

What he's saying is, "I don't think you people are prepared."

This is a challenge.

"I don't think you people are prepared."

I think that people in our own evangelical churches only partially believe the Bible. We have all kinds of people. Then when it comes to do you take Genesis literally?

"Well 17% of the faculties at Christian universities believe in a literal Genesis now."

Then they don't believe the Bible. So we have a problem here. Our own evangelicaso-called professing Bible believers are not really Bible believers. They haven't been challenged to go deep into the text and think this through once and for all - get it straight in their heads.

So verse 4:

NKJ Deuteronomy 29:4 "Yet the LORD has not given you a heart to perceive and eyes to see and ears to hear, to this very day.

"You still don't get it."

Now there is kind of a humorous note about this. In your notes I mention Luke 24, the disciples on the Emmaus road. What did Jesus say to them? Remember?

NKJ Luke 24:25 Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!

Jesus walking with two guys from Jerusalem and He tells them the whole Bible in a capsule summary.

He says, "Gosh guys, you still don't get it. You heard all this stuff, saw all this stuff and you still don't get it. You've been reading the Torah all your life; and you don't believe it."

It's a rebuke. But I think there is a purpose in this. If God had revealed himself to a generation that instantly believed - such as the Roman centurion. Remember the Roman centurion, the officer, sends one of his servants to Jesus and says, "Hey, my daughter is sick.

The Lord said, "I'll go to your house."

The guy says, "No, don't worry about it. I'm an officer. I give an order; and it's carried out. All you have to do Messiah is give the order."

Remember Jesus' response to the Roman centurion?

"Man," He says, "I haven't seen faith like this in all Israel."

It was a military guy by the way there - because he understood authority.

So here we have Moses trying to get these people to do this. I think when God reveals Himself He always likes to have Doubting Thomases around in this generation because that forces the revelation to become more and more clear because God has to deal with doubt.

I am so glad He does because I have doubts. I've had doubt in my life; and I've had to deal with it.

It's so nice to be able to go back to the text and say, "Gee, I'm not to be alone. These guys had doubts too. God worked with them."

That's comforting to me to know He's the kind of God that doesn't blast me because I doubt. But He works with me.

So here he says - he admits in verse 4.

"You've got a problem folks. You're not ready."

Now in verse 5 and 6 read very carefully verses 5 and 6 and see if you can say who is speaking. Look at the subject and pay particular attention to the pronouns. Check whether they're singular or plural and check whether

they're the subject or the predicate. Do you notice something strange? Does anybody spot that? Verses 5 and 6.

Exactly! See what he pointed out. Look at verse 5.

NKJ Deuteronomy 29:5 "And I have led you forty years in the wilderness.

Now that could be the Lord or it could be Moses. You would think it's Moses because he just talking.

Your clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandals have not worn out on your feet.

NKJ Deuteronomy 29:6 "You have not eaten bread, nor have you drunk wine or similar drink, that you may know that I am the LORD your God.

Whoops! We started off with pronoun singular - I. We thought it was Moses. At the end I is the Lord. I find this is striking. This is an unusual text. I wonder what's going on here. I'm wondering whether Moses is saying this of himself but when he gets down to the end of the sentence he's voicing as a prophet God's words which shows you the prophets words and the Lord's words are one in the same.

I haven't seen this happen too often. In fact this is the first time. Maybe I've seen it before and haven't noticed it. This is one of the rare times I have seen this in the text. So we have this oscillation between Moses and Yahweh here. And it comes right after verse 4. So I'm wondering if the Holy Spirit didn't have a purpose in the way He worked this verse right after their unbelief was an issue almost to comfort them that, "My words," Moses is saying, "are identical to God's words."

Then of course we come to 7. This is Transjordan. That was the great conquest on the east side of Jordan. This area over here - Moab. This whole area was a gift. Two and half tribes got extra real estate. That wasn't on the docket when they were coming out of Sinai. That was one of these things where this giant started attacking and so they counterattacked and took his land away. So that's God's grace. Now it comes down to the end.

NKJ Deuteronomy 29:9 "Therefore keep the words of this covenant, and do them

There is the authority of the words of the prophet, the words of the text that we now hold in our hands. This is the same thing as it would be dictated from heaven. I know that we don't hold to the dictation theory; but I'm talking about as far as the end product. It could have been dictated. Obviously it wasn't in many, many cases; but the point here is the authority of the Scripture and the text.

When we think about that the concluding point I'm making at the end of the handout there are two words. You need to think about the logical claim. Mathematicians when they're making proofs use these two words - necessity and sufficiency. Necessity means that the Word of God is necessary in order to believe.

NKJ Romans 10:17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

The Bible makes the claim you cannot believe without verbal revelation because the act of belief must have an object. What is the object of faith? Biblical faith's object is God. It has to be not an invisible dumb God that doesn't speak; but a God who speaks. That's the object. So in order to get any kind of faith God has to speak. So the Word of God is necessary in order to believe. That means that if you don't spend time in the Word of God and so many people in our own Bible believing churches they manage to hear a sermonette once a month and think that's enough to feed me for the next 4 or 5 weeks until I show up again. Then when a crisis hits they wonder why they're all over the board. Obviously the Word of God doesn't mean that much so under times of pressure and frustration they fall apart because they're not exposed to the Word of God. So the Word of God is necessary.

