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BIBLE STUDY

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**“PLASTER THEM WITH PLASTER”**

**Deuteronomy 27:1-26**

***Deuteronomy 27:1 "And Moses with the elders of Israel commanded the people, saying, Keep all the commandments which I command you this day."***

***Deuteronomy 27:2 And it shall be on the day when ye shall pass over Jordan unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, that thou shalt set thee up great stones, and plaster them with plaster:***

In chapter 27 the renewal of the covenant is commanded. These verses begin the address of Moses. This is not speaking of just the ten commandments, but of all the statutes and ordinances Moses gave, the blessings and curses. “Plaster them with plaster” meant to coat the stones with lime or gypsum, in order to secure a surface on which the writing inscribed might be clearly legible. This practice was quite common in Egypt. The word "great" describing the stones is, probably, an understatement. It is possible that there were many stones, rather than just one huge stone. To have all of these laws and statutes written, would take quite a large area. The plastering them with plaster makes a smooth place to write upon.

***Deuteronomy 27:3 "And thou shalt write upon them all the words of this law, when thou art passed over, that thou mayest go in unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, a land that floweth with milk and honey; as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee."***

The only civil law these people will have to go by, is the law God had given them. It would be necessary to have them written down, so there will be no confusion about the laws. They will have to set up a government, but it will not be like the lands around them, which have earthly kings. Their only King is the LORD. All spiritual matters were carried to the priests for settlement. Civil laws would be decided by judges appointed for this purpose.

***Deuteronomy 27:4 "Therefore it shall be when ye be gone over Jordan, [that] ye shall set up these stones, which I command you this day, in mount Ebal, and thou shalt plaster them with plaster."***

These stones were to be set up on Mount Ebal/ Mount Gerizim area (near Shechem), located about thirty-five miles north of Jerusalem, was to be considered the central sanctuary. The two mountains were across from each other. From here, the law of Moses was recorded, and read by Joshua to the people. Joshua will have to see to all of this, because Moses will not cross over Jordan with them. Again “plaster them with plaster” means to coat (join) the stones and make (unified) a smooth place to write God’s instructions.

***Deuteronomy 27:5 "And there shalt thou build an altar unto the LORD thy God, an altar of stones: thou shalt not lift up [any] iron [tool] upon them."***

***Deuteronomy 27:6 "Thou shalt build the altar of the LORD thy God of whole stones: and thou shalt offer burnt offerings thereon unto the LORD thy God:"***

These stones are carefully chosen and fit together without any chisel being upon them. They were to be uncut, either to emphasize that the Israelites were not to depend on the technology of pagan craftsmen in building such an altar, or simply because the use of any tool would profane an altar dedicated to the Lord.

***Exodus 20:25 "And if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone: for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it."***

***Joshua 8:30-31***

***30 "Then Joshua built an altar unto the LORD God of Israel in mount Ebal,"***

***31 "As Moses the servant of the LORD commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, an altar of whole stones, over which no man hath lift up [any] iron: and they offered thereon burnt offerings unto the LORD, and sacrificed peace offerings."***

***Deuteronomy 27:7 "And thou shalt offer peace offerings, and shalt eat there, and rejoice before the LORD thy God."***

The burnt offerings and the peace offering established the covenant between God and His people in their new land. They were completely consumed, symbolizing complete commitment to the Lord, while the fellowship offerings were eaten in a communal meal that expressed thanksgiving to God and joy in his presence and eaten in celebration of their covenant.

***Deuteronomy 27:8 "And thou shalt write upon the stones all the words of this law very plainly."***

The main reason for the setting up of the stones with the law written on it, was so the people could know the law themselves. The word "plainly" is added to the writing this time. For people not conducting worship, it might be difficult to understand, if it were not written plainly.

