

Deuteronomy 16-18

Good morning and thank you for joining us. Would you please turn in your bibles to Deuteronomy chapter 16?

If you remember, the nation of Israel is on the edge of the promised land, getting ready to enter what the Lord had promised them. But first, the nation needs some reminders.

Deuteronomy is so important because as we read later in the OT, we wonder 'why did the Hebrews have to do this, or follow this command'. Deuteronomy is a 2nd giving of the OT law, and is the foundation to the Hebrew culture and way of life.

We're going to study chapters 16-18 this morning as a variety of topics are addressed including politics, power and prophecies

And you'll notice that both the beginning of chapter 16 and the end of chapter 18 are clearly pointing to the coming of Jesus.

The title of this morning's message is POINTING TO JESUS

Would you please stand as we read verse 1 together?

1 "Observe the month of Abib, and keep the Passover to the LORD your God, for in the month of Abib the LORD your God brought you out of Egypt by night.

Lets pray

Chapter 16 begins with the reminder of the 3 major Hebrew feasts, the first being Passover. We saw the very first Passover in Exodus 12 12 'For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. 13 Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you

when I strike the land of Egypt. At the first Passover, each family in Israel sacrificed the Passover lamb at their home and spread the blood on the door posts.

The feast of Passover commemorates what God did in setting the Hebrew slaves free from Egypt.

1-4

1 “Observe the month of Abib, (our late March, early April), and keep the Passover to the LORD your God, for in the month of Abib the LORD your God brought you out of Egypt by night. 2 Therefore you shall sacrifice the Passover to the LORD your God, from the flock and the herd, in the place where the LORD chooses to put His name. 3 You shall eat no leavened bread with it; seven days you shall eat unleavened bread with it, that is, the bread of affliction (for you came out of the land of Egypt in haste), that you may remember the day in which you came out of the land of Egypt all the days of your life. 4 And no leaven shall be seen among you in all your territory for seven days, nor shall any of the meat which you sacrifice the first day at twilight remain overnight until morning.

Prophetically, the feast of Passover presents Jesus as our Passover **1 Corinthians 5:7 Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.**[fn]

Jesus is the perfect Lamb of God who was sacrificed, and whose blood was received and applied, so the wrath of God would pass over us.

5-8

5 “You may not sacrifice the Passover within any of your gates which the LORD your God gives you; 6 but at the place where the

LORD your God chooses to make His name abide, there you shall sacrifice the Passover at twilight, at the going down of the sun, at the time you came out of Egypt. 7 And you shall roast and eat it in the place which the LORD your God chooses, and in the morning you shall turn and go to your tents. 8 Six days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a sacred assembly to the LORD your God. You shall do no work on it. After the sacrifice of the Passover animal, the eating, and the night vigil which followed, the people would return in the morning to their lodgings or tents where they were staying for the duration of the feast.

Now we're not going to spend much time on these feasts-but they are detailed in Leviticus 23.

The Feast of Weeks, also known as Pentecost is discussed in the next few verses. It took place 50 days after the Passover.

9-12

9 "You shall count seven weeks for yourself; begin to count the seven weeks from the time you begin to put the sickle to the grain. 10 Then you shall keep the Feast of Weeks to the LORD your God with the tribute of a freewill offering from your hand, which you shall give as the LORD your God blesses you. 11 You shall rejoice before the LORD your God, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, the Levite who is within your gates, the stranger and the fatherless and the widow who are among you, at the place where the LORD your God chooses to make His name abide. 12 And you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and you shall be careful to observe these statutes.

Everyone was to be included in the celebration- the poor, widow, orphan, priest – even the servants were to partake.

The 3rd mandatory feast was the Feast of Tabernacles

13-15

13 “You shall observe the Feast of Tabernacles seven days, when you have gathered from your threshing floor and from your winepress. 14 And you shall rejoice in your feast, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant and the Levite, the stranger and the fatherless and the widow, who are within your gates. 15 Seven days you shall keep a sacred feast to the LORD your God in the place which the LORD chooses, because the LORD your God will bless you in all your produce and in all the work of your hands, so that you surely rejoice. Leviticus 23 tells us the Feast of Tabernacles was all about celebration, rest and reflecting upon the faithfulness of God.

Now you’ve seen several times it says the ‘place where the Lord chooses’. This is pointing to the future when Jerusalem will be home to the temple that Solomon constructs. Until that time, everything revolved around the portable tabernacle.

16 “Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Tabernacles; and they shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed. ”

17 Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God which He has given you.

And remember, as a Jew, Jesus was obedient to this command; He made the trip from Galilee to Jerusalem to be at these feasts **John 7:10 But when His brothers had gone up, then He also went up to the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.**

Verses 18-20 talk about the necessity for the nation to practice justice.

18 “You shall appoint judges and officers in all your gates, which the LORD your God gives you, according to your tribes, and they shall judge the people with just judgment. 19 You shall not pervert justice; you shall not show partiality, nor take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and twists the words of the righteous. 20 You shall follow what is altogether just, that you may live and inherit the land which the LORD your God is giving you. Notice what bribes do-*they blind the eyes of the wise and twist the words of the righteous*. Yet how often are our leaders capitulating to bribes? Now they don’t call them bribes, but its exactly what they are-where money and campaign contributions are used as leverage to promote certain policies and laws?

