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## **DEUTERONOMY**

From Commentary on the Old Testament

**John Gill**

adapted for Grace Notes training by Warren Doud

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# DEUTERONOMY

**John Gill**

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## The Author

John Gill (23 November – 14 October 1771) was an English Baptist pastor, biblical scholar, and theologian who held to a firm Calvinistic soteriology. Born in Kettering, Northamptonshire, he attended Kettering Grammar School where he mastered the Latin classics and learned Greek by age 11. He continued self-study in everything from logic to Hebrew, his love for the latter remaining throughout his life.

At the age of about 12, Gill heard a sermon from his pastor, William Wallis, on the text, "And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?" (Genesis 3:9). The message stayed with Gill and eventually led to his conversion. It was not until seven years later that he made a public profession when he was 18. His first pastoral work was as an intern assisting John Davis at Higham Ferrers in at age 21.

He became pastor at the Strict Baptist church at Goat Yard Chapel, Horsleydown, Southwark in 1719. His pastorate lasted 51 years. In his congregation needed larger premises and moved to a Carter Lane, St. Olave's Street, Southwark. This Baptist church was once pastored by Benjamin Keach and would later become the New Park Street Chapel and then the Metropolitan Tabernacle pastored by Charles Spurgeon. During Gill's ministry the church strongly supported the preaching of George Whitefield at nearby Kennington Common.

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### Introduction to Deuteronomy

This book is sometimes called “Elleh hadebarim”, from the words with which it begins; and sometimes by the Jews “Mishneh Torah”, the repetition of the law; and so in the Syriac version, with which agrees the Arabic title of it; and when the Greeks, and we after them, call it “Deuteronomy”, it is not to be understood of a second, a new, or another law, but of the law formerly delivered, but now repeated, and also more largely explained; to which are likewise added several particular laws, instructions, and directions; all which were necessary, on account of the people of Israel, who were now a new generation, that either were not born, or not at an age to hear and understand the law when given on Mount Sinai; the men that heard it there being all dead, excepting a very few; and these people were also now about to enter into the land of Canaan, which they were to enjoy as long as they kept the law of God, and no longer, and therefore it was proper they should be reminded of it; and besides, Moses was now about to leave them, and having an hearty desire after their welfare, spends the little time he had to be with them, by inculcating into them and impressing on them the laws of God, and in opening and explaining them to them, and enforcing them on them, which were to be the rule of their obedience, and on which their civil happiness depended. And sometimes the Jews call this book “the book of reproofs”, because there are in it several sharp reproofs of the people of Israel for their rebellion and disobedience; and so the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem begin it by calling it the words of reproof which Moses spake, etc. That this book was written by Moses there can be no doubt, from (Deuteronomy 1:1 31:4,9,24), only the eight last verses, which give an account of his death, and of his character, were wrote by another hand, equally inspired by God, as either Eleazar the priest, as some, or Samuel the prophet, as others; or, as it is the more commonly received opinion of the Jews, Ezra; though it is highly probable they were wrote by Joshua his

successor. This book was written and delivered by Moses, at certain times in the last month of his life, and towards the close of the fortieth year of the children of Israel’s coming out of Egypt. And that it is of divine authority need not be questioned, when the several quotations out of it are observed, as made by the apostles of Christ, in (Acts 3:22 Romans 12:19) (Hebrews 10:30 Galatians 3:10) out of (Deuteronomy 18:15 32:35,36 27:26) and by our Lord himself, (Matthew 18:16) from (Deuteronomy 19:15). Yea, it is remarkable, that all the passages of Scripture produced by Christ, to repel the temptations of Satan, are all taken out of this book, (Matthew 4:7,10) compared with (Deuteronomy 8:3 6:10,13), and the voice from heaven, directing the apostles to hearken to him, refers to a prophecy of him in (Deuteronomy 18:15).<sup>4</sup>

### Deuteronomy 1

The time and place when the subject matter of this book was delivered to the Israelites are observed by way of preface, (Deuteronomy 1:1-5), and it begins with reminding them of an order to them to depart from Mount Horeb, and pass on to the land of Canaan, which the Lord had given them, (Deuteronomy 1:6-8), and with observing the very great increase of their number, which made it necessary for Moses to appoint persons under him to be rulers over them, whom he instructed in the duty of their office, (Deuteronomy 1:9-18), and he goes on to observe, that when they were come to the mountain of the Amorites, they were bid to go up and possess the land; but, instead of that, they desired men might be sent to search the land first, which was granted, (Deuteronomy 1:19-23), and though these men upon their return brought of the fruits of the land, and a good report of it, particularly two of them; yet being discouraged by the report of the rest, they murmured, distrusted, and were afraid to enter, though encouraged by Moses, (Deuteronomy 1:24-33), which caused the Lord to be angry with them, and upon it threatened them that they should die in the wilderness, and only two of them should ever see and enjoy

the land, and therefore were bid to turn and take their journey in the wilderness, (Deuteronomy 1:34-40), but being convinced of their evil, they proposed to go up the hill, and enter the land, which they attempted against the commandment of the Lord, but being repulsed by the Amorites, they fled with great loss, to their great grief, and abode in Kadesh many days, (Deuteronomy 1:41-46).

