

The Gift Of Milk And Honey

Kim Myers

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Today, I would like to get a look at ancient Israel's great bondage under the Egyptians, along with their difficulties, their are groanings, murmurings, and complaining against God and His servant Moses, on their way to this great gift that God had for them, on their way toward the second giving of the law or this book of instruction, the book of Deuteronomy.

The Israelites journey towards the great gift God had for them and the great gift God has for all of us is very, very closely related, brethren. Think about this. The Israelites did not have a prayer of ever being free from the Egyptians. The Israelites were stuck right there in Egypt and they were not getting free if it was not for God.

Exodus 1:13-14 So the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigor. [That is a word we do not use much anymore.] And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage—in mortar, in brick, and in all manner of service in the field. And their service in which they made them serve was with rigor.

The Israelites lives were miserable. They stunk. You would not want any part of it.

Now, the definition of rigor is harshness, it is sternness, it is hardship of living conditions, it is austerity, a severe or harsh act of circumstance. Their lives were not any good, brethren. The Israelites lives stunk and they did not have a prayer of ever being free.

There is nothing good about being in bondage—nothing. You and I were in the same state the Israelites were in; we were in total bondage to Satan and the ways of this world, each and every one of us. Lying, stealing, alcoholism, drug abuse, pornography, adultery, broken marriages, and on and on it goes, which all bring about misery. Then God began to work a series of miracles to

free these people, the Israelites, from their bondage, just like He did with all of us.

Exodus 3:8 [Here, God speaks to Moses] "So I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land into a good and large land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites."

Exodus 3:17 "And I have said I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, to a land flowing with milk and honey."

God repeats Himself here and He mentions again this great gift He has for them, this milk and honey. God also started working a great miracle with all of us, brethren. He started to open up our minds to His laws and His way of life, which was and is a complete miracle. You being here is a miracle. Then God delivered the Israelites with ten great miracles, ending with the death of the firstborn. He also baptized them in the Red Sea. And He defeated the whole Egyptian army as the waters of the Red Sea drowned the entire Egyptian army.

God also worked great miracles in all of our lives during the miracle of our calling. Each and every one of you have a story to tell about your calling. We were all baptized and promised a great gift, just like they were, the gift of the Kingdom of God and eternal life.

Exodus 6:7 "I will take you as My people, and I will be your God. [That is exactly what He did with us.] Then you shall know that I am the Lord your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians."

You and I should also recognize that we are God's people because of the miracles He has worked in all of our lives, especially the miracle of our calling. God has also taken us out of bondage. He has freed us with His truth.

While the Israelites were on their journey towards the great gift God had for them, what did they do? The Israelites complained, they griped, and they murmured. They are just like us.

Exodus 15:24 And that people complained against Moses saying, "What shall we drink?"

They had just seen these miracles and now they were worried about what they would drink. The Israelites were murmuring because they had already forgotten what it was like back under bondage in Egypt. They had already forgotten they had seen many great miracles. But their main problem was they did not trust God. They had very little or no faith, even though everything they were experiencing and going through was a great miracle, just like us, brethren.

What about us as we go through trials? Do we murmur? Do we lack faith? Do we forget that God has worked many miracles for all of us? Do we get in an attitude? You bet we do. We are just like the Israelites.

Exodus 16:2-3 Then the whole congregation of the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. And the children of Israel said to them, "Oh, that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat and when we ate bread to the full! For you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

The Israelites here make a ridiculous statement. It is ridiculous! In this verse, they say how good it was to sit around the pots of meat and eat to the fullest. The fleshpots (KJV) were garbage pots. That is what they were, it was garbage they were getting, brethren. Do you think the Egyptians were feeding the Israelites T-bone steaks, cauliflower with cheese sauce, and big baked potatoes, and then for dessert some homemade apple pie and some vanilla bean ice cream? Do you think that early in the morning, when the sun was just rising and the Israelites were getting ready to go to work, that the taskmasters had coffee and donuts for the poor Israelites?

We all know that none of this happened. The Israelites were fed exactly what the American black slaves were fed by their masters. Both of these groups of

people were fed with what their masters did not want to eat themselves. Think about what the rich white plantation owners fed their slaves. Things like pig's feet and field greens. Do you know what field greens are? Field greens are what the slaves found growing in the field and they could eat them. That is what they were, whatever they could find they could eat.