Isn’t it odd that of our elected officials have retirement accounts like most of us have retirement accounts-401ks or IRA’s or whatever, yet they are responsible for the legislation and regulation of the very companies that provide their wealth....

Chapter 16 ends with the forbidding of idol trees and pillars

21 “You shall not plant for yourself any tree, as a wooden image, near the altar which you build for yourself to the LORD your God. 22 You shall not set up a sacred pillar, which the LORD your God hates. Repeatedly God gives instructions to avoid anything associated with idol worship.

Chapter 17 begins by giving a reminder of the animals that were to be offered to the Lord.

1 “You shall not sacrifice to the LORD your God a bull or sheep which has any blemish or defect, for that is an abomination to the LORD your God. God demanded a perfect sacrifice. And no matter how good a person tries to be, everyone falls short. Only

Jesus could be the perfect, sinless, sacrifice. And that's what the entire OT sacrificial system did-it pointed for the need of the perfect one-Jesus. **Hebrews 10:11-14 11 And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. 12 But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, 13 from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. 14 For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.** We don't need to sacrifice animals. The blood of Christ has cleansed us from our sins.

2-7

2 "If there is found among you, within any of your gates which the LORD your God gives you, a man or a woman who has been wicked in the sight of the LORD your God, in transgressing His covenant, 3 who has gone and served other gods and worshiped them, either the sun or moon or any of the host of heaven, which I have not commanded, 4 and it is told you, and you hear of it, then you shall inquire diligently. And if it is indeed true and certain that such an abomination has been committed in Israel, 5 then you shall bring out to your gates that man or woman who has committed that wicked thing, and shall stone to death that man or woman with stones. 6 Whoever is deserving of death shall be put to death on the testimony of two or three witnesses; he shall not be put to death on the testimony of one witness. 7 The hands of the witnesses shall be the first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people. So you shall put away the evil from among you. The witnesses had to be so certain of what they saw that they were willing to initiate the execution. This resulted in a natural deterrent not only of committing the crime, but in falsely accusing someone.

This puts the words of Jesus in John 8 regarding the woman taken in adultery in perspective: **John 8:3 Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, 4 they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman was caught^[fn] in adultery, in the very act. 5 Now Moses, in the law, commanded^[fn] us that such should be stoned.^[fn] But what do You say?"^[fn] 6 This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear. 7 So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up^[fn] and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first."**

8 "If a matter arises which is too hard for you to judge, between degrees of guilt for bloodshed, between one judgment or another, or between one punishment or another, matters of controversy within your gates, then you shall arise and go up to the place which the LORD your God chooses. 9 And you shall come to the priests, the Levites, and to the judge there in those days, and inquire of them; they shall pronounce upon you the sentence of judgment. The priests served as a court of appeals. The leaders could bring difficult cases to them.

10 You shall do according to the sentence which they pronounce upon you in that place which the LORD chooses. And you shall be careful to do according to all that they order you. 11 According to the sentence of the law in which they instruct you, according to the judgment which they tell you, you shall do; you shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left from the sentence which they pronounce upon you." So, no matter what the decision of the priests were, those who brought their case to the priest were bound to the decision. There were no further appeals left-the decision was final.

12 Now the man who acts presumptuously and will not heed the priest who stands to minister there before the LORD your God, or the judge, that man shall die. So you shall put away the evil from Israel. 13 And all the people shall hear and fear, and no longer act presumptuously. If someone tried to usurp the priest's authority, it was an immediate death penalty.

Now verse 14 is very interesting, because God gives a prophecy as He looks into the future of Israel

14 "When you come to the land which the LORD your God is giving you, and possess it and dwell in it, and say, 'I will set a king over me like all the nations that are around me,' Pause here. God's desire for Israel was to be a theocracy-a nation governed not by a man, but rather God Himself. But about 400 years after this moment, the people demanded an earthly king.

1 Samuel 8:4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah, 5 and said to him, "Look, you are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations." But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." So Samuel prayed to the LORD. 7 And the LORD said to Samuel, "Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them.

God gave them what the Israelites what they wanted. But even before the choice was made, God in His foreknowledge knew this would happen, so He gave Moses instructions to regulate the monarchy.

15-17

15 you shall surely set a king over you whom the LORD your God chooses; one from among your brethren you shall set as king

over you; you may not set a foreigner over you, who is not your brother.

16 But he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, for the LORD has said to you, 'You shall not return that way again.' ' 17 Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself.

In the ancient world when two kings signed a treaty, they ratified it by giving a daughter in marriage to the other king, because you're less likely to attack an in-law. Well most of the time!

An ancient king built his harem through these political alliances by giving away their daughters. Clearly this was not God's desire for the Israel, yet a study of the OT will show that her kings did this. Think of King Ahab-he married the daughter of the King of Phoenicia – a woman named Jezebel. And Jezebel indoctrinated the northern kingdom in the worship of Baal.

