

Living as God's Covenant People
Studies in Deut. 1-11, #8

**"Living as the God's Covenant People:
The Consequences of the Covenant"**
Dt. 10:12-11:32

--CEFC 8/13/17

From my own experience as a person in the pew
I have observed that there are a number of ways to end a sermon--

1. First, there is the notorious "**Never-Ending Ending.**"

Here the preacher says "in conclusion," but then doesn't.
The word "finally" is heard four or five times before it's finally over.

In this kind of conclusion, I find that the listeners usually take the preacher
more seriously than he takes himself,
and they finish listening before he finishes speaking./

2. Then there is "**The Sudden and Abrupt Ending**"--
otherwise known as the "Oops! We're-Out-of-Time Ending"--
The name is self-explanatory.
The preacher looks at his watch and just quits.

This often leaves the listeners hanging,
though some are glad that he looked at his watch./

For those who take conclusions more seriously in their preaching,
3. there is "**The Classic Poetic Ending**"—
This can be very effective,
though sadly sometimes preachers' poems
can have a Hallmark greeting-card quality about them--

For example,
God said, "Build a better world"
and I said, "How?"
The world is such a cold, dark place,
and so complicated now.
And I'm so tired and useless.
There's nothing I can do."
But God in all his wisdom said,
"Just build a better you."

You get the idea.

4. "**The Story-Book Ending**" is always well received—
who doesn't like a story?
And in using stories the more sentimental the better, it seems.

Stories have a power to move the emotions,
and can drive home the point and elicit a response.

Closing with a personal anecdote also falls under this heading--
though the preacher always has to remember that personal stories,
can become like home movies--
interesting occasionally,
but not something you want to see every Saturday night.

5. And then there is ending with a **memorable quotation or pithy saying**--
"When all is said and done," said the preacher in conclusion,
"Just remember those immortal words of Winston Churchill
that have meant so much to me through the years,
words that have been forever engraved on my memory--
as Churchill said, "Always . . . No, excuse me, Never give in, Never."

That kind of ending is quite common.
Though, as someone once said,
"To travel hopefully is better than to arrive."
And some sermons prove that to be true. /

But whatever the precise technique that is used,
a sermon with power builds to its conclusion.

Like a great symphony, it recapitulates its major themes
and sets them once again before the listeners.
It reaches a crescendo as it sets down a final challenge,
and calls for a decision.

Like a lawyer in his closing argument,
the preacher seeks to lay out the facts before the members of the jury
in such a way that they feel conscience-bound
to render the verdict in his favor. / /

Now, whether you realize it or not,
in these past couple of months we have been studying a sermon--
a sermon delivered by one of the Bible's most prolific preachers.

Moses has gathered the people of Israel together
on the eastern shore of the Jordan River in preparation for their entrance
into the promised land of Canaan.

And except for a few isolated paragraphs,
the first eleven chapters of Deuteronomy
present a continuous address of Moses to the people.

This is a sermon--

and our passage this morning is that sermon's conclusion.

Moses has much more to say to them, of course--

we're not even half-way though the book.

But in chap. 12 he changes course

and begins to outline the specific stipulations of the law.

The passage we consider this morning is really the end of that long section

in which he sets forth the fundamental principles of living as God's covenant people,
and that's been our overarching theme.

And as a master preacher, Moses builds to a climax,

touching on all the major themes that we have looked at

in the preceding chapters.

As one commentator puts it:

This passage "is unquestionably one of the richest texts in the Hebrew Bible,
exalted and poetic in its language,

comprehensive and challenging in its message.

It purposely tries to 'boil down' the whole theological and ethical content of the book
into memorable phraseology, packed and pregnant,

rich and resonant of all the surrounding preaching.

Indeed, there are not many dimensions of 'OT theology,'

that are not directly expressed or indirectly echoed

in this mini-symphony of faith and life."¹

This is, without question, the **symphonic ending**,

offering a gripping reprise,

repeating the various melody lines

that have been ringing in our ears

from the themes of the last eight weeks.

