

Three Important Principles from an Old Book

by Bill Crews

A WORD ABOUT THE “OLD BOOK”: The old book is **Deuteronomy**, the last of the five books written by Moses. Together, they are called “The Pentateuch,” from a Latin word meaning “book of five.” The word “deuteronomy” is derived from the name given this book in the Septuagint (Greek) translation of the Old Testament. It means “second law,” and in Deuteronomy we do have a review of the law given to the Israelites through Moses — and more. One of the Hebrew names given the book, namely, **MISHNEH HATTORAH**, means “repetition of the law” (or “second law” or “double law”). These are not good names for the book, for they have encouraged many Bible classes to skip over Deuteronomy in their studies (“because we have already gone over this material in the previous books”). It is a mistake to skip over Deuteronomy.

What is in the book of Deuteronomy? The farewell addresses of Moses. Knowing that he cannot enter into the promised land, and knowing that he is soon to die, Moses addresses all the congregation of Israel. In his addresses he reviews their history during the past forty years, from Egypt to Moab, goes over the law that God had given them at Sinai, urges them to observe that law with their whole heart, reminds them of the things God had done for them and of his promises of future blessings, urges them to lay hold of God’s promises by loving obedience, and warns them of the dire consequences of disobedience — he especially warns against following after the religions of the pagan nations and against forgetting God when prosperity comes to them.

Take **Deuteronomy** from the Bible, and we would not have the greatest commandment of the law (Deut. 6:5), the passages quoted by Jesus in response to Satan’s three temptations (Deut. 8:3; 6:16; 6:13), the place where the law of Moses permitted divorce and remarriage among the Israelites (Deut. 24:1-2), the test of a true prophet (Deut. 18:20-22), the statement about the things that belong to God and the things that belong to men (Deut. 29:29), the prophecy about raising up a prophet like unto Moses (Deut. 18:15-19), and many other matters.

Why go to any book in the Old Testament for lessons in view of its being “blotted out,” “taken out of the way,” and “nailed to the cross” (Col. 2:14)? Because of principles and lessons from examples, as emphasized in Romans 15:4 and 1 Corinthians 10:11. And because of its many types, copies, shadows, figures of things contained in the new covenant of Christ.

What Are The Three Important Principles?

They are found in Deuteronomy 6:4-6. *“Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah: and thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words which I command thee this day, shall be upon thy heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be for frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thy house, and upon thy gates.”* **Please note these principles:**

1. **Lay up the words of God in your hearts.** Be sincere, not hypocritical — that is, do this because they are the words of God, and because you love God and want to know and do the words of God.
2. **Faithfully observe the words of God.** Practice or obey the words of God. Be good examples, especially to your children, the next generation.
3. **Teach them diligently to your children.** Instruct them; see to it that they learn; pass the words of God on to each ensuing generation. Talk about the words of God frequently; keep them always in mind and ever before you; let them stand out above all other matters.

What Would Happen If They Were Applied?

If only each generation of parents from Shem, Ham and Japheth on had taught their children what they knew about God and His words for them, ... If only each generation of Israelite parents had taught their children the words received from Moses, ... We, as Christians, are more favored than the preceding. We have greater blessings than they; we have a far greater covenant than they, the words that came to us from God through His Son. The same three principles apply to us under the new covenant.

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