

Introduction to the Law

Study Guide

Deuteronomy 4:44-49

I can remember a time that I got into trouble at school; I had to stay inside during recess for punishment. As the other children were out playing, I was sitting at my desk with pencil in hand being forced to write the words, "I will not talk in class." I did not have to write it once, or even twice. I had to write until it seemed as if my hand would fall off. Perhaps you have had the same experience.

What is the purpose of such a punishment? Was it to shame me? Was it to make me feel pain? Whatever the evil intentions or strange purposes my teacher had, one thing was true. When I was finished, I knew not to talk in class!

Repeating the same things over and over again has a way of sticking it in our minds. Usually those things are very important. That is why your parents will repeat the same things over and over to you, and sometimes make you repeat those things back to them.

In Deuteronomy 4:44-49, Moses begins to repeat the Law one more time. By repeating the law, first given at Mount Sinai almost thirty eight years earlier, it showed that God was very serious about these important commands. This second giving of the Law would engrave the Word of God on the minds of these Israelites and let them know that, even though the generation that came out of Egypt was dead, God still demanded obedience of them.

This week, we too will take another look at the law. The relationship of the Christian to the Law of Moses is a topic that many find confusing. Because of this, we will study what the law is, the purpose of it, and how we should view it.

Day 1

Read Deuteronomy 4:44-49

1. From verses 44 and 45, what are the three aspects of God's instruction to Israel? What are the distinctions between these aspects?

2. Why do you think that Moses goes into so much detail about the place and the historical events surrounding the original giving of the Law?

3. The Ten Commandments are a summary of the principles found throughout the Law of Moses. Write out the Ten Commandments here. Try to see if you can come up with them from memory. (If you need to look, they can be found in Deuteronomy 5).

4. Read Matthew 22:34-40. How can the Law be even further summarized?

5. Pray that God will help you to understand His Word so that you will view the Old Testament Law correctly and appreciate the benefits that it has for you.

Day 2

Read Exodus 19:16; 20:18-20 and Deuteronomy 5:5, 23-25.

1. What was Israel's reaction to the giving of the Law? Why did they have this reaction? What is your reaction to the Law when you read it?

2. Read Deuteronomy 5:32, 33; 17:20; 28:14; Joshua 1:7; 23:6; James 2:10 and Matthew 5:48. Did God expect total obedience to His Law? Was there any allowance to break it, -even a little? Based on your answers, what is the only way a man can be right with God?

3. Read Romans 3:20. Has anyone ever been able to have a right standing with God based upon his obedience to the Law?

4. Because man repeatedly broke these laws, God provided a way that these sins could be atoned for. Read Leviticus 16:1-34. Because of man's sin, what did men have to do?

5. Read Hebrews 10:1-4. Did this ceremony ever really make a person pure again?

6. Jesus Christ came in order to be a perfect sacrifice that could truly make a person clean. Praise God for Christ, who is a better Priest, with a better Sacrifice, by which he sealed a better Covenant. Thank Him for bringing you into a relationship with God that you could never attain on your own.

Day 3

Read Hebrews 8:6-13

1. Based upon these verses, is the New Covenant that Christ sealed with his perfect Sacrifice a revision of the Old, or totally different?

2. Verse 7 says that the Law of Moses had fault. What was wrong with it? (See Hebrews 7:11 and 10:1-4 for help). From your answer, was the problem with the Law or the people?

3. Read Romans 6:14; 7:1-6; and 10:4. As a Christian under the New Covenant, what is your relationship to the Law?

4. Read Matthew 5:17. Jesus said that he did not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfill it? What does this mean?

5. Do you have any questions about the verses that you have read? Write down your questions here before you forget them and take some time to dig deeper for answers.

6. Acknowledge to God that you are utterly helpless to save yourself. Thank God for setting such a high standard as the Law to help you recognize your sad state. Thank Christ for fulfilling the Law's demands perfectly so that He could make atonement for your sins. Meditate on 2nd Corinthians 5:21 and tell Him of your love for His work.

Day 4

Read Romans 6:15-19

1. From the passages we have read so far this week, it is evident that the Law of Moses was to be followed as a code of conduct during a distinct time in history; from Moses to Christ. Does this mean we can do anything we want? Based on this passage, what would you tell someone who thought this way?

2. Just as the people under the Mosaic Covenant served the Law of Moses, those under the New Covenant are free to serve the Law of Christ through the power of the Spirit (Romans 7:6). The Law of Christ is made up of commands of Christ, and the teachings of the apostles. From your overall understanding of the New Testament, which of the 10 commandments are found there? Which are not?

3. Many times, the Law of Christ even further intensifies commands found in the Mosaic Law. Read Matthew 5:21-48. What two laws did Christ intensify? How were they intensified?

4. The Children of Israel had no hope of ever fulfilling the demands of the Mosaic Law. As believers under the New Covenant, the Spirit's indwelling makes it possible to walk in obedience to the Law of Christ. However, we still fail so often. Take this time to take a spiritual inventory of your life. What sins are you struggling with? What are you going to do about it?

5. Pray that God would forgive you for your failure to obey Christ's Law. Commit to living out your freedom from the Law of Moses by being His slave. Thank Him for the forgiveness that He provides. Worship Him for being your advocate who pleads your case before the Father's throne.

Day 5

Read Romans 3:20; 7:7; 7:12

1. The fact that the Ten Commandments, as well as the rest of the law, has been done away does not mean that they are not beneficial for us today. God preserved them for a reason. In Romans 7:12, what three adjectives does Paul use to show his respect for the Law?

2. What purpose does the law serve according to Galatians 3:19, 24? How does the law fulfill this purpose?

3. Just as we can learn from God's interaction with and commands to Adam, Noah, David, and the prophets, we can learn and benefit from God's covenant with Israel. Refer back to the Ten Commandments and write down four things that are always true about God. (For example: We can learn from the first two commandments that God is a God who is zealous for his children to worship Him and Him alone).

4. Pray that God would use the teaching of the Mosaic Law in your life to teach you more about Himself. Pray that your encounter with His Law would result in greater godliness and humility.