And like the ending of the lawyer--

it is certainly not a conclusion that will not allow us

to sit back and admire or even analyze,

for it calls to decide-- each one of us--

if we are to live as members of the covenant people of God.

May we be challenged by this recapitulation

of all that Moses has to say to Israel

and to us.

So I invite you to turn with me to Dt. 10, as we begin at v. 12.

Deuteronomy—it's known as the fifth book of the law of Moses.

1. We began our study of the book

by looking at the foundation of this law?

¹ C. Wright, *Deuteronomy*, p. 144.

What is it based on?

And we went first to the playground--

"Hey Johnny, you can't do that. It's against the rules."

"Oh yeah!" Johnny replies, "Who says so?"

"Who says so?"--

In chap. 4 of Deuteronomy Moses addressed that question

as he focused our attention on Yahweh, the God of the Covenant.

He is the God who deserves our respect;

He is the God who demands our reverence.

He is the God "who says so."

The Lord had revealed his glory to Israel on Mt. Sinai,

as Moses tells Israel in 4:35—

"So that you might know that the Lord is God.

Besides him there is no other."

Or in 4:39--"**Acknowledge and take to heart this day that the Lord**

is God in heaven above and on the earth below. There is no other."

And Moses, in his conclusion to the people in our passage this morning,

reiterates this same point--

10:14--"**To the Lord your God belongs the heavens,**

even the highest heavens,

the earth and everything in it."

10:17--"**For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords,**

the great God, mighty and awesome,

who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes."

Consider again who we are dealing with--

the mighty and awesome God.

He is not one to be trifled with.

He shows no partiality.

You can't pull strings to get on the good side of this God--

It doesn't matter who you are—

a phone call from your father won't make a difference,

your rich uncle can't help you.

He will assess us all by the same holy standard--

your earthly achievements cannot impress him.

"**he accepts no bribes**"--

don't pretend to offer him some good deed, religious or otherwise,

in exchange for his favor.

When I was in Costa Rica recently,

I witnessed as hundreds of thousands of Ticos, as they call themselves,

were making a pilgrimage on foot to a sacred shrine outside San José,

most of them crawling on their knees when they entered the church,

seeking to gain some favor from the virgin Mary.

But the Lord doesn't operate that way, Moses says.
He can't be manipulated by some spectacular show of religious piety.

He is God of gods and Lord of lords.
He is the one who deserves and demands our reverence.
He is the one who "says so."

10:20--"**Fear the Lord your God and serve him.**
Hold fast to him and take your oaths in his name.
21 **He is your praise; he is your God,"**

There is no higher authority to which you can possibly make your appeal./

Let's be clear about this fundamental fact—
The Lord, Yahweh, is the God of the covenant.
We must revere him.
"For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords,"

So I ask you,
Do you ever fear God?
Do you ever bow in awe and reverence before him?
We've become so egalitarian in our culture
we've almost forgotten what that might feel like.
But we are not God's equal—
we are but the clay before the potter,
like sheep before a shepherd,
like lowly house servants
before a majestic King.

Without this understanding we can go no further.
For our great God opposes the proud,
but gives grace to the humble.
As the Lord says through Isaiah the prophet:
**"This is the one I esteem:
he who is humble and contrite in spirit,
and trembles at my word" (Isa. 66:2).**

2. Moses moved from who God is in chap. 4
to what he demands in the lives of his people in chap. 5,
listing the Ten Commandments.

And in chap. 10 Moses summarizes God's demand upon his people,
with one simple question:

beginning in v. 12--
**"And now, O Israel. What does the Lord your God ask of you,
but to fear the Lord your God,
to walk in all his ways, to love him,
to serve the Lord your God
with all your heart and with all your soul,
and to observe the Lord's commands and decrees,**

that I am giving you today for your own good?"

These are weighty demands--
the Lord requires nothing less than all that we are--
we are to love him and to serve him,
with all our heart and all our soul.
He deserves our total allegiance.
And when you remember who he is,
doesn't that make perfect sense?