They fed them things like chitlins. Do you know what a chitlin is? A chitlin is what comes out under the pig's tail. It is the lower intestines. And I used to own a butcher supply and when they come to market they have to be washed, and boy do, they stink! They really stink. The American slaves were fed grits. No offense to you southerners, but you can have my grits. They were fed grits and field corn because it was cheap. The good cuts of meat and the good fruit and vegetables were kept, in both cases, for the Egyptians and for the plantation owners.

Do you know what the Israelites were really saying? When they said we wish we were back sitting by the pots of meat, they were saying we really like bondage. We are used to bondage. We do not like what God is putting us through on the way to this milk and honey. And we do not like the trials and tests were going through. We like bondage. We understand bondage. We are the same, brethren. We understand the ways of this world, do we not?

Deuteronomy 8:2 "And you shall remember that the Lord your God led you these forty years in the wilderness [To do what? Exactly what He is doing with us, to humble us.], to humble you and to test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not."

And what do you think all our trials are about? They are about humbling us and testing us so God can see how will we will react and if we will keep His commandments no matter what.

Deuteronomy 8:16 ". . . who fed you in the wilderness with manna, which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and He might test you, to do you good at the end."

Brethren, that is coming, the good was coming down the road for the Israelites and it is coming for us. The Israelites did not like being humbled

and tested through trials and testings. They preferred what they were comfortable with—bondage—and we are the same. We are no different than the Israelites were. Do you know how many times people within God's church have made comments to me like, "I'm not staying for the whole Feast of Tabernacles. I need to get back to work" or my kids need to get back to school or college or whatever. We want to get back to the world, do we not?

People have told me that their kids have given up enough with the loss of Christmas, Easter, and Halloween; and they are not giving up Christmas. We like bondage, brethren. One man, years ago, gave a sermon and said how much he missed marijuana and how much he liked getting high. Really? Wow! Well, this man has left God's church and the great gift God has for all of us—and this gift is great. He went back to what he knew and understood—complete bondage. And a number of God's people today long for the garbage pots and the bondage of this crazy world we live in. We are no different than the Israelites were.

Exodus 34:6-7 And the Lord passed before him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and upon the children's children to the third and the fourth generations."

God is telling us here what He is like, brethren. He is merciful to us. He is gracious. He is longsuffering. He is abundant in goodness. He is truth, forgiving iniquity and transgressions and sins. If we would just keep His laws, that is all we have to do. He loved the Israelites. He wanted to give them this milk and honey. He was with them in their trials and testings. He also is with us in our journey and trials and testings on our way to this great gift He has for us—the Millennium and the Kingdom of God and eternal life.

Do you know how much God loved the Israelites? He loved them so much that He spoke to Moses over and over again. In Exodus and Leviticus, He spoke to Moses 72 times. He wanted to give them a land flowing with milk and honey. He wanted them to be successful when they took possession of

the land. God gave us the Holy Spirit, brethren. He wants us to be successful. He loves us and He wants us to be so successful that we get this gift that He asked for us, this eternal life and the Kingdom of God.

Deuteronomy 1:8 "See, I have set the land before you [here the Israelites are, they are up to the land and He says]; go in and possess the land which the Lord swore to your fathers—to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—to give to them and to their descendants after them."

Deuteronomy 1:21 "Look, the Lord your God has set the land before you; go up and possess it, as the Lord God of your fathers has spoken to you; do not fear nor be discouraged."

God says here, do not be afraid. This is the great gift I have for you. This is the milk and honey I told you about.

Deuteronomy 1:22-27 "And every one of you came near to me [this is speaking of Moses here] and said, 'Let us send men before us, and let them search out the land for us, and bring back word to us of the way by which we should go up, and of the cities into which we shall come. [Then in the next verse, Moses says that he likes the idea, good idea guys.] The plan pleased me well; and I took twelve of your men, one man from each tribe. And they departed and went up into the mountains, and came to the Valley of Eshcol, and spied it out.

They also took some of the fruit of the land in their hands and brought it down to us; and they brought word to us, saying, 'It is a good land which the Lord our God is giving us [See, the Israelites said, "This was a good place, a good land. This was a great gift."] Nevertheless you would not go up, but rebelled against the command of the Lord your God. [They did not want this gift, brethren. They said they would not go up and possess it. They loved bondage.]; and you complained in your tents, and said, 'Because the Lord hated us, He has brought us out of the land of Egypt to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us.'"

This statement is absolutely silly. God was with them from day one of their delivery from bondage. The Israelites experienced miracle after miracle after miracle, starting with the first plague of ten and it started on the 18th day of the sixth month. God turned the great river Nile and all the streams and ponds and pools of water in all of Egypt to blood. They saw the rest of the miracles God performed against the Egyptians. They saw the parting of the Red Sea. They saw the complete destruction of the Egyptian army. They followed the cloud by day and they slept by a pillar of fire by night.

