Deuteronomy 14-15

Review…

- **Deuteronomy 1-4 - The 1st sermon - rehearsing the history…**
- **Deuteronomy 5-9 - The Law of God / God's Chosen people / A stubborn & rebellious nation**
- **Deuteronomy 10-11- A new beginning…**
  - God gave Moses a 2nd set of stone with the commands of God engraved on them…
  - Choose this day whom you will serve - Israel had seen the power of God…
- **Deuteronomy 12 - Worshiping the Lord…**
  - 1st - Destroy all the idols of the Canaanites…
    - Israel was to completely destroy all the idols and high places in the Land…
    - The concern was if the did not have a strong relationship with God - stumbling block…
  - 2nd - Israel was only to offer sacrifices at the place God choose to be worshiped…
    - God choose Shiloh - 20 miles from Jerusalem - the Tabernacle stood there for 400 years…
    - A place to identify the people with God - you went to the Tabernacle if you were a Jew!
  - 3rd - Eating meat - any time an animal was killed - it was to be offered at the Tabernacle…
    - In that way the people would always have a reason to come before the Lord…
    - But if you lived very far away - you were allowed to kill an animal - but not eat the blood
- **Deuteronomy 13 - Bad influences…**
  - If a teacher performs signs and wonders - but contradicts the Word - stone them…
  - If a family member encourages you to worship another god - stone them…
  - A city rebels against God - burn it to the ground - leave it as a reminder to future generations!

Deuteronomy 14 - (*2 things*)…

- **1st - Clean and unlean animals… vs. 1-21** Read: Deuteronomy 14:1-3
  - God forbid cutting your body - or shaving your eyebrows…
    - The cutting was meant to get the attention of the gods - **I Kings 18:28**
    - Egyptian custom - saved to show morning - would morn till the eyebrows grew back….
    - The key fact - is if it was done in the mourning of the dead - religious ritual…
    - What was forbidden were the pagan religious practices - performed in fear of death…
    - There are plenty of 'practices' all around us when it comes to mourning the dead…
    - You are not to take a shower / comb your hair / eat chicken / wear red…

- All of them are done out of fear off death - if you do these things you could be next...
- We are not to uphold the many superstitions people have in reaction to death...
- Others may not know any better - but we have the Word of God - and know the truth...
- We have no reason to fear death - for us it is a celebration of entering into eternal life!

- God gave instructions to Israel as to what kind of animals they were permitted to eat...
  - The concept of clean and unclean animals goes all the way back to Noah - **Genesis 7:2**
    - If an animal was a 'clean' animal - then they were allowed to use it for food...
    - It an animal was 'unclean' - then it was forbidden for them to eat it...
    - Before God gave the Law it is assumed men knew 'clean' animals by oral tradition...
    - In the Law God established 5 categories of clean and unclean...
  - 1st - Any animal that has a split hoof / and that eats grass - is a clean animal... vs. 3-8
    - Meaning God allowed Israel to eat - Cows / Sheep / Goats / Dear / Caribou...
    - But they were forbidden to eat - Pigs / Camels / Horses / Dogs / Lions...
  - 2nd - Any fish that has fins and scales - is a clean fish... vs. 9-10
    - Meaning God allowed Israel to eat - Anchovies / Tuna / Salmon / Bass...
    - But everything else was forbidden - Shrimp / Crabs / Mudfish / Squid / Frogs...
  - 3rd - God gave a list of the birds that were unclean... vs. 11-20
    - Included were owls / vultures / eagles / hawks / ravens / seagulls / and bats...
    - What all these birds have in common is they either eat unclean animals...
    - Or they are eat carrion - dead animals - they are scavengers...
    - The suggestion is that birds that are not scavengers or birds of prey - are clean...
  - 4th - Israel could not eat anything that died on its own...
    - If an animal died of old age - or from an accident - it was unclean...
    - They could sell it to a gentile - but could not eat it themselves...
  - 5th - Israel could not boil a goat in its mothers milk...
    - Likely the purpose was just compassion - cruel to cook a kid in its mother's milk...
    - To this day Jews will not eat any milk products with any meat products...
    - They actually have two different kitchens and sets of serving wear - milk and meat...
    - Who is to say the milk product did not come from the mother of the meat!
- Why the clean and unclean animals (*4 things*)...
  - 1st - God created the animals - and He knows which ones are the safest to eat...
    - For example: Pigs are scavengers - eat anything from garbage to their own fecal...
    - God wants to keep us healthy - so He gave us rules to eat the healthiest animals...
    - There is wisdom in following these rules - just simply for your health's sake...
  - 2nd - It may have been a test - to see how devoted Israel was to God...
    - By forbidding Israel to eat certain foods - some of them (*letson*) VERY tasty...
    - It allowed God to test Israel and see if they would be obedient to God...

