

February 19

Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy & Exodus

What was stated on February 18th.

- I. Religious and Ceremonial Laws: other gods prohibited, idolatry prohibited
 - a. Laws against idolatry and paganism
 - i. Sacrificing children to Molech – Lev 20.1-5
 - ii. Separation from pagans and AVOID enticement 12.30
 - iii. Punishment for idolatry – 17.6
 - iv. Only one place of worship – 12.4

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- b. Laws against false spiritualists: you must be blameless before the Lord your God
 - i. Witchcraft and divination
 - ii. Death for sorcery, spiritualists, false prophets, dreamers
 1. test of false prophets
 - iii. MESSIAH to be true prophet 18.15-19
- c. Laws regarding Blasphemy
 - i. Reverence for God commanded
 - ii. Reviling God
 1. a case for blasphemy
- d. Laws requiring dedications
 - i. Firstborn, first crops, first fruits, firstborn animals
- e. Laws requiring Tithing
 - i. Tithes for priest – 18.1-5
 1. portion for Levites, yearly and triennial produce tithe
 - a. 14.25 eat there in the presence of the Lord
- f. Special instructions for Conquest
 - i. Special dedication of fruits
 - ii. Dedication for REMEMBRANCE 26.5-7
 - iii. Prayer of THANKSGIVING 26.12-15
 1. then say to the Lord your God: I have ...
- g. Law of the Sabbath (read EMOTIONALLY HEALTHY SPIRITUALITY)
 - i. The first and foremost day of worship, the Sabbath, is commanded no less than 12 times throughout the giving of the laws.
 - ii. Sabbath rest commanded – 5.12-15
 1. Symbol of covenant, day to honor sanctuary, day for holy convocation, no fire on Sabbath, no plowing and or harvesting
 2. death penalty for breaching the Sabbath
 - a. example of working on the Sabbath

Don't forget; the theme and focus for Deuteronomy is remember. Moses is challenging the Israelites to never forget who God is, what He has done, how

faithful He has been and how needy they are for God – even when they enter into the Promised Land. Today we see how this is to impact weekly life schedule.

Today's reading has a prayer on remembrance and thanksgiving on pages 226-227, Deuteronomy 26.5-15. Remembering and thanksgiving go hand in hand.

Israelites had been in the wilderness with a regular schedule. Israel had experienced no rest while in Egypt for 400 years. They worked seven days a week as slaves. In the wilderness they had observed the Sabbath and knew the importance of the Sabbath, but they were going to be busy. Going into the Promised Land changes that. They will be going into a land, and eventually settling down. They will be busy with crops, livestock, homes and running the country. I believe that Moses wanted them to not forget the importance of the Sabbath and how God will care and bless them if they observe the Sabbath.

Yesterday we talked about the law of idolatry. Today I want to focus on the law of the Sabbath. We read today about a lot of laws, laws about tithing, dedications, witchcraft, sorcery, blasphemy, etc. I feel that today, I need to talk about the Sabbath and how that applies to you today. They observed the Sabbath and knew the importance of the Sabbath.

In today's society – we are in a blizzard of activity. We are more 'productive' than ever before. But over productivity can become counter productive.

Of the Ten Commandments, the one of the Sabbath is the longest and most specific.

The Sabbath is resetting our lives toward God, the busyness of life can get us off track, and priorities messed up. The Sabbath can be an anchor to keep us stable or a compass to get us back on track. With the Sabbath, we have a chance to somewhat imitate God.

Sabbath is stopping to surrender, to give up control of your life and trust God

Pete Scazzero in his book Emotionally Healthy Spirituality helped me understand the Sabbath in new and different way. He points out in Deuteronomy 5.12-14 that stopping for the Sabbath by the Israelites was a sign to the surrounding nations of their liberation by God.

Scazzero goes on to say that with the Sabbath, God is at the center and is the source of our lives. He is the beginning, the middle, and the end of our existence. With the Sabbath we are trusting God to provide and care for us.

The Sabbath consists of:

Stopping – trust in God, life won't stop if we rest and ultimately acknowledge that God is on the throne

Rest – where you respect your humanness and that we are not nonstop human beings.

Delight – after God had finished his work of creating he said in Gen 1.31 “it was very good.” Sabbath gives you to look around and enjoy what is around you.
Contemplate – Sabbath gives you time to reflect, worship God and his love.

Think of the Sabbath as a heavy snow day, where everything is closed and you can't get out, that the whole day is blocked out and a gift to you.

May you realize the importance of the Sabbath and put it into your life in 2012. Remember, this is not a law in order to earn the right to be God's people, but it is God saying, you are my people – so live this way.