

## THOU PROVOKEDST THE LORD THY GOD >>>

### DEUTERONOMY 9:7 – 11:14

~ If you have your Bible open, turn to this section of Scripture and pray for wisdom, judgment and discernment. Then, fasten your seat belt tightly as we begin this leg of our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God. We have been on a bumpy ride in Deuteronomy; and if you have not read our six previous reports from this book of the Bible, then I highly suggest you go back and do so now. Some of the truths we examined are almost unbearable. In this report, we need to prepare for more blunt, harsh, real-life lessons from God in His Word. We're going to find a proper, correct and complete study of Deuteronomy is one painstaking and exhaustive undertaking.

In our previous report, God reviewed the history of the nation Israel – and quite frankly – it was coarse and abrasive. God knew Israel and God knew their past was NOT a good one. God never saved them – or anyone – because they were good little Sunday school boys and girls. God never called Israel because they were some kind of an outstanding nation. Likewise, God never called YOU because of anything He sees in you; no, you're NOT outstanding and you are NOT superior – you're NOT good – you're bad – ALL bad; YOU and I are rotten to the core, my safari friends. Bad people are the only kind of people God is in the business of saving; so, if you ARE a good person – well, then, you just aren't saved. The only reason ANYONE ever truly turns to Christ is because they realize they are no better than the common criminal. If you haven't made that realization about yourself, then you have never trusted Christ and, my friend, you are not born from above.

As genuine believers, we are to esteem others better than ourselves and consider the welfare of others above our own. I understand how difficult it is to accept and believe we are WORSE than anyone else; and we can only ever do so when we realize we are sinners. Only when we recognize our distressed need for a Savior can the Lord Jesus Christ begin to make these things real to us, and then wash us and cleanse us. Our churches today honestly believe they are better than others because they have been saved.

Well, God is saying to you, "forget that lie." It is the complete opposite of what the NEW Testament teaches. The New Testament teaching says, "... we need to be saved because we are terrible, awful, miserable, treacherous, lying, hating, thieving killers." If you don't think you have ever killed anyone, then try the Words of the Lord Jesus on for size, as He said, "if you are angry with your brother without a cause then you are guilty of murder." Now, do you REALLY want to continue to argue with the Lord? Or are you ready to confess your sins, admit your pride, covetousness and idolatry of abominations; and finally turn to Christ honestly, truthfully and in reality so that you can genuinely be saved? God already knows your lost condition; it's likely that YOU are the only one who doesn't see it. Your friends, neighbors, co-workers, family and spouses just happen to know you better than you know yourself....

IX

***7 Remember, and forget not, how thou provokedst the LORD thy God to wrath in the wilderness: from the day that thou didst depart out of the land of Egypt, until ye came unto this place, ye have been rebellious against the LORD.***

~ God seems to be adamant about making His chosen people remember their past; and, specifically here, He reminds them of the little golden calf incident. If you want to backtrack on safari to the thirty-second chapter of Exodus at verse four, you'll see how the men and women took off their golden earrings, which were a sign of blatant idolatry, and contributed to the making of an even BIGGER idol. Moses wasn't out of the camp five minutes when Aaron started melting gold down; and Aaron received said gold at the hand of these people. He fashioned it with a graving tool, and when he was done, he had made a molten calf. Israel looked upon the work and Aaron said, "... these be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." No, friends; God has no problem reminding us of our sordid and failure past, and He does so at every turn in our road. At least, that's the way He has dealt with me. When God says He remembers our sin no more - that's true; but when we don't remember them, don't repent of them, and continue to make the same mistakes, God reminds us - for our own well-being. Make a note.

*Psalm 106:19 They made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image. 20 Thus they changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass. 21 They forgat God their Saviour, which had done great things in Egypt ~*

>>> DEUTERONOMY IX

***8 Also in Horeb ye provoked the LORD to wrath, so that the LORD was angry with you to have destroyed you.***

***9 When I was gone up into the mount to receive the tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant which the LORD made with you, then I abode in the mount forty days and forty nights, I neither did eat bread nor drink water:***

***10 And the LORD delivered unto me two tables of stone written with the finger of God; and on them was written according to all the words, which the LORD spake with you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly.***

***11 And it came to pass at the end of forty days and forty nights, that the LORD gave me the two tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant.***

***12 And the LORD said unto me, Moses; Arise, get thee down quickly from hence; for thy people which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt have corrupted themselves; they are quickly turned aside out of the way which I commanded them; they have made them a molten image.***

