



CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT THE RELIGION

BIBLE SURVEY

THE UN-DEVOTIONAL

DEUTERONOMY

Week 2



*“So I took the two tablets
and threw them out of my
hands, breaking them to
pieces before your eyes.”*

Deuteronomy 9:17

Trust and Obey: There's No Other Way!

DAY 8

Deuteronomy 9:1-29

Can you remember the last time when you chose not to trust and obey God? What was the result?

1. Would verses 1-5 make the people of Israel confident or frightened as they went into battle against the Anakites?
2. Why was God taking the land away from the previous inhabitants (vs. 4-5)?
3. Why do you think Moses' absence (vs. 10-21; Ex 32:1) would cause the Israelites to turn away from God and worship a golden calf?
4. How do you think Moses felt when he saw the Israelites worshipping the golden calf? (a) angry, (b) anxious, (c) disappointed, (d) frustrated, (e) furious, (f) all of the above.

1. Do you know anyone who was clearly the underdog—who went on, against all odds, to emerge victorious? Was it some personal quality of that person which enabled him or her to overcome—or was it all done by God's grace?
2. "...the Lord your God is the one who goes across ahead of you like a devouring fire" (9:3). What does this mean? Have you experienced God this way?
3. Moses interceded for the idol-worshippers. When have you seen an individual or group saved from destruction as a result of another person's fervent prayer?

Aaron, (v. 20) was the first of Israel's high priests. The last high priest mentioned in the Bible is Ananias (Ac 24:11). The office of high priest spanned more than 1,300 years. At first, the position was open to all descendants of Aaron, but later it was limited to descendants of Zadok, high priest at the time of Solomon. In the second century B.C., the Hasmonean rulers took over the office. Under Herod the Great, it was a political appointment.

OPENING
up to the Word

DIGGING
into the Word

LIVING
out the Word

WINDOW
on the Word

The God of Mercy and Grace

Deuteronomy 10:1-22

OPENING
up to the Word

Have you ever broken a law—such as a traffic violation—and been given a reprieve?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. What instructions did Moses receive in verses 1 and 2?
2. Where did Aaron die? Who replaced him as the high priest?
3. What does God expect of his people (vs. 12-16)?
4. If time permits, consider the attributes of God as described in verses 17-22. Why does Moses describe him as “God of gods and Lord of lords” in verse 17?

LIVING
out the Word

1. Compare Moses’ summary of what God wanted from the Israelites (vs. 12-16) to your own spiritual lifestyle. Are you (a) satisfied with your conduct, (b) anxious because you don’t measure up, (c) confident of God’s mercy and his work in you?
2. Israel entered the Promised Land, not because of their righteousness, but because of God’s grace (v. 11). Can you give examples of how God’s grace was given to you in spite of your actions?
3. Have you ever had the experience of being “fatherless” or a “widow” or an “alien”? Did you experience God providing for you?

WINDOW
on the Word

Acacia (v. 3) is a hard orange-brown, durable wood common in the desert region of Sinai. It was used to make the Ark of the Covenant (v. 1), which held the stone tablets.

Remembering Miracles

DAY 10

Deuteronomy 11:1-32

Are there any incidents in your life that you can explain only as miraculous? Have you shared that information with anyone?

1. Describe the Promised Land based on verses 8-12. How did this land differ from Egypt?
2. What was to be the result of Israel's obedience to God (vs. 8-15)?
3. After all God had done for the people of Israel, why would it be necessary for God to warn them against worshipping other gods (vs. 16-17)?
4. What is the blessing and curse cited in verses 26-32?

1. Give thanks for God's actions in your life—his love, guidance, protection, inspiration and answers to prayer.
2. Is there a difference between having God's word in our "hearts" and "minds" (verse 18)? Why is this distinction made? Who is the ultimate Word of God (Jn 1:1)?
3. In verse 26 God offers the choice of a blessing or a curse. Amazingly, the people of Israel frequently chose the curse. Have you ever made the same mistake—or is God's love under the new covenant different? If so, how?

*The brothers **Dathan and Abiram** led a revolt against Moses and Aaron. Their dramatic demise is recorded in Numbers 16. The brothers complained that Moses had led them out of the relative security of Egypt to die in the desert. They also resented Moses' leadership and authority. God defended Moses by annihilating the brothers and their households.*

OPENING
up to the Word

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WINDOW
on the Word

DAY 11

There's a Right Way and a Wrong Way...

Deuteronomy 12:1-32

OPENING
up to the Word

Does your relationship with God inspire you to grow, act or change in some way?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. What were the Israelites instructed to do after taking over a nation? How were they to worship in the new land (vs. 1-14)?
2. Review Israel's dietary restrictions. Why the prohibition against drinking blood?
3. Why would the people of Israel need the warning in verse 30?