***Deuteronomy 27:9 "And Moses and the priests the Levites spake unto all Israel, saying, Take heed, and hearken, O Israel; this day thou art become the people of the LORD thy God."***

***Deuteronomy 27:10 "Thou shalt therefore obey the voice of the LORD thy God, and do his commandments and his statutes, which I command thee this day."***

As Moses stood earlier with the elders (v. 1) he now stood with the Levitical priests who would also be instrumental in maintaining the nation spiritually after his death. By his public association with them Moses was transferring his authority to the elders and the priests. The priests also repeated the injunction to the nation for them to obey the LORD their God and to obey His commandments. Thus, the priests immediately exercised spiritual authority over the Israelites. Moses’s statement, “This day you have become the people of the Lord your God”, doesn’t mean the Israelites weren’t God’s people before this point. Rather, at this crucial moment in their history, as they were ready to enter the land God had given them, they had recommitted themselves to obey his covenant by drawing a new line in the sand and stepping across it, so to speak. As we said, the sacrifices at the altar established the covenant relationship with God and His people in their land of promise. The day, spoken of, is after they have crossed Jordan, and fulfilled building the altar. The LORD has given them their land of promise. What is their obligation in this?

***Deuteronomy 10:12-13***

***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?"***

***Deuteronomy 27:11 "And Moses charged the people the same day, saying,"***

***Deuteronomy 27:12 "These shall stand upon mount Gerizim to bless the people, when ye are come over Jordan; Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Joseph, and Benjamin:"***

***Deuteronomy 27:13 "And these shall stand upon mount Ebal to curse; Reuben, Gad, and Asher, and Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali."***

***Deuteronomy 27:14 "And the Levites shall speak, and say unto all the men of Israel with a loud voice,"***

The "charge", in the verse above, is like a proclamation. To confirm that renewal in an unmistakable way, Moses commanded the people to divide themselves into two groups of six tribes between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal to hear the blessings and curses read. The tribes that represent the blessings were all born of Leah and Rachel (Ephraim and Manasseh being combined under Joseph), and the tribes announcing the curses were born of the handmaids, in addition to Reuben and Zebulun, sons of Leah. Reuben, though the eldest, was probably selected to announce the curses because of his having defiled his father’s bed by sleeping with Bilhah (Genesis 35:22; 49:3-4). Zebulun was listed with the tribes that pronounced the curses probably because he was the youngest of the sons of Leah and six tribes were needed for each grouping. Although certain tribes announced the curses does not mean that God had cursed their tribe. Moses designated the Levites to read the curses to the people. The Levites were the protectors of the law. They were the spiritual leaders of the people. The Levites mentioned were probably Levitical priests since the rest of the tribe of Levi was standing on Mount Gerizim.

***Deuteronomy 27:15 "Cursed [be] the man that maketh [any] graven or molten image, an abomination unto the LORD, the work of the hands of the craftsman, and putteth [it] in [a] secret [place]. And all the people shall answer and say, Amen."***

These curses are spoken of breaking the law of God. They just go into specifics. The worst offence that can be committed is against God. These sins are covered in the first of the ten commandments. "Amen" means so be it. This would be saying that they agreed to the curse spoken, if they committed this sin.

***Deuteronomy 27:16 "Cursed [be] he that setteth light by his father or his mother. And all the people shall say, Amen."***

Set light by their father and mother shows they have no respect for them. It means they have a low opinion of them. Your father and mother are the instruments God used to bring you life, if for no other reason than that, you should honor them.

***Deuteronomy 27:17 "Cursed [be] he that removeth his neighbour's landmark. And all the people shall say, Amen."***

The only reason a person would remove a landmark, would be to steal the land. Again, this is covered in thou shalt not steal, and also, in thou shalt not covet anything that belongs to thy neighbor.

***Deuteronomy 27:18 "Cursed [be] he that maketh the blind to wander out of the way. And all the people shall say, Amen."***

There is a physically blind person, and there is a spiritually blind person. To cause either one of them to go out of the way, would be very cruel. In fact, from the spiritual standpoint, we should lead them to the Light.

***Deuteronomy 27:19 "Cursed [be] he that perverteth the judgment of the stranger, fatherless, and widow. And all the people shall say, Amen."***

This is speaking of someone influencing the judgement against another for personal gain. It would be especially bad to take advantage of the widow, the fatherless, or the stranger.

***Deuteronomy 27:20 "Cursed [be] he that lieth with his father's wife; because he uncovereth his father's skirt. And all the people shall say, Amen."***

Not only would he sin against his mother, or stepmother, in this, but would bring shame upon his father, as well. This would, also, defame the holiness of the Father in heaven.

***Deuteronomy 27:21 "Cursed [be] he that lieth with any manner of beast. And all the people shall say, Amen."***

Many of the satanic cults today are committing this very sin. Bestiality, many believe, is what started the A.I.D.S. epidemic and COVID pandemic. We see, from this, anyone involved in such ungodly practice is cursed of God.