~ Remember, Moses was up on Mount Sinai receiving the commandments when God said to him, "we're going to have to take a little break because your people are descending into chaos." Yes, I think that's exactly what God was thinking, friends. God was giving commandments against the very thing they were doing at the very time they were doing it. The children of Israel had already agreed to obey all the words of the law - but they hadn't considered those words yet - and this revealed what was in their hearts -

SIN. A natural rebellion against that which they claimed to love and obey. God didn't even have time to tell them they should have no other gods before Him before they had other gods before Him! That, in my estimation, is just about as degenerate as one can descend to. They were not to make a graven image, nor any likeness – of ANYTHING – but here, we are seeing the children of Israel fashion a calf, of all things. Furthermore, God seems to blame Moses, at least partially, as He says it was Moses' people and that it had been he who had brought them forth out of Egypt. Of course, Moses will correct God concerning this – but this should be an awakening fact for most of us today....

***13 Furthermore the LORD spake unto me, saying, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people:***

***14 Let me alone, that I may destroy them, and blot out their name from under heaven: and I will make of thee a nation mightier and greater than they.***

~ The Lord has repeated this stiff-necked phrase several times. I wonder if He wants us to understand something. The Lord has known throughout our entire lives how rebellious we were – and are, my beloved. God knows us, even in our denial. Verse fourteen was a tremendous temptation to Moses. Thank God Moses was able to resist that temptation and tell God if He wasn't bringing the people into the land, then don't bring him, either. Moses identified with the people. The children of Israel are reminded that they were saying they would obey God while, at the exact same time, they were disobeying Him. I am not sure God could make this any clearer. People are phony in religion more than ANYTHING else in this world. Even Hollywood doesn't rise to the level of fake and fraud as the religious man and woman do today. Phony religion is, obviously, characteristic to human nature; and some of those people are honestly sincere in their false teaching and beliefs. They are utterly misled and misguided. The real problem is a complete and total ignorance of the Word of God, of course. Can you pray to God, "... search me, Oh, Lord, and know my heart, And see if there be iniquity in me." When you do pray that, what does God reply?

Every single child of God needs to pray a similar prayer from Psalms. Paul said, "... examine yourself and see whether you're in the faith or not." Have you done that this way lately? You all should know that I preach the security of the believer – BUT – I ALSO preach the INsecurity of the MAKE-believers. There happen to be an abundance of those types running around this forum on which I teach who REFUSE to search their hearts. Now, I warned you about the turbulence of this section of Scripture in our previous safari report – so, don't blame me – because it gets worse. Much worse. Every single one of us had better learn how to ask God to search our hearts and STOP being so stiff necked....

***15 So I turned and came down from the mount, and the mount burned with fire: and the two tables of the covenant were in my two hands.***

***16 And I looked, and, behold, ye had sinned against the LORD your God, and had made you a molten calf: ye had turned aside quickly out of the way which the LORD had commanded you.***

***17 And I took the two tables, and cast them out of my two hands, and brake them before your eyes.***

***18 And I fell down before the LORD, as at the first, forty days and forty nights: I did neither eat bread, nor drink water, because of all your sins which ye sinned, in doing wickedly in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.***

~ God sent a message to Moses when the calf episode played out that was loud and clear, friends. They were sinners before they even knew they were sinners. I want to say two things as we progress: one – most of you should simply stop reading at this point; and, two, Moses knew God. The Psalmist says "... God made His ways known unto Moses; and His acts unto the children of Israel." The children of Israel ALL saw the smoke on Mount Sinai, and they all saw the tablets with the Ten Commandments written on them. They personally witnessed the judgment of God and saw Gods glory. However, they still didn't know Him. Moses did know God.

Two things are revealed here to us that are absolutely true today. These two things are completely paradoxical statements, too. They do NOT – in any way – contradict each other. The first statement is, you and I do not have the faintest conception of how much God really HATES sin and intends to punish it. When Moses saw what these people were doing, he fell on his knees and for FORTY DAYS he fasted and cried out to God to deliver them. Moses saw his own sins because he knew the ways of the True and Living Holy God, and Moses was frightened. He knew God hated sin. The average so-called Christian today doesn't seem to realize how much God detests the sin in their life. Well, my dear readers, God has NO INTENTION of passing by our sins as if nothing's wrong. God IS going to deal with our sins in THIS life. You can just write that down.