**DEUT. 1:1. *These be the words which Moses spake unto all Israel,*** Not what are related in the latter part of the preceding book, but what follow in this; and which were spoken by him, not to the whole body of the people gathered together to hear him, which they could not do without a miracle; but to the heads of the people, the representatives of them, who were convened to hear what he had to say, in order to communicate it to the people; unless we can suppose that Moses at different times to several parties of them delivered the same things, until they had all heard them:

***on this side Jordan;*** before the passage of the Israelites over it to the land of Canaan; for Moses never went in thither, and therefore it must be the tract which the Greeks call Persea, and which with respect to the Israelites when in the land of Canaan is called “beyond Jordan”, for here now Moses was; and the children of Israel had been here with him a considerable time in the wilderness, the vast wilderness of Arabia, which reached hither: ***in the plain;*** the plains of Moab, between Bethjeshimoth and. Abeshittim, where the Israelites had lain encamped for some time, and had not as yet removed; (see Numbers 33:49) ***over against the Red [sea];*** the word “sea” is not in the text, nor is there anything in it which answers to “Red”; it should be rendered “opposite Suph”, which seems to be the name of a place in Moab, not far from the plains of it, and perhaps is the same with Suphah in (Numbers 21:14 \*marg) for from the Red sea they were at a considerable distance: ***between Paran, and Tophel, and Laban, and Hazeroth, and Dizahab;*** these are names of places which were the boundaries and limits of the plains of Moab, or lay very near them; for Paran cannot be

understood of the Wilderness of Paran, which was too remote, but a city or town of that name. Tophel and Laban we read of nowhere else; a learned man conjectures Tophel is the name of the station where the Israelites loathed the manna as light bread, because of the insipidness of it, which he observes this word signifies; but that station was either Zalmonah, or Punon, or this station must be omitted in the account of their journeys, and besides was too remote. Jarchi helps this conjecture a little, who puts Tophel and Laban together, and thinks they signify their murmuring because of the manna, which was white, as Laban signifies; but the above writer takes Laban to be a distinct station, the same with Libnah, (Numbers 33:20), and Hazeroth to be the station between Mount Sinai and Kadesh, (Numbers 12:16). But both seem to be too remote from the plains of Moab; and Dizahab he would have to be the same with Eziongaber, (Numbers 33:35), which he says the Arabs now call Dshahab, or Meenah el Dshahab, that is, “the port of gold”; and certain it is that Dizahab has the signification of gold, and, is by Hillerus rendered “sufficiency of gold”, there being large quantities of it here; perhaps either through the riches of the port by trade, or by reason of a mine of gold at it, or near it; so the Vulgate Latin version renders it, “where there is much gold”, and the Septuagint version “golden mines”, Catachrysea; and Jerom 6 makes mention of a place of this name, and says they are mountains abounding with gold in the wilderness, eleven miles from Horeb, where Moses is said to write Deuteronomy; elsewhere he calls it Dysmemoab, i.e. the west of Moab, near Jordan, opposite Jericho.

**DEUT. 1:2. *There are eleven days' journey from Horeb, by the way of Mount Seir, to Kadeshbarnea.***] Not that the Israelites came thither in eleven days from Horeb, for they stayed by the way at Kibrothhattaavah, a whole month at least, and seven days at Hazeroth; but the sense is, that this was the computed distance between the two places; it was what was reckoned a man might walk in eleven days; and if we reckon a day's journey twenty miles, of which (See Gill on “Jon 3:3”), the distance