***Deuteronomy 27:22 "Cursed [be] he that lieth with his sister, the daughter of his father, or the daughter of his mother. And all the people shall say, Amen."***

This covers the terrible sin of incest in our society today. Lot and his two daughters practiced incest. The Moabites and Ammonites that came from that union were evil. They were the enemies of Israel {God's chosen}.

***Deuteronomy 27:23 "Cursed [be] he that lieth with his mother in law. And all the people shall say, Amen."***

This would shame his wife, as well as being evil in the sight of God. Paul rebuked this behavior in Corinth.

***1 Corinthians 5:1-5***

***1 It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.***

***2 And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you.***

***3 For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed,***

***4 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,***

***5 To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.***

***Deuteronomy 27:24 "Cursed [be] he that smiteth his neighbour secretly. And all the people shall say, Amen."***

***Deuteronomy 27:25 "Cursed [be] he that taketh reward to slay an innocent person. And all the people shall say, Amen."***

***Deuteronomy 27:26 "Cursed [be] he that confirmeth not [all] the words of this law to do them. And all the people shall say, Amen."***

Jesus said, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The man that did such a thing would be a murderer. The one who hired him would be a murderer, too. The slang name people call them today is {hit man}. This is premeditated murder. Of the twelve curses, as many as eight can be traced specifically to a violation of one of the Ten Commandments. Moses had issued stern warnings before, but in this ceremony the people would affirm that they understood each point through following it with an “Amen!”. They were pledging their obedience before God on each point and also giving him permission to bring down on them the curse attached to committing the sin described. There’s a new element introduced here that seems to tie these curses together: the fact that these sins could all be done in secret; also, secretly. Nevertheless, the omniscient (all-knowing) and omnipresent (everywhere present) God would see what was done and judge the offender. The last violation: cursed is he who does not confirm the words of this law by doing them is unlike the others in that it is not a violation of a specific commandment but a general catchall violation of the entire body of laws contained in Deuteronomy. While the curses are listed in chapter 27, the formalized recitation of the blessings is stated in chapter 28:1-14 (The COOLJC Blessing Plan).

***Deuteronomy 28:1-14***

***1 And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth:***

***2 And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God.***

***3 Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field.***

***4 Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.***

***5 Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store.***

***6 Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out.***

***7 The Lord shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways.***

***8 The Lord shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto; and he shall bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.***

***9 The Lord shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, and walk in his ways.***

***10 And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord; and they shall be afraid of thee.***

***11 And the Lord shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers to give thee.***

***12 The Lord shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.***

***13 And the Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the Lord thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them:***

***14 And thou shalt not go aside from any of the words which I command thee this day, to the right hand, or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.***

As Israel would learn in the hard and bitter years ahead, they would prove incapable of perfectly keeping God’s law. That’s because the law doesn’t give one the power to obey. It simply points out your shortcomings without granting you the ability to overcome them. In this way, the law is like a mirror—it shows what you look like but doesn’t clean you up. The law is intended to show people our need for a Savior.

***Galatians 3:10-14***

***10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.***

***11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.***

***12 And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.***

***13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:***

***14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.***

**QUESTIONS**

1. Is this just the ten commandments that Moses is speaking of in verse 1?
2. Why must they be great stones?
3. Why must they be plastered?
4. What are they to write on them?
5. What was the only civil law these people had?
6. Their only King is the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
7. All spiritual matters were carried to the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
8. Civil laws would be decided by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
9. Where were they to set up the stones?
10. Where was mount Gerizim located?
11. Who read the law to the people?
12. What was one restriction to building the altar of stones?
13. Who built the altar?
14. What should they do, when the altar is finished?
15. Thou shalt write upon the stones all the Words of this law \_\_ \_\_\_.
16. What does "charge" mean?
17. What tribes were represented on Mount Gerizim?
18. Who were these tribes descended from?
19. What tribes were represented on Mount Ebal?
20. Who speaks between the mountains?
21. What does "Amen" mean?
22. To set light by their father and mother shows they have no \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for them.
23. What two kinds of blindness are there?
24. Verse 20 is speaking of a sin against whom?
25. What is the basis for these statements Moses made here?