I have seen the man and woman in the church playing fast and loose with God; and it always ends disastrously. Contemporary Christian's are masters at placing a beautiful front on their lives; but they cut corners that indicate they have no relationship with Christ. Then, as the days go by which turn into years, the Hand of God is revealed as it moves in the life of that individual. Sometimes, the judgment is so severe it is simply too much to look upon. THAT is a tragic day, my beloved. Many arrive at a point where they cannot bear God's judgment. Some have lost their children and marriages; some have gone bankrupt and lost EVERYTHING. Well, you will NOT get by toying around with a Holy God. I'll be honest, because I always am honest with you dear readers: I don't like dealing with those people, because they cannot hear what God says. We don't walk together because we are not agreed. I can write until I am deflated, and they are in no better position at all; in fact, they are WORSE because they CONTINUE to reject God. It's like spiritual quicksand.

Alright, at this point in our safari, we see Moses down on his face fasting for the children of Israel. When the Word of God says "Moses knew the ways of God," that means Moses knew God punishes sin. Something else is revealed here, too: the mercy of God! Most of us will never realize how wonderful God is in His mercy towards us - because we are a stiff-necked people, and we literally shut out His mercy altogether with our continued sins. God is so gracious and merciful that we can never fully comprehend it.

We have no conception of the extent of how gracious and wonderful the Lord truly is to those who repent. That is the only reason God extended mercy to the children of Israel, and His grace is the only reason God extends mercy to US. Maybe you have seen the mercy of God – I know I have....

***19 For I, Moses, was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure, wherewith the LORD was wroth against you to destroy you. But the LORD hearkened unto me at that time also.***

~ God answered the prayers of Moses because Moses knew God – BUT – Paul makes it perfectly clear God did NOT answer Moses' prayers just because Moses was Moses. No, friends, God heard and answered the prayers of Moses because God is merciful – and NO OTHER REASON! Specifically, Paul said, "... for he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." This had NOTHING to do with Moses being the leader of Israel or the deliverer of His people. This is critical to understand. God is sovereign, and He extends mercy on HIS terms – NOT your terms. You and I can never know the full extent of how wonderful God really is until we understand Holy Writ properly, correctly and completely. That's what this little so-called safari is all about. This is at once, terrifying and comforting; and I have a WHOLE lot more to say about this – but not in this report – we must move along now - or we could very well end right here....

***20 And the LORD was very angry with Aaron to have destroyed him: and I prayed for Aaron also the same time.***

***21 And I took your sin, the calf which ye had made, and burnt it with fire, and stamped it, and ground it very small, even until it was as small as dust: and I cast the dust thereof into the brook that descended out of the mount.***

***22 And at Taberah, and at Massah, and at Kibrothhattaavah, ye provoked the LORD to wrath.***

***23 Likewise when the LORD sent you from Kadeshbarnea, saying, Go up and possess the land which I have given you; then ye rebelled against the commandment of the LORD your God, and ye believed him not, nor hearkened to his voice.***

***24 Ye have been rebellious against the LORD from the day that I knew you.***

~ If verse twenty-four weren't so tragic it would be laughable. There was never a single day these people were found completely faithful to God. What a psychedelic picture we have painted before our eyes in this chapter; and, yet we all like to point our fingers at the children of Israel in criticism. Well, what about YOU – what about your church? Even the most fundamentally conservative churches today can never say they have a full day in which they are totally faithful to God. If you think they are, then you just happen to be in unbelief of the Word of God. These are the ones who are ALWAYS boasting how sound in the faith they are, too. Well, they must mean sound asleep, because they're totally, completely and woefully ignorant of ALL things they claim to understand....

***25 Thus I fell down before the LORD forty days and forty nights, as I fell down at the first; because the LORD had said he would destroy you.***

~ Moses said this because Moses knew God WOULD destroy them. If you don't think God will judge your sin down here, you just aren't acquainted with God. John tells us there is a sin unto death. Let me say this in no uncertain terms: God judges sin. Moses knew how to pray. I wish we knew how to pray about our own sins today like this. Moses reminds God again and again these are His people – not Moses' people. Moses went to the Lord and Moses told the Lord that he thought He had made a mistake; if you missed verse twelve, read it again. Can you imagine telling God He has made a mistake? Well, that's exactly what Moses just did. Honestly, Moses didn't claim these people, and I don't think Moses really wanted to lead them very much further – if at all. Moses says he didn't bring them out of Egypt – GOD brought them out of Egypt – and Moses reminds God again that these were His people – not his. That was the prayer that moved the



arm of God. Moses also reminds God that the enemy will say some very bad things about God if He forsakes them. The enemy would have laughed at God and said that God was able to bring Israel out of Egypt, but that He couldn't bring Israel into the land as He had promised. In return, God said, "I'll be bringing them in." Proper prayer can move the Arm of God, my friends. What a great and terrible chapter we have now completed....