But as when we looked at the Ten Commandments,
we must emphasize once again--
the Bible is not about morality.
The Bible doesn't give an autonomous catalogue of moral rules,
a universal ethical code by which to govern our lives--
prescriptions that can stand on their own apart from the God who gives them.

The Bible in general, and the book of Deuteronomy in particular,
is not about morality--
it is about a relationship
a relationship with a holy God who rescues us from our sins
and who calls us to himself to be his children
and to display his family likeness in the world.

For the first of the Ten Commandments—
"You shall have no other gods before me" (5:7)
is preceded by an affirmation of God's redemptive love—
**"I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt,
out of the land of slavery"** (5:6).

The Lord's demands upon us--his laws--
depend upon the prior covenant relationship he establishes,
and they must be seen in the light of his gracious purposes for us.
They are "**for your own good**," he declares.

The law is itself a gift, not a burden.
God's decrees are paths to life.
they are given by the Lord your God--
the one who allows you to call him Father.

And the focus of the law, here and throughout the Bible
is that we might love him.

Like any father, he doesn't want a lifeless obedience to rules.
He wants our hearts;
he wants a loving response to his gracious authority.

When you are confronted by the demand of God upon your life,

do you feel guilty?

If you have understood the message of this covenant relationship--
You should first of all feel loved instead.

The demand of the covenant—
it flows out of the Lord's desire to live in a loving relationship with us.

3. We move from the theme of chap 5 to chap. 6
where we read, "**Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One.**"

This, as we saw, was the core of the covenant—
the central truth about the God we worship--
It's what the Jews call the *Shema*—from the Hebrew word for "to hear."
It's just six words in Hebrew--

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה יְהוָה אֶלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד :

"The LORD is One"—

This oneness of God can have two dimensions--

1. First, it can be the affirmation that the LORD, the God of Israel, is unique—
He alone is God.
The emphasis is on his singularity.²

The pagans had a multitude of gods who vied with one another for control and power,
and each god in the pantheon
ruled over a particular sphere of human experience.

But Yahweh, the God of Israel, is not like those gods—

He is the one God over all other powers—he has no equal;
he has no rival.

He is the one God who created all things,
and he is the one God who demonstrated his supremacy
over all the other so-called gods of Egypt
in redeeming his people from the power of Pharaoh.
He alone is God.

2. Second, this statement that the Lord is one can be understood
as an affirmation that the God of Israel is not only unique,
he is also unified--
He has one will, one purpose, one plan by which he rules the cosmos.
To say "The Lord is one" is to affirm his unchangeableness and his consistency—
it is a statement of his internal integrity.

Every aspect of God's being—all his eternal attributes—
are perfectly joined in the oneness of his nature.

The theological term for this is God's simplicity—

² Ibid.

that is, God is not composed of competing parts.
He does not have the various attributes of goodness, mercy, justice and power;
He is goodness, mercy, justice and power.
Every attribute of God is identical with his essence—
so his justice is always perfectly loving,
and his love is always perfectly just.

And since Yahweh, the Lord, alone is God
he alone deserves our total allegiance.
Because he is an undivided God,
so he deserves our undivided devotion--
The *Shema* is followed by this supreme command:
**"Love the Lord our God with all your heart
and with all your soul and with all your strength."**

"These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts."
and then Moses says,
"Impress them upon your children" (6:4-6).

The covenant is to continue as it is passed on to new generations.

This command of chap. 6 is repeated almost verbatim in chap. 11

11:18-21—

**"Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds;
tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads.
Teach them to your children,
talking about them when you sit at home
and when you walk along the road,
when you lie down and when you get up.
Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates,
so that your days and the days of your children may be many
in the land that the LORD swore to give your forefathers,
as many as the days that the heavens are above the earth."**

There is no other word to describe this process
than the much maligned word "indoctrination"—
which simply means leading people into the doctrines or principles
by which a community desires to live.
We are to teach doctrine, truth.