Their clothing and shoes never wore out for 40 years. They also tasted the waters at Meribah and the waters were not drinkable. They were bitter. God made the waters drinkable by Moses throwing a branch of a tree into the water. One miracle after another. Then, again, the Israelites had no water to drink. So they murmured and got mad at Moses. Things got so bad that Moses was afraid that the Israelites would even stone him. God tells Moses to strike the rock there in Horeb with his rod. Moses does, and God supplies the people with water.

Do you know what a miracle that was, brethren? There was *no water* there. It was completely dry. God gave them a huge lake that was able to sustain about three million people and all their flocks, not for a day or a week or a month, but about a year. Do you realize that the Israelites continued in that neighborhood for more than one year?

They saw the great miracle of manna. They also had the miracle of the quails. They ate manna in the morning and flesh (or quails) at night. These people saw God come down on Mount Sinai and give them the Ten Commandments; and yet they love bondage.

Exodus 19:16-18 Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet exceeding loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. [They were even afraid in front of God. These people were scared spitless. This was another great miracle, brethren, and it scared them.] And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the Lord descended upon

it in fire. Its smoke ascended like a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly. [another great miracle]

They also saw Moses' face shine like the sun because he was in the presence of God when he came down off the mountain. They also saw the cloud of God cover the Tabernacle of the congregation once it was built and erected, as this was a sign for them that God was with them—and God is with us with the Holy Spirit. Everywhere you go—when you are in the shower, when you are asleep, when you are at work—God is with you.

The Israelites saw and experienced and were involved in many, many, many miracles, yet when they got to the milk and honey, they failed. They rebelled against God. So God then led them back into the wilderness to die. Back to bondage, the bondage of wandering in the wilderness for 40 years. For 40 years, brethren!

Think about us. How many of God's called-out people have failed? They went back to what they understood: bondage and this world, just like the Israelites.

Then the second group of God's people came to the milk and honey after the death of the first group, the adults that rebelled, the people that did not understand milk and honey. This group of people only understood bondage. Do you realize that all the Israelites, both groups, should have been unbelievably happy? They should have been doing cartwheels every day. They should have had the fruit of the Spirit and we should be the same. They were free of bondage, free from slavery, and God was with them allowing them to witness miracle after miracle after miracle. They were promised milk and honey—this great gift.

Do you know what the Israelites' problem was? Their problem was that they did not understand milk and honey. They did not get it. They only understood bondage. Do you realize what the gift of milk and honey was? It was a gift from God that no other nation or people have ever been given! They have never been given this. These people were given homes they never worked for. They were given farms and fields that were already cleared and planted. They were given grape vines and orchards, cattle, sheep, donkeys, chickens and goats, that these people never worked for.

Let me ask all you young people a question, because us old people have already been there. We have already done it. How would you like God to give you a home and everything in it? Dishes, pots, pans, furniture, appliances, clothing, and jewelry for all you women. Barns full of implements to grow food, walled cities that you did not build, to protect you and keep you safe. Most of us older people have worked all our lives to pay for our homes and to accumulate all the junk we have got.

Debbie and I bought our first home in 1967 and I have worked six days a week—not five but six—for the next 35 years to pay off our house and to accumulate all the junk we have got. It takes a lifetime of hard work to get a home paid for and gather all the stuff we all have.

Do you even realize how much time and work it takes to just clear five acres of land and get it ready to plant? God gave Israel all this and much, much more. This was the gift. This was the milk and honey He had for them. There are no other people in the whole world that have ever been given a gift like that. We have all had to work for it, brethren.

Deuteronomy 3:4-5 "And we took all his cities at that time; there was not a city which we did not take from them: sixty cities, all the region of Argon, the kingdom of Og in Bashan. All these cities were fortified with high walls, gates, and bars, besides a great many rural towns."

The Israelites in this one encounter takes 60 fortified cities. Just one encounter with many rural towns. They utterly destroyed the inhabitants and they took much spoil, and many cattle. On top of all this God says He will do the fighting for them. He was doing it all for them.

Deuteronomy 1:30 "The Lord your God, who goes before you, He shall fight for you, according to all that He did for you in Egypt before your eyes."

He is talking about what He did to the great Egyptian army, killing them to the last man, and not one Israelite being killed. The Israelites were given a great physical gift that no other people in the whole world were ever given.