must be two hundred and twenty miles. But Dr. Shaw allows but ten miles for a day's journey, and then it was no more than one hundred and ten, and indeed a camp cannot be thought to move faster; but not the day's journey of a camp, but of a man, seems to be intended, who may very well walk twenty miles a day for eleven days running; but it seems more strange that another learned traveller should place Kadeshbarnea at eight hours, or ninety miles distance only from Mount Sinai. Moses computes not the time that elapsed between those two places, including their stations, but only the time of travelling; and yet Jarchi says, though it was eleven days' journey according to common computation, the Israelites performed it in three days; for he observes that they set out from Horeb on the twentieth of Ijar, and on the twenty ninth of Sivan the spies were sent out from Kadeshbarnea; and if you take from hence the whole month they were at one place, and the seven days at another, there will be but three days left for them to travel in. And he adds, that the Shechinah, or divine Majesty, pushed them forward, to hasten their going into the land; but they corrupting themselves, he turned them about Mount Seir forty years. It is not easy to say for what reason these words are expressed, unless it be to show in how short a time the Israelites might have been in the land of Canaan, in a few days' journey from Horeb, had it not been for their murmurings and unbelief, for which they were turned into the wilderness again, and travelled about for the space of thirty eight years afterwards. Aben Ezra is of opinion, that the eleven days, for the word "journey" is not in the text, are to be connected with the preceding words; and that the sense is, that Moses spake these words in the above places, in the eleven days they went from Horeb to Kadesh. 7

**DEUT. 1:3.** *And it came to pass in the fortieth year,* That is, of the coming of the children of Israel out of Egypt: *in the eleventh month;* the month Shebet, as the Targum of Jonathan, which answers to part of January and part of February: *in the first day of the month, that Moses spoke unto the children of Israel*

*according to all that the Lord had given him in commandment unto them;* repeated to them the several commandments, which the Lord had delivered to him at different times.

**DEUT. 1:4.** *After he had slain Sihon the king of the Amorites, which dwelt in Heshbon,* Either Moses, speaking of himself in the third person, or rather the Lord, to whom Moses ascribes the victory; of this king, and his palace, and the slaughter of him, (see Numbers 21:24-26), *and Og the king of Bashan,* which dwelt at Ashtaroth in Edrei; or near Edrei; for Edrei was not the name of a country, in which Ashtaroth was, but of a city at some distance from it, about six miles, as Jerom says; hither Og came from Ashtaroth his palace to fight with Israel, and where he was slain, (see Numbers 21:33). Ashtaroth was an ancient city formerly called Ashtaroth Karnaim, and was the seat of the Rephaim, or giants, from whom Og sprung, (See Gill on "Genesis 14:5"), see also (Deuteronomy 3:11). Jerom says in his time there were two castles in Batanea (or Bashan) called by this name, nine miles distant from one another, between Adara (the same with Edrei) and Abila; and in another place he says Carnaim Ashtaroth is now a large village in a corner of Batanea, and is called Carnea, beyond the plains of Jordan; and it is a tradition that there was the house of Job.

**DEUT. 1:5.** *On this side Jordan, in the land of Moab,* On that side of Jordan in which the land of Moab was, and which with respect to the land of Canaan was beyond Jordan; this the Vulgate Latin version joins to the preceding verse: *began Moses to declare this law:* to explain it, make it clear and manifest; namely, the whole system and body of laws, which had been before given him, which he "willed", as some render the word, or willingly took upon him to repeat and explain unto them, which their fathers had heard, and had been delivered unto them; but before he entered upon this, he gave them a short history of events which had befallen them, from the time of their 8 departure from Horeb unto the present time, which is contained in this and the two next chapters: *saying;* as follows.

**DEUT. 1:6. *The Lord our God spoke unto us in Horeb,*** The same with Sinai, as Aben Ezra observes; while the Israelites lay encamped near this mountain, the Lord spoke unto them: ***saying, ye have dwelt long enough in this mount:*** or near it; for hither they came on the first day of the third month from their departure out of Egypt, and they did not remove from thence until the twentieth day of the second month in the second year, (Exodus 19:1 Numbers 10:11) so that they were here a year wanting ten days; in which space of time the law was given them, the tabernacle and all things appertaining to it were made by them, rulers both ecclesiastical and civil were appointed over them, and they were numbered and marshalled in order under four standards, and so ready to march; and all this being done, they must stay no longer, but set forward for the land of Canaan. It is well for persons that they are not to stay long under the law, and the terrors of it, but are directed to Mount Zion; (Hebrews 12:18-24).