Think about king Solomon, who had horses imported from Egypt and multiple wives. Just 2 examples of the future kings who disobeyed God's commandment here in Deuteronomy 17.

18 "Also it shall be, when he (the king) sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book, from the one before the priests, the Levites. Notice, the king was not allowed to delegate this task to a scribe or some subordinate. The king was to copy the Scriptures with his own hand. The king to be personally acquainted with the Word of God.

Verses 19-20 tell us why the king was to know God's word.

19 And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, 20 that his

heart may not be lifted above his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left, and that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel. Imagine what would happen if our political leaders studied God's word each day! We need to pray for our politicians!

Chapter 18

1-2

1 "The priests, the Levites—all the tribe of Levi—shall have no part nor inheritance with Israel; they shall eat the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and His portion. 2 Therefore they shall have no inheritance among their brethren; the LORD is their inheritance, as He said to them. We saw in our study of the book of Numbers earlier this summer how every tribe had been assigned a portion of the Promised Land except for the Levites. As ministers to the Lord, the Levites were to be scattered throughout Israel.

3 "And this shall be the priest's due from the people, from those who offer a sacrifice, whether it is bull or sheep: they shall give to the priest the shoulder, the cheeks, and the stomach. 4 The firstfruits of your grain and your new wine and your oil, and the first of the fleece of your sheep, you shall give him.

5 For the LORD your God has chosen him out of all your tribes to stand to minister in the name of the LORD, him and his sons forever. In place of a land inheritance and in recognition of their priestly duties, the priests had a right to specific portions of the animals offered for sacrifices.

6-8

6 “So if a Levite comes from any of your gates, from where he dwells among all Israel, and comes with all the desire of his mind to the place which the LORD chooses, 7 then he may serve in the name of the LORD his God as all his brethren the Levites do, who stand there before the LORD. 8 They shall have equal portions to eat, besides what comes from the sale of his inheritance.

So after reminding the nation of the role of the priests, God once again warns against the evil that would surround them in Canaan
9-12

9 “When you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominations of those nations. 10 There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, 11 or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead.

12 For all who do these things are an abomination to the LORD, and because of these abominations the LORD your God drives them out from before you. The Hebrew word translated “abomination” means “disgusting or abhorrent”. All of the abominations listed here involve direct demonic influence. God commanded Israel to follow Him alone.

13 You shall be blameless before the LORD your God. 14 For these nations which you will dispossess listened to soothsayers and diviners; but as for you, the LORD your God has not appointed such for you. Again we see where a king in Israel did exactly the opposite of what God commanded-Saul. **1 Sam 28 5**
When Saul saw the army of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart trembled greatly. 6 And when Saul inquired of the LORD,

the LORD did not answer him, either by dreams or by Urim or by the prophets.

7 Then Saul said to his servants, "Find me a woman who is a medium, that I may go to her and inquire of her."

And his servants said to him, "In fact, there is a woman who is a medium at En Dor."

8 So Saul disguised himself and put on other clothes, and he went, and two men with him; and they came to the woman by night. And he said, "Please conduct a seance for me, and bring up for me the one I shall name to you."

Over its history, Israel will go through ups and downs, good kings and bad kings. Godly prophets and evil prophets. And God now looks even further into the future with a prophecy of Jesus.

15 "The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear, Who is this prophet like Moses? Jesus. Look how the crowd described Jesus in **Matthew 21:11** So the multitudes said, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee."

16 according to all you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, nor let me see this great fire anymore, lest I **good**. Like Moses, this coming Prophet would be a mediator, representing God to the people, and representing the people before God. **1 Timothy 2:5** For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,

18 I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. Again this points specifically to Jesus. **John 12:49** "For I have not spoken on My own authority;

but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak.

19 And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him.

What is required? Judgment.

Revelation 20: 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God,[fn] and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is *the Book of Life*. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. 14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.[fn] 15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. Anyone who refuses Jesus will spend an eternity in hell.

I read of 1 commentary that lists 75 ways Jesus was like Moses... **SHOW PIC 1** Both were shepherds. Both fasted 40 days As infants, both were attacked by tyrants who slaughtered innocent kids. Moses turned water into blood – Jesus turned water into wine. Both were willing to die for the nation. Both interceded, and God spared the people. Both were rejected by their brothers. Both were redeemers. Both occupied all three major Hebrew offices – prophet, priest, and king. The list goes on and on. **CLOSE PIC 1**

Yet Hebrews 3 makes it clear Jesus was not only like Moses, He is far greater. We don't have time, but for your homework read Hebrews chapter 3.

The rest of the chapter provides a couple of very simple tests for how to discern a false prophet...

20 But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.’ 21 And if you say in your heart, ‘How shall we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?’— 22 when a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him. In the last couple of years, we’ve seen an incredible number of false prophets rise up, haven’t we? And not only that, the integrity of the information that’s being shared with American’s today isn’t exactly always truthful, is it? We wonder-can I trust this information-what is the truth?

Well there’s good news. If you know Jesus, you know the truth.

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.