All this and yet they still rebelled, complained, griped, and wanted bondage more than freedom. Hard to imagine, is it not?

Why, brethren? Why? Why? Because they did not understand the gift of milk and honey. The greater churches of God are just the same, brethren. We do not understand the Millennium, Kingdom of God, and eternal life. Do you know how I know this? I know this by the way we act, all of us including myself. If we really understood the Millennium, Kingdom of God, and the eternal life, we would act and conduct our lives much differently. We would never be offended. We would be happy, happy, happy! We would do our very best not to offend others. We would love the brethren unconditionally.

Do you know how to love the brethren unconditionally? There are all kinds of ways. I would just like to mention a few: pray for them every day. Look at the prayer list every day and make phone calls and send cards to all the people that are suffering and asking us, you and me, to pray for them. Even though you might know most of them on the prayer list do not pick and choose who you will and will not be friends with within the body of Christ. Do you know how many times I have heard brethren say, "I don't like that person. He's a nerd."

Do you know we are all nerds? We are. If you do not believe me, later today go downtown here and tell the people what you do. Pick out some people and tell them "I go to church on the Sabbath. I keep the holy days." Tell them you pray every day and you study every day. Tell them that once a year you starve yourself; you fast and you do not drink any water. Tell them that. And do not forget this one. Tell them that once a year you get down on your hands and knees and you wash somebody's feet. And when you are all done, you know what? They are going to tell you, they are going to confirm what I just told you. They are going to say, "You're a nerd."

You know, people say that they do not want anything to do with one of their brothers because their feelings are hurt or they did this or that to us. You know, all these things would not happen if we really understood the gift that God has for us because we would be happy all the time. We would never date out of the faith because we would be afraid that we might compromise ourselves right out of receiving this fabulous gift. There would be no Laodicean attitude within the body of Christ. We would keep the Sabbath

and preparation day correctly. We would keep 1st, 2nd, and 3rd tithes properly. We would pray and study every day and we would be in a prayerful attitude all the time, and on and on it would go. But most of all, we would be full of the fruit of the Spirit.

Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love [see, that is what would be full of, brethren, [and we would be full of], joy [we would be full of], peace [we would be full of], longsuffering [we would be full of], kindness, goodness, faithfulness [we would be full of], gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

Do you know why? There is no law, there is not a nation in the world that says you cannot love. There is no law against that. They will not put you in jail for it. There is no law against peace or longsuffering. No law against gentleness. We should be the happiest, most thankful people in the world. Nothing should bother us. We should never be worried or fearful or get down or be depressed. But we are not, brethren, because we are like the Israelites. I am talking about myself just like I am you. We do not understand the fabulous gift God has for each and every one of us, we really do not get it.

The Israelites did not understand what God had for them in His statement of milk and honey. God gave them a fabulous gift in spite of themselves that no other nation or people had ever been given—homes that they did not build, food that they did not raise, and every other thing that they needed or wanted for life or pleasure. All you young people, in order to own your own home and accumulate all the junk all of us old people have, you will have to do what we did. You will have to work almost all of your lives and some of you will still never own a home. And God gave this to the Israelites. He gave them this fabulous gift for free. All they had to do was obey, be obedient (And James talked about obedience earlier.) and live by the covenant that they made with God.

God has a gift for us that is a trillion trillion times better than the gift God gave to ancient Israel. But we do not understand it, brethren. We do not get it. If we did, we would act differently.

What is eternity? What is it? What really is eternity? Because I do not understand it. You know, when I wake up in the morning, some mornings I

look in the mirror and I think I kind of hope I do not live another day the way I feel. And we are going to be given eternity. What will the Kingdom of God be like? What will it be like to be firstfruits even in the Millennium? (That was just gone over here by Charles and he gave us some insight to that.) But what will it really be like, brethren? I cannot explain it to you, but I know it is unimaginable. It is the greatest gift God can give to anybody.

There is a big difference between us and our gift, and the Israelites and their gift. The Israelites were given their gift even though God knew they would fail. You and I do not have the option of failure though, brethren. We *have* to succeed. God will do everything He can possibly do, just like He did for the Israelites, to assure that we will succeed and receive this unimaginable gift. That is what the book of Deuteronomy is all about—the book of instruction. That is what it is all about. That is why God wants it read every seven years at the Feast. So let us look at some of the instructions God has for us.