The Bible stresses the central role of the home in this learning process.
The home is the indispensable nest of nurture.

But in teaching our children about God,

Moses reminds parents of two things--

1. First, spiritual truth must be a personal part of your life--

"Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds."

If you have not dealt with God personally
you can hardly be surprised if your children don't.
If you've not been personally gripped by the gospel,
then you have nothing to give.

And, second, if the faith of the fathers and mothers is to filter down to our children--
2. Your relationship with God must not only be personal,
it must also be a pervasive part of your life--
a pervasive part of your home.

**"Teach them to your children,
talking about them when you sit at home,
and when you walk along the road,
when you lie down and when you get up.
Write them on the door frames of your houses and on your gates."**

Your relationship with God is to impact all of life,
and your children must see that.
You life will teach more than your words.

Take advantage of those little teachable moments
in the lives of your children--
whatever they may be.

We need to capture all of life for Christ.
and to use all of life to capture our kids for him.

Passing the baton on to the next generation.
Communicating the covenant to our children--
It is the responsibility of the home.

4. There are, of course, dangers to be faced as God's covenant people--
The land the Israelites were entering was enemy country--
occupied territory,
filled with a sinful culture that could easily ensnare the hearts of the people.

So we read in 11:13--"**Be careful or you will be enticed to turn away
and worship other gods and bow down to them.**"

This recalls the admonition that we explored in chap. 7 concerning
the conquest of the covenant.

Moses spoke of what some people might call "Holy War"--
7:1,2--"**When the Lord your God brings you into the land to possess
and drives out before you many nations
and when the Lord your God has delivered them over to you
and you have defeated them then you must destroy them totally.
Make no treaty with them and show them no mercy.**"

Does this sound harsh?

We must remember that the sovereign Lord, the ruler of history,
the one who holds the nations in his hand--
he has the right to say that this nation shall live
and this nation shall die.
He is God, after all.

More than that--this sovereign king is also a righteous judge.

The culture of Canaan was corrupt to the core and was ripe for judgment,
filled with child sacrifice, magic, sorcery, witchcraft, sexual promiscuity.
His patience had come to an end;
he could endure their sin no longer.

But the Lord's final concern in the destruction of the Canaanites
was in the conquest of his covenant with Israel.
Israel belonged exclusively to the Lord.
This was her divine destiny.
This was her divine duty.
Their very existence depended on their faithfulness to this relationship.

It is in this context that we have to understand
the command to utterly annihilate the wicked nations that occupied the land
that Israel was about to enter.

Back in 7:2ff--"**When the Lord your God has delivered them over to you
and you have defeated them,
then you must destroy them totally.
Make no treaty with them. Show them no mercy.
Do not intermarry with them, . . .
for they will turn your sons away from following me
to serve other gods
and the Lord's anger will burn against you and will quickly destroy you."**

The Lord's righteous anger acting in judgment against the nations of the land
corresponds to his covenant love acting in mercy toward his people,
protecting them from the evil influence of the Canaanite culture./

Turning back to today's passage,
Moses again warns the people in 11:16,
when you enter the land,
**"Be careful, or you will be enticed to turn away
and worship other gods and bow down to them."**

We live in a culture that would entice us and ensnare us, to be sure,
in all sorts of subtle and not-so-subtle ways.
We must be vigilant and remain faithful to our covenant god.
We must put to death every rival to his rule in our lives,
as Paul tells us--

**"Put to death whatever belongs to your earthly nature:
sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desire and greed.
you must rid yourselves of all such things as these--
anger, rage, malice, slander and filthy language from your lips."
(Col 3:5-8)**

The conquest of the covenant demands putting to death
the sin within our own hearts,
taking every thought captive to Christ.

The conquest of God's covenant in our lives comes through drastic action
against all that opposes God's holiness
and this faithfulness to him also comes through
remembering all that he has done for us.

"Remember"--

Remember the theme of chap. 8?—

It was the remembrance of the covenant.

Like the Texan's memory of the Alamo,
the memory of what God has done in the past
is to empower our lives in the present.

