

International Bible Lessons Commentary
Deuteronomy 6:10-19

International Bible Lessons
Sunday, May 4, 2014

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The **[International Bible Lesson](#)** (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, May 4, 2014**, is from **Deuteronomy 6:10-19**. Please Note: Some will only study **Deuteronomy 6:13-19**. This commentary is the first part of a two part Bible Lesson that includes **Matthew 4:1-11**. **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lesson Commentary* below. **Study Hints for Thinking Further**, a study guide for teachers, discusses the five questions below to help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion; these hints are available on the **[International Bible Lessons Commentary](#)** website. The weekly *International Bible Lesson* is posted each Saturday before the lesson is scheduled to be taught.

International Bible Lesson Commentary

Deuteronomy 6:10-19

(Deuteronomy 6:10) When the LORD your God has brought you into the land that he swore to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to

Jacob, to give you--a land with fine, large cities that you did not build,

Because the LORD had promised their ancestors that He would give them the Promised Land, Moses repeated the fact of God's promise in the form of a prophecy. God promised to give them cities that were not totally devastated by war or fire or earthquake, so when they entered the land, they would not need to build their cities on bare ground. They would acquire the homes built by the enemies they defeated; homes built by those who had turned from the true God to worship idols. God had given those who lived in the Promised Land four generations to repent and turn back to Him, but instead they became even more evil (see Genesis 15:16).

(Deuteronomy 6:11) houses filled with all sorts of goods that you did not fill, hewn cisterns that you did not hew, vineyards and olive groves that you did not plant--and when you have eaten your fill,

Though the walls of some cities tumbled down and the residents were put to the sword, the homes and property of some were not destroyed so the Israelites could inhabit them and enjoy the possessions of their enemies. Cisterns caught rain water for drinking. In some cities (such as Jericho), the people were not to take anything for themselves, but this was not universally the case. God ordered total destruction only when necessary (perhaps to eradicate and prevent the spread of disease); captured items of gold and silver that in some cases were to be given

to God could not spread any diseases to the priests. In the case of Jericho, God tested the total obedience of the people, for it was “devoted to the LORD for destruction” (Joshua 6:17). Moses’ prophecy also included a warning that God’s gift of prosperity might lead the people to forget God, the Ultimate Source of their successes.

(Deuteronomy 6:12) take care that you do not forget the LORD, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

Moses stated a universal problem for God’s people and a prophetic warning that God’s people subsequently ignored. When God blesses His people with material possessions, they can be easily tempted to stop trusting primarily in the LORD who protects and provides. Time and again, when God blessed the Israelites, they forgot the LORD and turned to idol worship.

(Deuteronomy 6:13) The LORD your God you shall fear; him you shall serve, and by his name alone you shall swear.

In order to remember the LORD and not forsake the LORD or fall into sin when tempted, Moses gave God’s people positive steps they could take to remain in a right relationship with God. To fear God involves reminding ourselves that God is just and God will punish those who persist in doing evil and refuse to repent (as God punished the Amorites in the Promised Land and later disciplined the Israelites for their idolatry). Love for God and

appreciation for God's gifts should motivate believers to obey and serve God, but sometimes fear of punishment will give them additional motivation to avoid committing sin when tempted. When you make a promise to do something consistent with the will of God, you can pray to God to help you do what you have promised.

(Deuteronomy 6:14) Do not follow other gods, any of the gods of the peoples who are all around you,

The Israelites were tempted to follow the gods of the lands they conquered, even though their idols had failed to save them from the Israelites and the God of Israel. They mistakenly thought that these false gods had the power to bless their crops or bring timely rain. These idols also promoted worship that appealed to the flesh, to their sinful desires, and involved activities forbidden by God in the Ten Commandments. These foreign gods promoted activities that would spread diseases among them and often required the sacrifices of their children. Even before they entered the land, the Holy Spirit inspired Moses to warn the people against these gods and the evil practices they promoted in worship and at other times.

(Deuteronomy 6:15) because the LORD your God, who is present with you, is a jealous God. The anger of the LORD your God would be kindled against you and he would destroy you from the face of the earth.

God deserves the undivided allegiance of His people. God will not share with other gods the total loyalty that He alone deserves and the truth of reality demands. Divided loyalty will bring great harm to God's people naturally as they practice behaviors that bring spiritual, mental, and physical harm (even physical and spiritual death) to themselves and others. At some point, God will judge that the behavior of some is so harmful and is bringing such suffering to others that to save others He must destroy the evildoers, especially those who are misleading others into falsehood, injustice, and idolatry.

(Deuteronomy 6:16) Do not put the LORD your God to the test, as you tested him at Massah.

For the test at Massah, see Exodus 17. The people complained that Moses had brought them out of Egypt to kill them; thus, they accused God and Moses of having lied to them in order to murder them. When they accused God and Moses of plotting evil against them, they failed the test of trusting in God in times of trouble. God told Moses to strike the rock to give them water, and Moses obeyed and gave the people water to drink. When times are troubled or tough, instead of continuing to trust in God and His word, people can be tempted to think badly of God and blame God for their situation. Moses then told the people what they needed to do whenever God tested them or they were troubled.

(Deuteronomy 6:17) You must diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, and his

decrees, and his statutes that he has commanded you.

No matter what our situation, in good times and bad, believers need to keep trusting in and obeying God. Whether times are troubled or not, God expects His people to keep obeying Him by keeping His commandments—continued obedience demonstrates undivided loyalty, love, and trust in God. For example, Job continued to obey God even when all was taken from him and he did not understand the reason. God expects us to obey all of His moral laws and not just the laws that please us or might give us some perceived selfish advantages over others.

(Deuteronomy 6:18) Do what is right and good in the sight of the LORD, so that it may go well with you, and so that you may go in and occupy the good land that the LORD swore to your ancestors to give you,

Moses promised believers certain blessings would flow from obeying God. When we come to know the true God truly, we will know what is right and good in His sight. Doing what is right and good in the sight of God covers all areas of life in this world and will make a real difference in our eternal prospects. When we do not know what is good and right in a situation, previous experiences derived from committed obedience to God and the help of the Holy Spirit will guide us to obey God and do what is right in His sight. What is right in the sight of God matters far more than what seems right to others, especially what seems

right in the sight of those who do not obey God. Good consequences that promote our total wellbeing will flow from right behavior in the sight of God.

(Deuteronomy 6:19) thrusting out all your enemies from before you, as the LORD has promised.

Because the Israelites did not obey God as God commanded Moses to teach them, neither they nor God thrust all of their enemies out of the Promised Land. These idolaters remained a source of temptation and trouble throughout subsequent generations, eventually leading to the destruction of the Kingdoms of Israel and Judea after the people turned to idolatry and evil practices.

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

Since this is the first of a two part Bible Lesson, only two of the five Study Questions will be asked below.

1. Read Deuteronomy 6:10 again. What difference would it have made if Moses had told the people, “If the LORD your God brings you into the land that he swore to your ancestors . . .”? What difference would the word “If” have made?
2. What can happen to a people when they “forget the LORD”?

Begin or close your class by reading the short weekly
International Bible Lesson.

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