

MOSES' SECOND ADDRESS

part I Deuteronomy 4:44 - 8:20
July 28, 2024

PART II Deuteronomy 9-15
Aug. 4, 2024

Part III Deuteronomy 16:1 - 26:19
Aug. 11, 2024



Quick review of last week:

- Suzerain treaty
- The 10 Commandments (hear, learn, be careful, do)
- Shema
- Holy war



God told his people in DT 7:1 that they will conquer many strong nations, but his inspiring pep talk did not include the Anakites. This was a race of tall, warlike people who occupied southern Canaan.



True or False:

God allowed Israel to conquer the tribes in Canaan because he found them to be righteous.¹

The Golden Calf

Moses now recounts the events which occurred years ago on Mt. Horeb/Sinai. He sums it up in DT 9:7-8. Remember: Moses isn't speaking to the same audience we see in Exodus. These are the children and grandchildren of the people who left Egypt and made the golden calf.



The story retold.

DT 9:11 --- ***“At the end of the forty days and forty nights, the Lord gave me the two stone tablets of the covenant.”***

Ancient Hebrews used forty as a round number to designate a fairly long period of time, not necessarily “forty.”

¹ Good news: Israel will destroy the Anakites **BUT** don't get a big head.
[READ DT 9:4-5a]

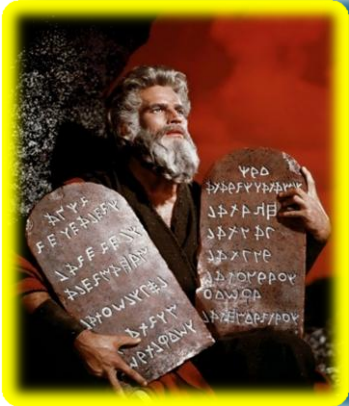
Forty years was:

- ✓ how long Moses and company wandered in the wilderness;
- ✓ the age of a full grown man (Ex. 2:11);
- ✓ the length of a generation;
- ✓ how long a successful king's reign lasted (David, Solomon, etc.), which demonstrated God's favor.

Also, forty days or forty years was a common duration for punishment, fasting, and repentance. The use of this number seemed to be common elsewhere in the known world as well:

- ✓ in ancient Greek and Roman writings.
- ✓ in Persia (now Iran) where "forty" was often used as a synonym for "many."²

[READ DT 9:11-12]



[DT 9:15-16] **Why make a molten golden calf?** This group of Israelites have been tramping through Canaanite country for some time. They would have witnessed the trappings of other cultures, who often venerated the bull. Now their leader, Moses, has disappeared up a mountain weeks ago, and his people are leaderless.

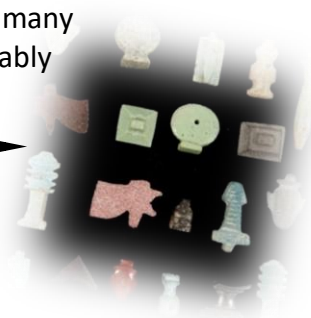
"Like many religious people, ancient and modern, they wanted a God who is near at hand, not far off. And above all they wanted a God whose presence was compatible with the prevailing culture—in this case, Canaanite culture with its emphasis upon sexual vitality and fertility."³

We see this timeless and universal desire for protection and blessings in many different forms. "When babies were born [in ancient times] they were probably immediately decorated with amulets to protect them against the many dangers that threatened their lives."⁴

We learned in EX 12:35-36 that the gold came from the earrings and jewelry the Egyptians gave them after God rescued them from that country.

But why a calf?

The Canaanite storm god, Adad, is often pictured riding into Canaan on a bull. Adad was a strong and much feared god. In all probability, the calf that Moses' people created "was not intended as an object of worship, but as a symbol of the deity."⁵ [Now, transfer this thought into today's society, where some Christians wear gold or silver pendants depicting the cross of Jesus —the wearer is not worshipping the jewelry; he/she is showing religious adoration for God's son.]



ADAD, god of storms

² Interpreter's, vol. 3, "Number."

³ Anderson, pg. 94.

⁴ Alexis Castor, asst. prof of classics at Franklin and Marshall College, in *Discovermagazine.com*.

⁵ Thompson, pg. 141, citing O.R. Gurney, *The Hittites*, (1964), pp. 134, 149.

DT 9:15-17—Moses sees the golden
furry he breaks both carved
burns and crushes the idol,
himself and the Israelites---
him by name. Aaron, Moses’ brother, was the people’s leader whom Moses chose
before heading up Mt. Sinai... and blame for the golden calf rests on his shoulders.



calf as he descends the mountain. In
stone tablets as the people watch.⁶ He
then pleads to God for mercy for
and he prays especially for Aaron, mentioning
him by name. Aaron, Moses’ brother, was the people’s leader whom Moses chose
before heading up Mt. Sinai... and blame for the golden calf rests on his shoulders.