Then the other side of the coin the Word of God is sufficient. By sufficiency we don't mean that you study the Bible and nothing else. What I'm saying there when I'm saying the Word of God is sufficient is that it is sufficient tool to take into any subject area whether it's mathematics, whether it's history, are whether it's music, whether it's art, whether it's business, whether it's labor, whether it's economics. The Word of God is sufficient unto every good work. That means it is the framework of interpreting every area of life. So the Word of God is necessary; and it's also sufficient. When we think of the faith rest drill we can think of the promises of God.

NKJ Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good ...

That is a hard to claim in many situations in life. In order to really claim that you have to go back and get precedence out of the Bible that is analogous to the situation you are in. There is plenty of precedence in the Bible.

"You know God did that with Job. God did that with Him so I know God can do that. So that verse has credibility to me."

That's what Moses is doing here.

Tonight what we've tried to show you that verses 2 through 9 prep the people to have the faith to undergo that Shechem-Sinai commitment to the covenant. It's got to be done by faith. It can't be people going through the motions. It's got to be a heart commitment; it can't be a heart commitment if there's not a trust. You can't have trust unless you think this thing through here. Moses' challenge is that if you have a heart that doesn't get it or eyes that don't see; then you're going to have a problem here. He's forecasting a problem in the nation as we'll see in the rest of the chapter.

Next week we'll try to finish off chapter 29 and proceed from there.

(Closing prayer)

I see my wife pointing out the fact that I did not fill in the blanks. On

page 1 - past history defines a relationship by establishing Israel's true identity and God's identity. I skipped over that because of the time.

Where do you see that in the New Testament epistles? Same thing. Take Ephesians. Before Paul gets into the dos and don'ts of marriage and church relations in chapter 4, chapter 5, and chapter 6 - what is he doing in chapters 1 and 2? He's talking about our historic union with Jesus Christ and Christ's historic work, isn't he? He sets it up. He doesn't ask people to obey the dos and the don'ts in the last half of the epistle without the first part of the epistle giving this history. So your identity is locked up with your history.

I said that before and I think we Americans need to think about that as Christian citizens in our country at this hour is that there are forces on college campuses and elsewhere who are serious about rewriting American history and writing it such that Christian influence is exhumed from it because they know that if they are successful in doing that they have altered the identity of the nation. Your identity is locked up with your history.

The next one present challenge - that's what we're coming up to. We're going to deal with that next week - the invitation and decision. We have that in evangelistic services in the New Testament - the moment of decision, the Billy Graham moment. You'll notice that the Billy Graham moment comes after the prep time because otherwise the Billy Graham moment is just an emotional response. It's got to be a response to something, something substantive.

Then the last one fore view of Israel's relationship with God - it's choice and consequences model of history. That's the basis of hope. The basis of hope is the ethical backdrop to history. It is so important that we grasp that. The flavor of history that we learn from the Bible is not the flavor that we learned in school. It just isn't.

Question

Oh, the first blank. Oh, way up in #1. Commitment to Yahweh's kingdom is comprehensive and deep so much so that no one could keep it apart from spiritual assets derived by faith from the Abrahamic Covenant.

Question

Okay, Andrea has asked about the verse 4 thing talking about you don't have eyes that see, you don't have a heart that understands. She rightly points out that occurs again and again in the prophets. It's an accusation I think that says you're not connecting the dots here. Maybe that's a contemporary way of putting it. You people don't connect the dots. You hear these little fragments here and there; but you haven't got the big picture. It's like you see pieces; but you don't see the whole. I think one of the big issues if we were to say this is what we've pointed out is I don't think the people that were castigated by the prophets really thought of history as a ultimately a response to an ethical choice.

Think about their ethical environment. These people are farmers. What does a farmer do? A farmer is surviving season after season after season.

A farmer has that on his mind. Farming is far riskier business than most businesses because if all your eggs are in one crop basket. So that's the environment and in that environment the mythology that we have found archeologically is all agricultural cycle. It is endless cycle after cycle after cycle.

They don't think in terms of, "Gee, my sin 5 years ago is having an effect on the climate today."

That is not part of the deal.

The Egyptians, as Henry Frankfurt points out, University of Chicago - Frankfurt says you can read all the Egyptian literature and never get an idea of sin. The Egyptian thought of mistakes. He'd weep over what he said were stupid mistakes; but he never thought of personal sin transgressing a god.

So I think that's the problem. He didn't connect the suffering or the blessing with the choices they had made.

Question

Okay good question David brought up - that is that an unbeliever could appeal as we appeal. For example someone would bring up the trinity issue - how can God be three and be one. It's not quite that fast. We don't leap from the trinity as a contradiction and then jump from that accusation to incomprehensibility that quickly. The way we do it is obviously God is not three in one in the same way. The church fathers dealt with this for 400 years. The way they dealt with it was that they separated personality and essence. So there is a whole 400-year history of this discussion.