***26 I prayed therefore unto the LORD, and said, O Lord GOD, destroy not thy people and thine inheritance, which thou hast redeemed through thy greatness, which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand.***

***27 Remember thy servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; look not unto the stubbornness of this people, nor to their wickedness, nor to their sin:***

***28 Lest the land whence thou broughtest us out say, Because the LORD was not able to bring them into the land which he promised them, and because he hated them, he hath brought them out to slay them in the wilderness.***

***29 Yet they are thy people and thine inheritance, which thou broughtest out by thy mighty power and by thy stretched out arm.***

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~ The entire theme of chapter ten is how God sent Israel to Egypt and brought them out of Egypt. We're only going to hit the high points in this chapter and the next. This is all a demonstration of what we considered in chapter nine. God is saying in this chapter that He was willing to start all over again. They would repeat the Ten Commandments and begin afresh, and there wasn't going to be any golden calves. We see Moses bring the tablets down and we see Moses place them in the ark. Then, the children of Israel continue on their journey.

We also cross the line in history where the tribe of Levi is separated from the rest of the nation. This is a great spiritual lesson regarding Levi as the priestly tribe. Today, the church is called a kingdom of priests. The church is

to be a royal priesthood, and every believer is called to be a catholic priest, but not a Roman catholic priest. Roman is a specific, whereas "catholic" means "general." Levi was to have no inheritance within the nation Israel. God Himself was to be Levi's inheritance. That's where we stand as believers today. The rest of the tribes were promised certain parcels of land, certain acreage and other specific temporal blessing in their families and fields. God didn't make any of those promises to the tribe of Levi. Today, believers are promised all spiritual blessings in the Heavens. Our treasures are in Heaven - not on earth. We have no portion down here. We are strangers and pilgrims here. This is also utterly critical to consider....

***12 And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul,***

***13 To keep the commandments of the LORD, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?***

~ Verses twelve and thirteen are not the Gospel; and we can all thank God for that. If it were the Gospel and our salvation depended on this, then neither one of us would be blessed very much. Israel was not blessed because they never kept these commands. The children of Israel broke them all and judgment broke forth upon them as a result. For about fifteen hundred years God demonstrated through the children of Israel to the other nations roundabout – and to us today – that He isn't saving anyone by the law or love. These people were in favorable circumstance to keep the law – but they could not. This means you and I are unable to keep the law, too. We can all bow down and thank God that He saves us by grace today. We can thank Him that He is faithful to us even when we are not faithful to Him. Of course, it has always been mercy and grace by which God saves. The temple sacrifices of the nation Israel all pointed forward to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to die on the cross....

***18 He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment.***

**19 Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.**

**20 Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God; him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name.**

**22 Thy fathers went down into Egypt with threescore and ten persons; and now the LORD thy God hath made thee as the stars of heaven for multitude.**

XI

**1 Therefore thou shalt love the LORD thy God, and keep his charge, and his statutes, and his judgments, and his commandments, always.**

~ Our response to the love of God MUST be OBEDIENCE. Again and again, we come back to this primary truth. Here, in this chapter, God talks to the children of Israel about the land because the Promised Land was nothing like Egypt was. The principle of their occupancy of the land is laid out succinctly here. Down in Egypt, the entire land was irrigated by man-made methods. In the Promised Land, things are going to be altogether different....

**10 For the land, whither thou goest in to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs:**

**11 But the land, whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven:**

**12 A land which the LORD thy God careth for: the eyes of the LORD thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year.**

**13 And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul,**

***14 That I will give you the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil.***

***15 And I will send grass in thy fields for thy cattle, that thou mayest eat and be full.***

***16 Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them;***

***17 And then the LORD'S wrath be kindled against you, and he shut up the heaven, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit; and lest ye perish quickly from off the good land which the LORD giveth you.***

***18 Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes.***

***19 And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.***

~ That land is just as desolate and barren as it could possibly be today, my friends. The minute water is introduced, though, the dessert will blossom like a rose. Sadly, it cannot blossom without the water of the Word of God. The one resource they lack is natural rainfall. The Israelites have attempted every scientific method of irrigation known to mankind; instead of trusting and obeying and worshipping the True and Living God for rain. For most people today, particularly the Israelites, science IS their God. Jehovah told them they were dependant upon rain from Heaven. If only they had obeyed during the time in which we are studying. They would have received the promised blessings from Him. God is still waiting right now for the nation Israel to turn to Him. If you travel over there and you look over the land, you will see the spiritual condition of the people living there. Desolate. Well, our Spiritual Safari must break off our study here in this report, but

we'll resume in the next leg of our expedition. I am praying you read this section of Scripture very carefully and that you will seriously consider all the truth God has outlined today ~

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