Now, I am just going to pick out some of the highlights as we go through the book here and we are going to start in Deuteronomy chapter 4. God exhorts the Israelites to obedience first off, right there. To obedience, remember that word. He tells them not to add to or take away from His laws. God also tells them how He will preserve the faithful. This is in verses 1 and 2. Then in verse 9, He tells them to make sure that they pass God's laws down to their children. How are we doing on this one, brethren? How much time do you spend passing God's instructions on to your children? You know, if there is one thing that I would like to do over my life is that I would like to have the opportunity to teach my children again.

Deuteronomy 4:9 "Only take heed to yourself, and diligently keep yourself, lest you forget the things which your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all of the days of your life. And teach them to your children and your children's children."

In Deuteronomy chapter 5, God goes over the Ten Commandments again. Then in verses 22 and 23, God exhorts them to obedience. Once again, obedience, brethren. That is the key.

Deuteronomy 5:32-33 "Therefore you shall be careful to do as the Lord your God has commanded you; you shall not turn aside to the

right hand or to the left. You shall walk in all the ways which the Lord your God has commanded you, that you may prolong your days in the land which you shall possess."

God wants to give us every good thing, brethren. He wants to bless you physically now, but He wants to give you this great gift in the future.

In Deuteronomy chapter 6, God tells the people the great design of God in giving His laws is so the people may fear and obey Him, and that we may have peace and prosperity, be mightily increased. Let us turn to Deuteronomy 6. God talks here about the great commandment of the law. He says,

Deuteronomy 6:4-5 "Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength."

That is the instruction He has there. God also instructs us again in verse 6 to teach His law to our children. Again, very important, brethren.

In Deuteronomy chapter 7, God tells us to consider ourselves to be a holy people. Brethren, we are holy, and that God had made the Israelites as such. He made them holy. He is with you, not for your merits, not because we are great, not because we are better than the other created human beings, but because He *chose* us. We are unique, and that is what John Ritenbaugh is going over with us. We are not better than, but we are truly unique. Do you see how involved God is with us?

In Deuteronomy chapter 8, God exhorts us to be obedient again in verses 1 and 2. In Deuteronomy 8:3, God says we are not to live by bread only, but by every word of God.

Deuteronomy 8:3 "So He humbled you and allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man does not live by bread alone; but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord."

In this chapter God also says He gave the Israelites trials to see if they would be obedient. And He does that with us. God also tells them what would happen to them if they were unfaithful to Him and His laws. There are penalties.

In Deuteronomy chapter 9, God tells the people that the gift of milk and honey is not because of their righteousness. That is not why He gave it to them. In chapter 10, God tells them their hearts must be circumcised and not to be stiff-necked. How are we doing with that, being stiff-necked? We are all a little stiff-necked. In chapter 11, God talks about obedience again, and to teach our children of His laws—again. God says life and death, a blessing and a curse is set before you, you get to choose. Do you want to be blessed? Do you want to be cursed? I will take the blessing.

In Deuteronomy chapter 12, God tells the people to be happy on all their religious observances. I hope you are happy here, brethren. He also talks about clean and unclean meats. He also says, again, not to add to or to take away from His laws. And again, how are the greater churches doing with that? Not very well! In chapter 13, God says, watch out for false prophets and their lying signs. And in chapter 14, God says not to be superstitious. And He also talks about third tithe. In chapter 15, God talks about the year of release, which this year is. He also talks about how holy our offerings are, our offerings are even holy, brethren, because we are giving them to Him. That is what makes them holy.

In chapter 16, God talks about the holy days. In chapter 17 of Deuteronomy, God talks about how they will want a king to rule over them instead of God and how kings and governments of men bring nothing but bondage. Boy, how is that going for all of us? Huh? How is this going for all of Israel? We truly live in bondage under the government we have today in this country and it is getting worse. In chapter 18, God says we are not to sacrifice our children or use any kind of divination or enchantment. We have passed laws in this country that allow us now through abortion to kill our children. And do you know what happened in the very year we voted that in, in this country?

First off, we lost the Vietnam War that year (and we did lose that war) and we sacrificed 50,000 American lives for nothing. Absolutely nothing. And

then you know what else happened? Our national debt used to be kind of like a wave. It flowed along. One president would spend a couple 100 billion. The next president might take it down 50 or 75 billion. But it was a wave that was slowly going up. The year that we voted in abortion our national debt turned up at almost a 60 degree angle and it has never come down since. We are now at almost \$19 trillion upside down! And it is going to get worse, brethren.

Oh, here is something else to think about along that line. You know, we just lit up the White House with the colors of the rainbow. Do you think we are not going to pay a penalty for that? We are. It is coming. I do not know what it is going to be, but we are not going to like it. That is guaranteed.

