

## ***THE ONE YEAR BIBLE Reading for March 31:***

### *Deuteronomy 16:1-17:20:*

There are some students of Deuteronomy who have suggested that the long section of stipulations on the Law follow the order of the Ten Commandments. Though that is hard to support in any detail, it is true that, similar to all of the Law teaching in the Old Testament, this section does expound (see Deuteronomy 1:5) upon the Ten Commandments (which are a summary of the Law of God, cf. Matthew 19:17-19). Much of chapters 6-14 give in more detail the directives found in the first three commandments. Chapters 15-16 expound upon the principle of the Sabbath—setting aside time on a regular basis to worship God. In addition to the Sabbatical year (Chapter 15), the three main feasts of the year (Passover, Weeks, and Booths) are explained again to this generation in Chapter 16 (see Leviticus 23). One thing is clear, God has graciously communicated in detail and multiple times to Israel how they are to live faithfully before Him. They should know what they are to do.

Though the first seven verses of chapter 17 have affinity with commandments numbers one and two (against having any other gods and against worship with images), they may also be an exposition upon the fifth commandment which, though it speaks of honoring parents, also sets a pattern for honoring those in authority over us. The main focus of this chapter may very well be found in verses 8-13, where we learn about the importance of following priests and judges who are in authority, and in verses 14-20, where Moses addresses what Israel was to do when a king was placed over them. In the latter section Moses warns against the king acquiring many wives and an over-abundance of possessions. Instructions are also given that the king must regularly read the Law to the people and follow it himself. This chapter reminds all of us that God has placed people in authority over us (government leaders, parents, pastors, and bosses) and part of the way we are faithful to God is by submitting to them. At the same time, we also are reminded that if we are in positions of authority, we must carry out those positions according to Scripture.

One final note needs to be made about this chapter. When Israel demands a king in 1 Samuel 8, we must not conclude that the request in and of itself was necessarily wrong. It is true that they wanted the king for the wrong reasons, to be like the other nations and to reject the leadership of the LORD (1 Samuel 8:5, 7). Yet, the LORD had promised to Abraham that kings would be descended from him as part of the covenant God was making with him (Genesis 17:6) and here in Deuteronomy 18 Moses assumes kings will be part of Israel's future. Elsewhere in the Old Testament, godly kings are viewed positively (Judges 21:25; Psalms 20-21, 72). If we miss this, we will not be prepared for later Israel history and Old Testament material which not only speaks of the benefit of a godly king, but also which looks forward to the ultimate Messiah/king who will reign over God's people eternally (2 Samuel 7:12-13; Isaiah 9:6-7).

### *Luke 9:7-27:*

Luke challenges us in this section with a question by Herod Antipas, a ruler over Galilee (4 B.C. to A.D. 39): “but who is this about whom I hear such things?” (9:9). The reply to

that question is what he not only wants to answer, but to drive home with great force throughout this book. In our reading today we learn that He is the one who can meet our greatest needs since He can feed the 5,000 men (along with their wives and children) by multiplying the fish and the bread (9:10-17); He is the long-awaited Messiah as confessed by Peter (9:18-20); He is the Savior who knew ahead of time that He would die and be raised on the third day (9:21-22); and He is the one who calls us to the radical discipleship of following Him even unto death, if need be (9:23-27). As you read through the Gospels, hopefully you are discovering that at the heart of following Jesus Christ is growing in our knowledge of Him. The more this happens, the more we love Him, trust in Him, and live for His glory!

*Psalm 72:1-20:*

It is good we learned from Deuteronomy today that kingship can be a good thing, for this last psalm of Book 2 of the Psalter prays for God to bless the king and to bring things to a point that all peoples give allegiance to him. There is a sense in which the people of God knew that for the king to be blessed also meant they would as well. This psalm, of course, looks forward to the time when it will be ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ who will reign over all and peoples from every tribe, language, people, and nation will worship Him (Revelation 5:9-10)!

*Proverbs 12:8-9:*

We learn that good common sense skill for godly living is commended.