- Part of following Jesus is learning to deny what we want - and choose the Lord...
- * **Luke 9:23** - "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me."
- For example - we might want to eat - but God calls us to fast to focus on Him...
- Fasting is giving up something we want for the purpose of denying ourselves...
- Taking the time we would have devoted to eating (*or TV*) and spending it with Jesus

▪ 3rd - Israel was to be Holy - special - set apart from all other nations...

- God is holy (*separate from a sinful world)* - so we must also be holy...
- Israel stuck out in a crowd because of God's Laws - they were different...
- The same way God calls us to be different from a lost and sinful world...
- Not so much in what we eat - but in our actions - in our words...
- We live in a VERY sinful world - if we act like them - we are not following God...
- Instead we should be a light to them - by our life - show them the way to God!

▪ 4th - It made Israel constantly think about God...

- By giving rules on eating - something everyone does every day...
- Israel constantly - daily - had to think about God's Law for their lives...
- Too often Christians think their faith only has to be lived out on Sunday mornings...
- They other 6 days and 22 hours of the week - they act just like the world...
- We should be daily in fellowship with God - guiding our every action...

○ We are no longer under the Law - we are under Grace - **Romans 6:14**

▪ Spiritually it does not make a difference what we choose to eat...

- **Matthew 15:11** - "Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man; but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man."
- Whatever you eat – it just goes into your stomach – then into the CR...
- So you are not a better person if you don't eat pork/shrimp – or worse if you do...
- So spiritually speaking - chow down on all the letson and crabs you want!

▪ But what comes out of our mouth...

- The words that we speak – they are what make us unclean – defiled...
- We are defiled because our words reveal what is in our heart...
- **Luke 6:45** – "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks."

- **2ND - OFFERING A TITHE... VS. 22-29** Read: Deuteronomy 14:22-29

○ Israel was to offer a tithe of all their harvest - grain/wine/oil/animals...

▪ The word tithe literally means 10 percent - one tenth of the crops/animals were God's...

▪ The tithe was to be taken to the Tabernacle at Shiloh - and eaten with the Lord...

▪ But if Shiloh was too far to bring the tithe of the harvest - they were to sell the tithe...

▪ They would take the money to the Tabernacle - then buy whatever they wanted...

- And have a feast there with the Lord - celebrating the harvest and provision of God!

- The purpose of the tithes (*2 things*)...
  - 1st - To learn to fear the Lord - remember He is the one who provides...
    - It is easy to forget that God is the one who provides - start to take credit for our success
    - Yet everything we have - no exceptions - is a gift that comes from the Lord...
    - He is the one who sends the rain / He is the one who gave us our talents...
    - Next time we are blessed - good crops / extra work - take a moment to thank the Lord...
  - 2nd - To help take care of the poor...
    - Every third year - the tithe was to be set aside...
    - Given to the Levites (*they had no inheritance in the Land*), foreigners, and the poor...
    - Tithes can be used to support the church (*Levites*) and for the work of ministry...
    - But A tithe was not just to be given to the church - is was to be used to help the poor...
    - We can give a 'tithe' or 'offering' to the Lord by helping out those around us...
    - God considers that to be just as much a tithe as anything we 'give to the Lord'!