Deuteronomy 18:10-11 "There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire [and that is what we do with the law of abortion], or who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead."

But yet this stuff goes on in this country; all the time with all the Israelitish countries. We even make movies about it. And a lot of us take our kids to the movies. We are crazy.

In Deuteronomy chapter 19, God tells the people how to treat manslaughter. He even tells us how to do that. In chapter 20, God gives direction in conducting warfare. He also tells them that He will fight for them.

Deuteronomy 20:4 "For the Lord your God is He who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you."

This is quite a promise, brethren, but that is the promise He gave the Israel. And we have seen it in the British and the American and the French as they fought different wars.

In Deuteronomy chapter 21, God talks about the law concerning the stubborn and rebellious son who, when convicted, is to be stoned to death. Think about this instruction from God and how different all of the Israelitish

nations of this present world treat their children. We coddle our children, we spoil them, and we condone our children's bad behavior, and we do it right here in the church! How we treat things is completely opposite from how God treats things.

In chapter 22, God talks about how men and women shall not wear each other's apparel. Well, how is that going for us, huh? We have gone way past that. Men can marry men and women can marry women now. Wow! The whole country now is full of queers. And if you lived in Portland you would really see it. Really! We have a parade, a gay bicycle parade. Can you imagine a bunch of middle aged people riding around on their bicycles naked? We have got it in Portland.

In chapter 23, God cautions against wickedness. When you go forth against your enemies, you are even supposed to treat them correctly. God also says there should be no prostitutes or sodomites in the land. You know, in the early 80s, I worked in Denver, Colorado (and you people that are from Colorado know where Colfax Avenue is). I rented a garden apartment and you know what a garden apartment is. It is when you look out the window, the garden is right there. It is in the basement because that is the cheapest apartment. And I rented the cheapest place I could because I sent my money home to my wife to pay my rent and all that kind of stuff.

Anyway, every day when I would come in from work; they would not be out there in the morning, but in the evenings I would get propositioned. I mean, every day as I walked to my apartment. And I tell them, no, thanks. I'm married. And they tell me what I was missing out on. And I say, yeah, I know what I'm missing out on. But you know, no, thanks. Anyway, the land is full of it and that was years ago, that was in the early 80s. And there are prostitutes. We have got a place in Portland, you know, that is where they are at. You can go down there, everybody knows where it is at.

Then in Deuteronomy chapter 24, God says a kidnapper shall be put to death. We do not do that in this country. In chapter 25, God talks about false weights and measures. In chapter 26, God talks about third tithe. And in chapter 27, God talks about how the people should be exhorted again to obedience. Towards the end of the book here, obedience, brethren, to His laws and His way of life. In chapter 28 God talks about the blessing which

God pronounces on the obedient. This is something we should really think about and take to heart. There is a blessing for being obedient and that is what the blessing and cursing is all about. If you are obedient, good things happen. If you are not, things are not so good.

In chapter 30 God says He will circumcise our hearts and put all these curses on our enemies, another great blessing, if we will listen to His voice and keep His laws. This is, in itself, quite a blessing. In Deuteronomy chapter 31, God tells Moses and the Israelites to read the law of this book of Deuteronomy every seven years.

Deuteronomy 31:10-11 And Moses commanded them, saying, "At the end of every seven years, at the appointed time in the year of release, at the Feast of Tabernacles, when all Israel comes to appear before the Lord your God in the place which He chooses, you shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing."

And then in chapter 32, God talks about the character of God and the corruption of His people. In chapter 33, Moses delivers a prophetic blessing to all the different tribes that make up Israel, and through this blessing we can tell where most of the tribes of Israel are today, which we talk about all the time.

Finally, in Deuteronomy chapter 34, God shows Moses the great gift He has for His people; this land flowing with milk and honey, this awesome gift that no other nation or people have ever been given.

Now, I only picked out a few highlights of the instructions God has for us in the book of Deuteronomy. We all know there is much, much more and we have gotten a lot of it at the Feast this year, brethren, a lot of it. If all of us would just obey the instruction God has for us, things would really go good for us.

Brethren, our gift that God has for all of us, young and old, is a trillion trillion times better than the fabulous gift God gave the Israelites! And that was a fabulous gift. But that was a physical gift. What He has for you is spiritual.

So, do not worry. Be happy. Live by the instruction in the book of instruction and what we have coming shortly shortly, brethren (and Joe talked about it), will knock your socks off—provided you have any socks on.