[READ EX 32:1-6]

In the retelling of the story in Deuteronomy the damning dialogue of the people is
missing: (“...they gathered around Aaron and said, ‘Come, make us gods...’”)

DT 9:20---Moses’ intervention with God protects Aaron. (Surprisingly, this intercession for
Aaron is not mentioned in the Exodus tale.)

Chapter 10

10:1-4---By now Moses is down off the mountain and is with the Israelites. But the
Lord said, “Chisel out two stone tablets
like the first ones and come up to me on
the mountain.” So he did, but this time
Moses also made a wooden storage chest
for the tablets: the Ark of the Covenant.⁷



Verses 10:6 thru 10:9 is much like an
actor’s aside in a stage play. It was probably added later.

- 10:6---Aaron dies.
- 10:8-9---The tribe of Levi is set aside by God to have the honor of being the
priestly policemen of the faith. As such, they “have no share or inheritance
among their brothers” when it comes to land. In other words, you won’t find
the tribe of Levi on a map of the Bible lands.
- Levites had three main duties:
 1. carry the Ark of the Covenant
 2. be God’s minister to the people
 3. “pronounce blessings in His name.”

10:12 What does God require of us?

- ❖ Fear the Lord, which does not mean to be afraid. Rather, have a deep and
loving respect. This fear is in response to His faithfulness.
- ❖ Walk in His ways. **[READ 1 JN 1:6-7]**
- ❖ Love and serve God with your total being.
- ❖ Keep His commandments.

⁶ Other ancient suzerainty covenants were likewise usually voided by the breaking of the stone or
pottery upon which the agreement was written.

⁷ Surprisingly, Deuteronomy mentions the ark only one other time, in DT 31:26.



11:10-15---Life in ancient times revolved heavily upon agriculture. Moses warns the people that making a living in the Promised Land will be much different than it was in Egypt.

11:13-17---"Faithfully obey me," says God, "and I will send rain on your land in its season...." But if you turn to other gods the Lord will shut the heavens and it will not rain.

11:22-25---God gives his people a rough geographical idea of how much land they will conquer. Israel eventually did seize much of this promised land, but it was not until King David's reign.



Irrigating with a shaduf



describes what must be done to worship the true God.

Traditionally, DT 12:1 – 26:19 have been labeled the Deuteronomic Code, though it is actually a re-statement of the laws already laid before Moses and his followers.

- 12:5-14--seek a central place for the "Lord your God"⁸ to dwell...though it doesn't require they seek a "sole sanctuary."!!
 - Put His Name on that place. In OT times giving something a name implied ownership. Therefore, it is to be God's temple. (We don't know if this implied a central worship location like the Jerusalem Temple, which was not built until Josiah's reign in the 7th C. BC. One thing for sure: it meant that all of the Canaanite gods were to be destroyed; their shrines and "high places" cannot be converted into a house for Yahweh.)
 - Bring your burnt offerings and sacrifices there, where you can eat and rejoice.
 - Don't worship like you are accustomed, doing as you see fit.



You must put to death anyone who tries to sway you away from the Lord God, including entire towns, if necessary. Burn all of it as a whole burnt offering to the Lord.



Clean and unclean food.

14:3-21 ---"Do not eat any detestable thing."

Scholars have three different views on what this meant:

1. God ordered this for hygienic reasons;
2. It was to distinguish God's people from their pagan neighbors;
3. Nothing was wrong with the animals, but God established a system to test the Israelites obedience and loyalty to Him.

The "clean vs. unclean" debate was later squashed by Jesus: **[READ MK 7:18-19].**

⁸ This phrase "Lord your God" in Hebrew includes two of the primary names for God: the personal name *Yahweh*, and a form of *'Elohim*, the generic name that means "God." (J. Avery)

Tithing was not unique to just the Israelites. In some lands kings required tithing as a way of taxing the people. In Egypt the pharaoh authorized Joseph to take as much as one-fifth of the harvest to use as a buffer for famine years (GN 41:34-36).

In the case of Moses and his people, they were to eat the tithe with their individual families and in praise of God, rather than stash it away. Levites were also welcome to the table. Every third year the tithe was to be taken to the local sanctuary and distributed to the poor and needy.



The Year of Release was distinctly for Israel and was an anomaly among nations of the ancient Near East. Most cultures placed their leaders, priests, and the wealthy above all others. Moses' people, however, showed a special concern for the needy and the poor, as their God had directed.

15:1-12---“At the end of every seven years you must cancel debts.” This rule doesn't apply to foreigners. But “the foreigner (*nokrî*) was different from the resident alien (*gēr*) who was absorbed into the Israelite community.”⁹

15:13-18---Any Hebrew who voluntarily sells himself to you must be given his/her freedom in the seventh year. If your slave rejects this and wants to be a permanent slave of yours, drill a hole in his/her ear.



15:19-23---Set aside your firstborn male animals. They are to be sacrificed each year to the Lord and eaten in your town. But don't eat the blood.---AND NO DEFECTIVE ANIMALS!

⁹ Thompson, pg. 187.

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