Notice how Moses again picks up this idea,
Beginning in v. 2 of chap. 11--

**"Remember today that your children were not the ones who saw and experienced
the discipline of the LORD your God:
his majesty, his mighty hand, his outstretched arm;
the signs he performed and the things he did in the heart of Egypt,
both to Pharaoh king of Egypt and to his whole country;
what he did to the Egyptian army, to its horses and chariots,
how he overwhelmed them with the waters of the Red Sea
as they were pursuing you,
and how the LORD brought lasting ruin on them."**

Remember the Exodus--the mighty acts of God on your behalf--
then he continues--

**"It was not your children who saw what he did for you in the desert
until you arrived at this place,
and what he did to Dathan and Abiram, sons of Eliab the Reubenite,
when the earth opened its mouth right in the middle of all Israel
and swallowed them up with their households,
their tents and every living thing that belonged to them.
But it was your own eyes that saw all these great things the LORD has done."**

Dathan and Abiram—described in Numbers 16.

They rose up in opposition to Moses' leadership

and so treated the Lord with contempt.

Your own eyes saw God's holiness in judgment upon them, Moses says.

These were the lessons Israel learned in the desert.

They experienced the Lord's discipline.

They were to remember what the Lord taught them in the bad times
so that they would not forget the Lord when times were good.

The Lord had entered into a covenant relationship with Israel

and Israel's greatest challenge was to remain faithful to it

by remembering the Lord.

And most of all, they were to remember God's grace--

for this covenant, this relationship, was God's idea.

He took the initiative.

It was something that Israel never deserved.

The promise of God's goodness to Israel

was from first to last

based on the principle of God's grace.

This, of course, was our theme last week

and Moses drives it home in his conclusion here.

10:14,15—

**"To the LORD your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens,
the earth and everything in it.**

**Yet the LORD set his affection on your forefathers and loved them,
and he chose you, their descendants, above all the nations, as it is today."**

Who are you that God should care about you?

You are nothing;

you deserve nothing.

Do you think your great size as a nation merits God's blessing?--

7:7--**"The Lord did not set his affection on you or choose you**

because you were more numerous than other peoples,

for you were the fewest of all peoples,

but it was because the Lord loved you

and kept the oath he swore to your forefathers."

Nor do you deserve anything because of your superior righteousness--

No—in 9:6--**"Understand, then, that it is not because of your righteousness**

that the Lord your God has given you this good land to possess,

for you are a stiff-necked people."

Returning to our passage this morning—

11:16--**"Circumcise your hearts, therefore,**

and do not be stiff-necked any longer."

He calls us for this very purpose—

to reflect back to him something of his own character
and so bring him glory
Our hearts are to reflect the heart of our God.

Unlike pagan deities, he's not a god who only concerns himself
with the wealthy and the strong—

No--
10:18—"He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow,"—
those without power and resources.

"and he loves the alien"--
the foreigner who had no family connections,
no land to cultivate—
the people who were vulnerable to exploitation and oppression.
"he gives them food and clothing," we read.

v.19--"And you are to love those who are aliens,"—
Moses will have lots to say about how the Israelites are to live
as he expounds the law in the rest of the book,
so why does he pick out this particular concern for special attention here?

Perhaps because if they did care for foreigners in their midst
they would surely carry out the demands toward their own people.
The mark of any civilization, it's often said,
is measured by its treatment of the most vulnerable.

Or perhaps concern for aliens was picked out was because love for foreigners
will always be the first feature of any society to evaporate
in times of economic hardship or outward threat.³

People are always looking for scapegoats when things get bad.
We see that too often, don't we.

But there is another reason why this is emphasized--
"you are to love those who are aliens,"—
for you yourselves were aliens in Egypt."

"You were an alien people—
lowly slaves in Egypt,
yet I took notice of you and cared for you.
When you had nothing to commend you,
nothing that should elicit my love and support,
I reached out to you in love—
Don't you have an obligation to do the same?"