LIVING
out the Word

1. Besides money, what kind of offerings do you give God?
2. What kinds of idols or pagan shrines exist in our culture today? Do any of them tempt you?
3. "The family that prays together stays together" is a popular statement. What has been your experience?
4. What can you apply from this chapter to your personal relationship with Jesus?
5. Why is adding or subtracting from faith a dangerous practice? How does such a thing happen within a Christian context?

WINDOW
on the Word

Eating blood (vs. 16, 23) was forbidden to Israel. Drinking blood was a superstitious pagan practice often done in the hopes of receiving the qualities of the slain animal, such as strength, speed or stealth.

“Be careful not to sacrifice your burnt offerings anywhere you please. Offer them only at the place the Lord will choose in one of your tribes, and there observe everything I command you.”

Deuteronomy 12:13-14



POLYTHEISM VERSUS MONOTHEISM

Most of the world's religions, ancient and modern, are *polytheistic*—believing in many separate gods. *Pantheism*, popular among New Agers, asserts one impersonal god, identical with the universe. By contrast, only Judaism, Islam and Christianity are *monotheistic*, believing in only one God—personal and distinct from the universe. Other differences between polytheism and monotheism are listed below.

POLYTHEISM	MONOTHEISM
Many gods.	One God.
Often looks to a chief god among a pantheon of lesser gods, who may be created beings.	God is inherently superior to and different from all other creatures or aspects of creation.
Conflicts and rivalries may exist in the pantheon. Some gods may be conquered by other gods and incorporated into pantheons of other nations.	God has no rivals. Satan and the demons are his enemies, but they are not gods. God holds authority over all people and nations, whether they believe in him or not.
Various gods may be identified with natural objects, forces, or attributes such as weather, fire, love, wisdom, war, fertility or the planets.	God is distinct from his creation, which he made not out of himself, but out of nothing, by his command.
Polytheistic gods can sin. They are susceptible to passions and moral failure in the same way as human beings.	God cannot sin. He is holy and perfect—the absolute of moral purity and goodness.

Compromise, Compromise

DAY 12

Deuteronomy 13:1-18

Are there times when you have been too open or too tolerant? Have you ever made unwise compromises?

1. According to Deuteronomy 13:1-6, what were the distinctions between good leaders and bad leaders; true prophets and false prophets? How could the people recognize when a prophet was from God?

2. What accounted for the harsh treatment of family members who encouraged the worship of other gods (vs. 6-11)?

3. What steps were the Israelites to take if a false teacher emerged in a town (vs. 12-18)?

1. Think about your experience with good teachers and bad teachers. Can “bad” teachers simply be self-deceived so that they don’t actually know how corrupted and twisted their own teaching is?

2. Have you had family or friends who were a source of temptation? How did you deal with them?

3. Can or should Christ-followers be both tolerant and intolerant? How?

*Verses 9 and 15 disturb many people today because they call for immediate **capital punishment for those who worship other gods**. Christians need to understand that there are limits to spiritual tolerance and that sinful tendencies must be dealt with quickly and strongly.*

OPENING

up to the Word

DIGGING

into the Word

LIVING

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on the Word

Standing Out From The Crowd

Deuteronomy 14:1-29

OPENING
up to the Word

Would a casual acquaintance conclude you are a Christian from how you live and behave?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. The first two verses of this chapter prohibit certain mourning customs, presumably because they were part of Canaanite practices. To engage in them would be a sign of involvement in pagan worship.

2. Why do you think Israel was prohibited from eating certain foods? Why are these religious rules irrelevant for Christians?