Deuteronomy 15 - Giving to others (*3 things*)...

- **1st - The Law on lending money... vs. 1-11** Read: Deuteronomy 15:1-11
  - At the end of every 7 years - all debts were canceled... vs. 1-6
    - All loans were considered paid in full after 7 years - no matter how much was owed!
      - It made no difference if it was from a bank / borrowed money from family or friends...
      - Every 7th year (*not after 7 years*) all debt was wiped away!
      - The purpose was to guarantee there would be no poor in the Land of Israel...
    - It does not help people to lend them money - especially with interest - it sinks them!
      - Maybe they have food for today - but not tomorrow - and now they are in debt...
      - It puts people in a ditch that very quickly they find they cannot get themselves out of...
      - The greater blessing is to teach them to live off their income / live within their means...
      - And if we do need to step in and help - do not lend - just give it to them freely...
      - **Romans 13:8 –** "Owe no one anything except to love one another..."
    - If Israel obeyed these rules - they would lend to many nations...
      - The idea is they would have lots of money - with plenty to spare for others...
      - We might think if we lend and do not get our money back - we will have no money...
      - But in fact if we are willing to pour out blessing on others - then God will bless us more!
      - **Luke 6:28** - "Give, and you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full—pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, running over, and poured into your lap. The amount you give will determine the amount you get back."
  - Do not be hard hearted against the poor... vs. 7-11
    - If there was someone in need - Israel was never to turn their back on them...
    - But suppose the 7th year was close - meaning you would likely not get your money back...

- If you refused to help - and the poor cried out to the Lord - it would be your sin!
- We are called as believers to practically reach out in love / help out those in need...
- If someone is hungry and we say - God bless you - what good does that do - **James 2:16**
- How can we say we represent Jesus - we Love someone - and not be willing to help...
- It is through showing the Love of God - we have the opportunity to share the Gospel...

- **2ND - THE LAWS ON SERVANTS... VS. 12-18** Read: Deuteronomy 15:12-18
  - Israel was to release servants after seven years...
    - They were not to be sent out empty handed - blessed with gifts of animals/harvest...
    - Israel was to remember they were once slaves in Egypt - God redeemed them...
    - God may have blessed us - but that is never an excuse to take advantage of others...
    - We should be generous with what we have been given by God - use it to bless others...
    - We do not live by the example of the world - we are called to a higher standard...
    - If we are blessed with a position of prosperity - we should use it for the benefit of others!
    - *** I Timothy 6:17-18** - "Command those who are rich... not to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God.... Let them do good... ready to give, willing to share..."
  - If a servant did not want to be set free...
    - Suppose he loved you and your family - and he was 'well off' with you...
    - They would have his ear pierced (*on a doorpost*) to show he was a bondservant…
    - If we treat others well - they will not want to go elsewhere - they will want to stay with us...

- **3RD - THE LAWS OF THE FIRSTBORN... VS. 19-23** Read: Deuteronomy 15:19-21
  - Every male animal had to be sacrificed to the Lord...
    - When God brought the 10th and final plague on Egypt – the Death Angel…
    - God spared all of the 1st born sons of Israel through the blood of the lamb
    - In effect He purchased those sons (*both man and animal*) by saving them…
    - Therefore every 1st born male animal had to be offered as a sacrifice to the Lord
  - But if they animal had any defects - it was not to be offered as a sacrifice...
    - They were only to offer the best to the Lord - nothing imperfect was allowed...
    - In the same way we are not to give 'left over's to the Lord'...

- If we have some ‘spare time’ we can read the Bible / if there is nothing else to do go to church
- God desires the very best of our time / our efforts - He wants out best...
- It shows where our heart is - it shows the Lord He is most important to us!