The love we have received
becomes the source of the love we are to give. /

"What did you deserve from me?" The Lord asked Israel.
and "What do you deserve from me?" The Lord asks us.

³ Ibid., p. 150.

The grace of the covenant.

He offers a relationship with himself--

Take this offer and you will get what you don't deserve.

Refuse it and you will deserve what you get.

The Lord has blessed you—

he has blessed you far beyond what you deserve.

Now respond to that blessing, by blessing others by obedience to his commands,
and he will bless you more.

This is the point to which all that Moses has been telling the people leads,
as he concludes by setting before Israel the consequences of the Covenant--
11:26-28—

"See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse—

the blessing if you obey the commands of the LORD your God

that I am giving you today;

the curse if you disobey the commands of the LORD your God

and turn from the way that I command you today

by following other gods, which you have not known."

A blessing or a curse--this is the bottom line, isn't it.

It's your choice.

Which is it to be?

You see, we live in a moral universe.

Our God orders this world such that our choices in life mean something--
they have consequences.

All that Moses has said about who God is and what he has done--
his power and grace

and this covenant relationship he establishes with his people--
all of this is leading to this stark choice that is set before each one of them,
and us.

Will it be a blessing or a curse—which do you choose?

And isn't this how Jesus concluded his most famous sermon--

the Sermon on the Mount?

There are only two gates, Jesus says--

a wide gate that opens onto a broad road that leads to destruction.

That's the gate that many choose.

And there is a narrow gate that opens onto a narrow road that leads to life

which only a few will find.

Will you be among the many

or among the few?
There are only two ways to go—
there are two gates leading to two very different roads--
which way will you turn?

A blessing or a curse—life or death?
I mean, when you think about it—
what's the choice?
It's a no-brainer!!
Why wouldn't you want to choose God's blessing?

What is he asking of you,
but to fear him and to walk in all his ways, and to love him—
to serve him with all your heart and all your soul—
and to observe his commands—which are for your own good.
He is God and he loves you—
He made you--he wants what is best for you.
Why would you not do what he says?

You've seen his power, Moses says—
when he sent the ten plagues
and brought you out of Egypt--
you saw **"what he did to the Egyptian army, to its horses and chariots,
how he overwhelmed them with the waters of the Red Sea
as they were pursuing you,
and how the LORD brought lasting ruin on them."**

You've experienced his loving care—
how he preserved your lives in the wilderness
and is about to bring you into this good land.

Why would you ever consider not choosing the rich blessing that he sets before you—
if you but respond to him in loving obedience?
Don't be stupid!

I suppose I could end this sermon this same way Moses ended him—
with a simple call to decision—
Here it is—blessing or a curse?
What's it going to be?
Will you love God and obey him or not?

I could do that—

But we know the story, don't we.
Israel fails again and again to choose God's blessing—
again and again they choose the broad way that leads to destruction.
They choose a curse.

But why?

It just doesn't make sense.
The God who created them,
the God who loves them and wants what is best for them—
he shows them the way of life,
and they turn their back on him—
over and over again.

Their hearts are hard;
their necks are stiff—
they stubbornly turn from the way of life
and choose the curse.

It baffles us—
it defies explanation—
Why would they ever not choose God's blessing?
It's a mystery, isn't it—
it's the mystery of evil in the human heart.

And friends, what is true of Israel, is true of every one of us.
Our hearts are hard;
our necks are stiff.
We do not love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, strength and mind.
We are subject to the same curse.

This results in a double distress—
We not only need to be rescued from the curse of the law;
we also need to be renewed so that we might truly love the Law-Giver./
As time goes on,
the prophets of Israel see the depth of the problem—
there is a corruption at the core of the human heart—
they call it a heart of stone—
a hardness to the love of God,
a proud and stubborn refusal to live under his loving authority.

So Jeremiah pointed to the need of a new covenant—
One that went beyond a mere outward description of God's demands,
but one in which the Lord would bring forgiveness
and put his law in our hearts.
But that's jumping ahead—
we'll talk more about that in a couple of weeks.