3. Describe the way the people of Israel were to live and behave according to verses 22-28.

LIVING
out the Word

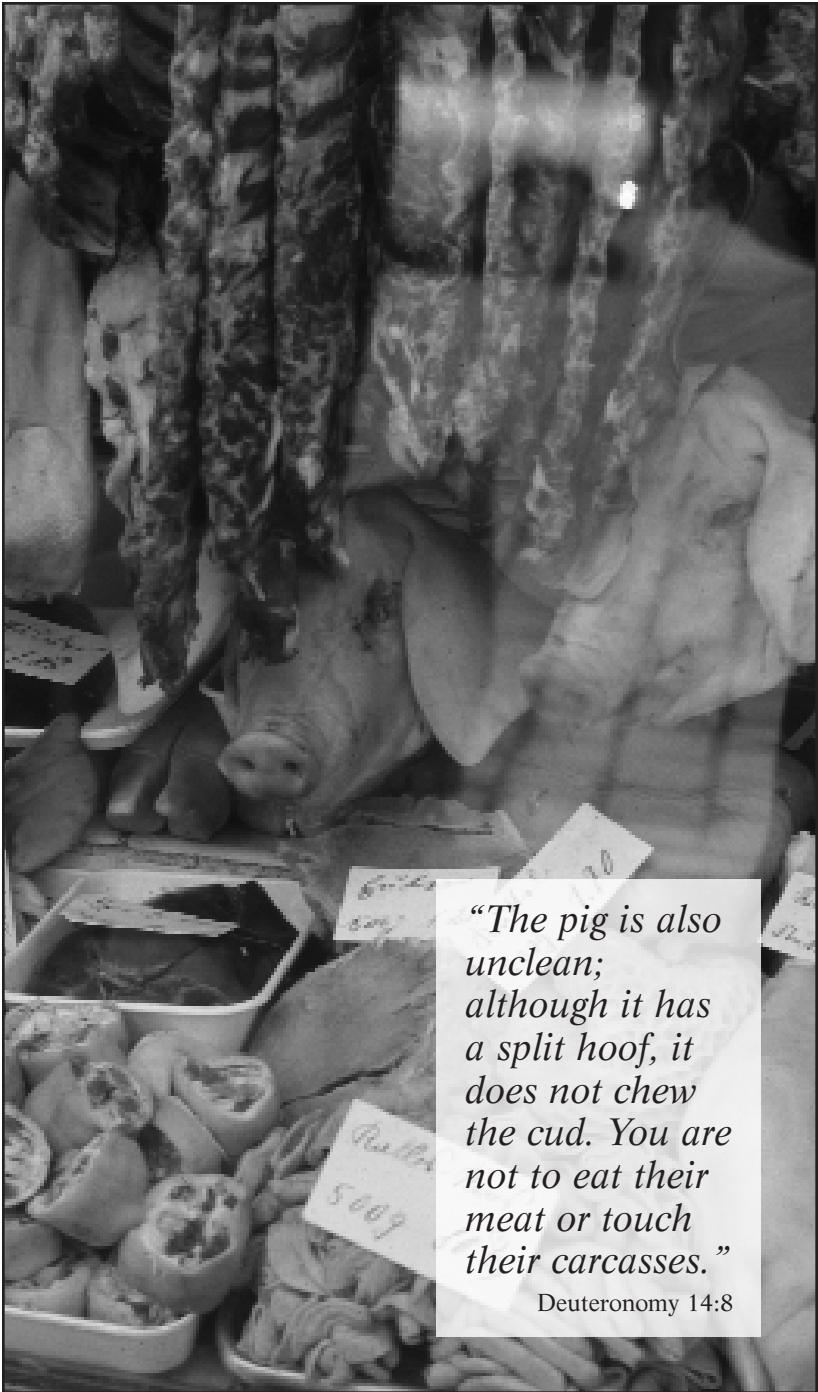
1. When a Christian's faith and practice set them apart, who gets the credit?

2. Is it possible for you to think that God loves you more than others because you are a morally superior person?

3. Why do you think it was necessary for God to order the people of Israel to tithe? Is tithing required for a Christian? Do Christians give because they must, or because Christ lives in them and produces a generous heart?

WINDOW
on the Word

*This chapter deals with **clean and unclean foods** as well as **tithing**. Although the two issues seem unrelated, the common thread is this: The people of God are different from the culture around them. For ancient Israel, that difference included what they ate, how they ate and how they used their wealth.*



“The pig is also unclean; although it has a split hoof, it does not chew the cud. You are not to eat their meat or touch their carcasses.”

Deuteronomy 14:8

Time Out

Deuteronomy 15:1-23

OPENING
up to the Word

Has someone hurt or wronged you? Is there someone you need to forgive, or to “release,” whether they want your forgiveness or not?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. What were the Israelites instructed to do every seven years? What did God promise them if they practiced the Year of Release?

2. Verse 4 states: “there should be no poor among you.” Was this realistic for Israel? Is this realistic for today’s communities?

3. Why would some slaves not wish to be free? Are there people today who choose “slavery” over freedom? Who are they? Would you agree with their choice?

LIVING
out the Word

1. Who are the poor in your area? Are they men, women, children, single people or families? Why are they poor? How did Jesus treat the poor?

2. How is our society *hardhearted* and *tightfisted* toward the poor? Do those two words describe you?

3. Verse 10 advises giving generously and “without a grudging heart.” Why this distinction? What is dangerous about *grudging giving*?

4. Think about practicing a “year” of release, where you, by God’s grace, freely forgive those who have wronged you, and let go of painful memories.

WINDOW
on the Word

Verse 17 strikes some people as odd: “Take an awl and push it through his ear....” This was Moses’ instruction for slaves who chose not to accept freedom, preferring to remain with their masters as voluntary slaves. The pierced ear symbolized the permanence of the master-slave status. It was a double bond—it not only bound the slave to the master, but equally the master to the slave. The master was prohibited from refusing to provide for the slave once he or she became old or incapacitated.