It wasn't just some appeal to incomprehensibility. But in the end we appeal to incomprehensibility not to resolve a contradiction. We're not arguing (and you saw that) there's a contradiction. We're arguing that the two sides of the proposition are not well enough understood to define the contradiction. Now where we would differ with the non-Christian is the non-Christian indeed could well make that appeal.

"I don't understand it."

Where that goes astray is that in the case of us we have a creator-creature distinction and therefore we have a reason why we hold to incomprehensibility. We don't hold to it because we're frustrated intellectually; we hold to it because we know that God is that way and therefore there is a reason behind the appeal to incomprehensibility.

The non-Christian however when he's faced with a chaotic meaningless universe; and he can't fit things together has to finally end by saying, "I don't understand it." But he's not justifying other than another arbitrary "I give up" just so story. He's not justifying his problem. Indeed he is appealing to incomprehensibility but as a finite mind.

"It is beyond my thinking."

We in that sense are doing the same thing except the reason why we're doing it because we know that God is there and He has told us that He is incomprehensible. So we have verbal propositional information to support our incomprehensibility claim.

What is the verbal transcendent propositional content that an unbeliever would have? Basically he doesn't because he's operating out of a finite mind.

That gets back to the fact that every worldview has what Dr. Jason Lyslett (sp?) of Answers in Genesis calls rescue devices. You have to understand every worldview has rescue devices. For example we in our view of biblical cosmology do not understand the issue of light. That is right now we have no answer to the fact that you have exploding galaxies created on the 4th day. The Genesis text says starlight was immediately visible when God made it. So how do we put that together? There are people working on that problem right now. There are 3 or 4 different models being created. One is by a mathematician right here at the Naval Academy. Another one is a guy at a (?) laboratory in New Mexico, recently retired. So guys are working on it.

But honestly saying we don't have an answer for that right now.

But then the other side also has a problem. For example, take meteorites. Meteorites dissolve fast. They don't last long. All the meteors are dying; and they're dying quickly. So the question is, why do we continue to have meteors? If the universe is millions of years old, all the meteoric material should be gone. So the rescue device that the cosmologists use, non-Christian cosmologists, is called an ort cloud that exists out beyond Pluto. That's the source of meteors. The problem with that is nobody has ever seen the ort cloud. There is no empirical evidence it exists. But it's a rescue device to explain why meteors are still around.

So both side have this rescue device. It's humbling. One of our points to throw out is how do you explain that diamonds that are supposed to be hundreds of millions of years old have carbon 14 inside them. Carbon 14 only has a half-life of 5,000 years or something like that. It only measures out to 40,000. What's going on with the diamonds?

They would answer, "We don't know. We haven't got an explanation for that."

So everybody has that. Every worldview has that.

So you come back down ultimately to the fact that - what is your justification for these rescue devices? Where does that rest? Can your worldview explain what you're using every day - the 3 big questions.

1. That you believe there is meaning and purpose in life
2. That you believe there is truth that can be known
3. You have moral authority.

How does your worldview support answers to those three basic questions?

Question

What he has pointed out is that the creator creature distinction has enormous - enormous implications all across this whole area of thought. Just one simple thing we talk about - truth. Because we have a creator who is omniscient we have basis for arguing for the rationality of existence. On a non-Christian basis without the creator-creature distinction when all I have is the universe, I am faced with mystery. I hope that it has rationality. I have no basis for justifying that other than my brain thinks that way so I hope that reality fits my brain.

Question

Or the idea that unbelief has involving - is the ethic on galaxy 52 the same as the ethic involving our galaxy? Don't know. So anyway, these are all the problems that come up.

The big idea here tonight behind the 29th chapter is watch how Moses preps the people for a choice to be made. It's interesting every time Moses faces this, and the prophets do the same thing.

So I'm sitting here reading the text.

"Well I guess that's what I'm supposed to do because it seems like the Bible people when they face crisis; they keep reviewing their history."

I think it's striking. What do we do when we do communion once a month? What are the words of the communion?

NKJ Luke 22:19 ... do this in remembrance of Me."

So even our communion service is based that way. I think that's the answer to faith problems. You have to go back and look at what God performance has been.

Question

He is bringing up John 3. Actually it starts out with Jesus talking to Nicodemus. Then it winds up John the Apostle is talking. You know what's the challenge in exegeting John 3 is figure out where the transition happened. It was a fun thing when our New Testament professor at seminary gave us an assignment one time to figure out...

"Hey guys, show me where John starts and Jesus stops."

You go through and you diagram sentences and so forth. You get some different answers from that. I think what those kinds of passages show - like this one tonight is the close intimacy between the prophets' words and God's words. They are so tightly knit that you can't see the transition between them.

I know you are all anxious to have a Happy Thanksgiving because you know who it is you are giving thanks to - not a vacuous holiday.

Go around and ask people, "Why should I be thankful and to whom should I be thankful?"

Good questions.