My point here is simply that our moral resolve is not enough.
You simply deciding to do better—it won't last.
On our own, you and I are no better than
Israel on the side of the Jordan River about to enter into the promised land.

We need more than what Moses can give us—
for Moses can only point us forward
to the One who did love the Lord his God with all his heart
and with all his soul,
and with all his strength.

Moses speaks of the truth of God that is the way to life,
but we need the One who is the way, the truth and the life.

We need one who not only succeeds where we have failed—
and who mediates and intercedes for us before God,
by giving his own life as a sacrifice for our sin;
we also need a new heart which only he can give,
by sending his Spirit to change us from the inside.

The law came through Moses,
but grace and truth come through Jesus Christ. /

So I conclude by calling you to choose God's blessing
that is found in fearing him and walking in his ways in love;
but I call you to understand that that blessing can only come
as you humbly acknowledge your need of God's Son Jesus Christ
as the one who makes that blessing possible.

For Jesus ends his Sermon on the Mount
not by urging us to follow the law given by Moses,
but by pointing us to himself—
**"everyone who hears this words of mine and puts them into practice
will be like a wise man who built his house upon the rock.
The rain came down, the streams rose,
and the winds blew and beat against that house;
yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.
But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice
is like a foolish man who built his house on sand.
The rain came down, the streams rose,
and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."**

Wisdom or folly,
life or death—which will it be?

prayer—

The Call of Jesus--

Mt. 11:28-30--come to me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest.
Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am and gentle and humble in heart, and
you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

a blessing or a curse—
Live as God's covenant people--

closing hymn: #283 *We Are God's People*

Benediction: "For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us
so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures
we might have hope.

May the God who gives endurance and encouragement
give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus
so that with one heart and mouth
you may glorify the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Amen.

Living as God's Covenant People
Studies in Deut. 1-11, #8
Aug. 10, 2017

"Living as the God's Covenant People" **Dt. 10:12-11:32**

Our passage this morning functions as the conclusion to Moses' great sermon to the people of Israel as he prepared them to enter the promised land. Here he recapitulates all that he has impressed upon them in the first eleven chapters of the book.

I. The God of the Covenant—

"Fear the LORD your God" (10:12)

II. The Demand of the Covenant—

"Love the Lord your God . . ." (11:1)

III. The Continuation of the Covenant—

"Teach [these words] to your children," (11:19)

IV. The Conquest of the Covenant--

**"Be careful,
or you will be enticed to turn away" (11:16)**

V. The Remembrance of the Covenant--

"Remember . . ." (11:2)

VI. The Grace of the Covenant

**"The Lord set his affection on your forefathers
and he chose you . . ." (10:15)**

VII. The Consequences of the Covenant

**"See, I am setting before you today
a blessing and a curse" (11:26)**

"Now choose life, . . . For the Lord is your life"

Sermon Discussion:
Living as God's Covenant People
Studies in Deut. 1-11, #8

**"Living as the God's Covenant People:
The Consequences of the Covenant"
Dt. 10:12-11:32**

- Take some time to read through this entire passage—it beautifully sets out the great themes of the first 11 chapters of the book.
- As you consider the themes of these eleven chapters, which was most significant for you?
 - I. The God of the Covenant—
"Fear the LORD your God" (10:12)
 - II. The Demand of the Covenant—
"Love the Lord your God . . ." (11:1)
 - III. The Continuation of the Covenant—
"Teach [these words] to your children, " (11:19)
 - IV. The Conquest of the Covenant--
"Be careful,
or you will be enticed to turn away" (11:16)
 - V. The Remembrance of the Covenant--
"Remember . . ." (11:2)
 - VI. The Grace of the Covenant
"The Lord set his affection on your forefathers
and he chose you . . ." (10:15)
- Why might it be that care for aliens is given special attention in this passage?
- In response to this word of God, why is our own moral resolve to do better not enough?
- So what are we to do if we want to share in God's blessing?