

# DEUTERONOMY 17

דברים יז

## WHEN

- Moses' speech, recorded in the opening chapters of Deuteronomy, occurred immediately following the Israelites' 40 years of wandering in the wilderness.
- The Israelites were in the wilderness from approximately 1490-1450 B.C.
- The Book of Deuteronomy opens on the 1st day of the 11th month in the 40th year (Deu 1:3) following the Israelites departure from Egypt (approximately 1450 B.C.).

## CHARACTERS

- **Israelites (Hebrews)** – The descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God granted them freedom after several hundred years in slavery in Egypt. Leading up to the book of Deuteronomy, the Israelites had spent 40 years wandering in the wilderness as they made their way to Canaan.
- **Moses** – Moses was selected by God to lead the Israelites to Canaan. God spoke directly to Moses and Moses communicated God's words and laws to the people.
- **Levitical Court of Israel** – An appointed judge and a selection of Levites were part of a "supreme court" in Israel that passed judgement on difficult legal cases.

## WHERE

- Deuteronomy 1:5 tells us Moses spoke the words recorded in Deuteronomy while in Moab, probably on the plains of Moab near Pisgah (Numbers 22:1).



## OUTLINE

- PROPER AND FORBIDDEN WORSHIP (17:1-7):
  - + Animals with blemishes were not to be used when sacrificing to the Lord.
  - + If a person was found to be breaking God's covenant by worshipping other gods, the sun, moon, planets, or stars, that person was to be stoned to death at the city gates.
  - + This was done to "purge the evil" from Israel.
  - + At least two witnesses were required before a person could be put to death. A person could not be put to death if only one person testified against them.
- JUDGING DIFFICULT CASES (17:8-13):
  - + If a legal case was too difficult for city officials to judge, the case was to be brought to the Levitical priests at God's appointed place of worship.
  - + This "supreme court" would render a final judgement and the officials who brought the case were required to carry out their decision.
  - + If a city official refused to comply with the decision of the Levitical court, he was to be put to death for his rebellion.
- LAWS CONCERNING THE FUTURE KINGS OF ISRAEL (17:14-20):
  - + God knew that one day, the Israelites would request a king to rule over them.
  - + He told them He would permit a king to rule, but the king was to abide by His laws.
  - + The king had to be an Israelite. He could not be a foreigner.
  - + The king was not allowed to acquire a large number of horses, especially Egyptian horses.
  - + The king was not allowed to have a lot of wives.
  - + The king was not allowed to acquire excessive amounts of silver and gold.
  - + When a king took the throne, he was to handwrite a copy of God's law, which had to be approved by the priests.
  - + His copy of the law was to remain with him for the rest of his life.
  - + He was to read it daily so "that he may learn to fear the LORD his God by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes, and doing them, that his heart may not be lifted up above his brothers, and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, either to the right hand or to the left, so that he may continue long in his kingdom, he and his children, in Israel." (17:19-20).

## APPLICATION

- Look at all the benefits of reading God's word every day.
- There were personal benefits but also generational benefits.
- A man who reads and applies God's words every day creates a trajectory for a family. His children and grandchildren will be directly benefited by his daily meditation on the word and the way it shapes his family.