

Bringing Your Faith Home:

For You, Your Kids & Your Grandkids (if you have them)

Deuteronomy 4

1. Introduction

a. July 4—Freedom & Independence

- i. On July 2nd, 1776, the continental congress voted in favor of independence, and two days later delegates from the 13 colonies adopted the Declaration of Independence. From 1776 to the present day, July 4th has been celebrated as the birth of American independence.

b. Deuteronomy—constitution for a free people—a covenant treaty of peace with God

2. Israel's Charter (read 1-9)

a. Listen and follow God's instructions so that you may live in the land (1-8).

- i. Be careful! Don't add or take away!
- ii. If you don't listen & follow, you saw God destroy those who followed Baal of Peor.
- iii. If you do listen & follow, other nations will marvel at your wisdom and God's presence.
 1. The way of God is the way of wisdom—a way of living in the world that is attractive to those who are close enough to see it.

b. Watch yourself so you don't forget what you've seen God do (9-14).

- i. Be on your guard! Don't let it slip your mind!
 1. Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it.
- ii. Two things they'd seen, 40 years apart:
 1. Baal-Peor—"your eyes have seen" (v3)—a recent event, maybe a few weeks prior
 2. Mt. Sinai—Exodus 19 (vv10-14)—this happened 2 months after leaving Egypt, almost 40 years ago
- iii. Teach your children and grandchildren, for their sake and for yours.

c. Watch yourself so you don't worship something else (15-38) (read 15-16).

- i. Three reasons:
- ii. No form at Sinai, just a voice. Don't make any idols of any form in creation: people, animals, birds, sun, moon, stars, etc. This is what the people of the world did and still do.

1. Romans 1:25. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie and worshiped and served what has been created instead of the Creator, who is praised forever.
2. Vv. 19-20. All these things were provided for all people under heaven, but the Lord selected YOU and brought YOU out of Egypt to be his inheritance. That's what's happening today!
3. Vv. 21-22. Moses said EVEN I would be excluded from the inheritance, but God is about to bring YOU into the land.
4. V. 23. So don't worship creation. Don't idolize even Moses, your leader. Worship God alone and remember what's he's doing for YOU.

iii. Yahweh is jealous and compassionate (24).

1. Vv. 25-31. Warning and prophecy that after they've been in the land a long time—and had children and grandchildren—they would forget God and act corruptly. Most will perish, the rest will be scattered among the nations, and there will be only a small remnant of survivors. They will worship idols—man-made gods of wood and stone, etc. But then they will return to God, seeking him with all their heart, and he will have compassion on them. Which is exactly what happened.

iv. Yahweh is unique and generous.

1. Vv. 32-38. Since creation, has any other god delivered a people from slavery to be his own people like God did in Egypt? Has any god spoken to his people through fire like God did at Mt. Sinai? No!
2. God was about to drive out bigger and stronger nations than Israel so they could live in the promised land.
3. He did all this because of his love (v37).

d. Summary (39-40)

- i. Recognize and remember that Yahweh alone is God, no other.
- ii. Keep his instructions so that you, your children, and your grandchildren will prosper.
- iii. All of this was instruction for how the people of Israel were to bring their faith home, living as a free people in the land God where God placed them.

e. Next Steps (41-49)

- i. Cities of refuge east of the Jordan.
- ii. Giving of the law—chapters 5-8—next few weeks.

3. Bringing Your Faith Home

a. Life works best when we follow God's ways.

i. Discipleship

1. Matthew 28:19-20. Make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you.
2. John 10:10. I have come so that they may have life and have it in abundance.
3. When we always tell the truth, we don't fear getting caught in a lie, and life is better.
4. When we extend grace to others and stop judging them, we're freer and happier, and life is better.
5. When we're committed to building real community with others, we're less lonely, and life is better.
 - a. David French. "At this moment in history, there is not a single important cultural, religious, political, or social force that is pulling Americans together more than it is pushing us apart."
6. When we focus on the needs of others, we're more content, and life is better.

b. When we forget what God has done for us, we begin to value other things more than following him (v23).

i. We follow most what we value most.

1. Sports, politics, Nascar, YouTubers, hobbies ...
2. We look to something for fulfillment, security, happiness.

ii. How can we watch ourselves so that we remember God alone can give us what we're seeking? What are the practices?

iii. ***The Role of Identity***

1. What God did for Israel; he did for those who would be grafted into their history
 - a. Galatians 3:7-9. Those who have faith are Abraham's sons. Now the Scripture saw in advance that God would justify the Gentiles by faith and proclaimed the gospel ahead of time to Abraham, saying, All the nations will be blessed through you. Consequently, those who have faith are blessed with Abraham, who had faith.
2. Practice tracing your lineage of faith back to the Bible—to God's people in the NT and the OT.

iv. ***The Role of Memory***

1. Remember what he did for you in the Exodus, at Mt. Sinai. Remember what he did to your people who turned away from him at Baal-Peor. Remember how he had compassion on your people who strayed but then returned to him.
2. And remember what he's done for you in your lifetime. Remember when he ...
3. Practice making time to reflect and remember.
 - a. Daily office—slow down for solitude, stillness, silence
 - b. Weekly sabbath
 - c. Monthly, quarterly, yearly rhythms—let's learn the practice of planning together.

v. ***The Role of Teaching***

1. Telling the stories to our kids and grandkids serves us and them.
2. Family Practices:
 - a. Read Bible story books to young kids.
 - b. Tell them the stories of what God's done in your life—reinterpreting your life story through the lens of God's invisible hand.
 - c. Give them opportunities to tell their stories. Young can teach old!
 - i. Jesus said, “whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it” (Mark 10:15, Luke 18:17).

c. **God's jealousy and compassion are both out of love for us.**

- i. He is jealous for our sake because life works best when we follow him.
- ii. He is compassionate because we so easily forget.

d. **God's love is most clearly displayed in Jesus' death.**

- i. Communion reflection—remember, recognize, respond
- ii. Communion confession

Almighty and merciful Lord, we easily stray from your ways like lost sheep. We often forget what we have seen you do in our lives, and we are not careful to follow your ways. We leave undone things we should do; and do things we shouldn't. We know this to be true, but in you is unending compassion.

You, O Lord, have had mercy on us, and restored us through Jesus' sacrifice on our behalf. Considering the overwhelming grace you have extended to us, help us remember you are Lord and follow your ways.

To the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

- iii. Communion observance
- iv. Communion hymn