**DEUT. 1:7. *Turn you and take your journey,*** That is, remove from Horeb, where they were, and proceed on in their journey, in which they had been stopped almost a year: ***and go to the mount of the Amorites;*** where they and the Amalekites dwelt, in the south part of the land of Canaan, and which was the way the spies were sent, (Numbers 13:17,29 14:40,43), ***and unto all the places nigh thereunto;*** nigh to the mountain. The Targum of Jonathan and Jarchi interpret them of Moab, Ammon, Gebal, or Mount Seir: "in the plain, in the hills, and in the vale"; such was the country near this mountain, consisting of champaign land, hills, and valleys: ***and in the south;*** the southern border of the land of Canaan, as what follows describes the other borders of it: ***and by the sea side:*** the Mediterranean sea, the western border of the land, which Jarchi out of Siphri explains of Ashkelon, Gaza, and Caesarea, and so the Targum of Jonathan: ***9 into the land of the Canaanites;*** which was then possessed by them, the boundaries of which to the south and west are before given, and next follow those to the north and east: ***and unto Lebanon;*** which

was on the north of the land of Canaan: ***unto the great river, the river Euphrates;*** which was the utmost extent of the land eastward, and was either promised, as it was to Abraham, (Genesis 15:18) or enjoyed, as it was by Solomon, (1 Kings 4:21).

**DEUT. 1:8. *Behold, I have set the land before you,*** Described it to them, and set its bounds, as well as had given them a grant of it: ***go in and possess the land, which the Lord sware unto your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give unto them and their seed after them:*** and which being thus made sure unto them, they had nothing more to do than to go and take possession of it.

**DEUT. 1:9. *And I spake unto you at that time,*** About that time; for it was after the rock in Horeb was smitten, and before they encamped at Mount Sinai, that Jethro gave the advice which Moses took, and proceeded on it, as here related; (see Exodus 18:1-27) ***saying, I am not able to bear you myself alone;*** to rule and govern them, judge and determine matters between them. Jethro suggested this to Moses, and he took the hint, and was conscious to himself that it was too much for him, and so declared it to the people, though it is not before recorded; (see Exodus 18:18).

**DEUT. 1:10. *The Lord your God hath multiplied you,*** Which was the reason why he could not bear them, or the government of them was too heavy for him, because they were so numerous, and the cases brought before him to decide were so many: ***and, behold, you are this day as the stars of heaven for multitude;*** whereby it appeared that the promise to Abraham was fulfilled, (Genesis 15:5), they were now 600,000 men fit for war, besides women and children, and those under age, which must make the number of them very large.

**DEUT. 1:11. *The Lord God of your fathers make you a thousand times so many more as ye are,*** This prayer he made, or this blessing he pronounced on them, to show that he did not envy their increase, nor was in any way uneasy at it, but rejoiced in it, though he gave it

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as a reason of his not being able to govern them alone: **and bless you, as he hath promised you**: with all kind of blessings, as he had often promised their fathers.

**DEUT. 1:12. How can I myself alone bear your cumbrance, and your burden, and your strife?**] His meaning is, that he could not hear and try all their causes, and determine all their law suits, and decide the strifes and controversies which arose between them; it was too heavy for him, and brought too much trouble and incumbrance upon him.

**DEUT. 1:13. Take ye wise men, and understanding, and known among your tribes,** Not only whose persons were well known, but their characters and qualifications, for their probity and integrity, for their wisdom and prudence in the management of affairs, for their skill and knowledge in things divine and human, civil and religious, and for their capacity in judging and determining matters in difference; (see Exodus 18:21) **and I will make them rulers over you**; the people were allowed to choose their own officers, whom they were to bring to Moses, and present before him, to be invested with their office. A like method was taken in the choice and constitution of deacons in the Christian church, when the secular affairs of it lay too heavy upon the apostles, (Acts 6:3).

**DEUT. 1:14. And ye answered me and said,** As the speech of Moses to the people is not expressed before, so neither this answer of theirs to him: **the thing which thou hast spoken is good for us to do**; to look out for and present persons to him as before described; this they saw was for their own good and profit, as well as for the ease of Moses, and therefore readily agreed to it.

**DEUT. 1:15. So I took the chief of your tribes, wise men, and known,** The principal persons among them, that were remarkable and well known for their wisdom and understanding, whom the people presented to him: **and made them heads over you**; rulers of them, as follows: **captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, and captains over fifties, and captains over tens**; (see Exodus

18:21-25) **11 and officers among your tribes**; which Jarchi interprets of such that bind malefactors and scourge them, according to the decree of the judges, even the executioners of justice; and so the Jews commonly understand them to be, though some have thought they were judges also.

**DEUT. 1:16. And I charged your judges at that time,** When they were appointed and constituted, even the heads and rulers before spoken of; this charge is also new, and not recorded before: **saying, hear the causes between your brethren**; hear both sides, and all that each of them have to say; not suffer one to say all he has to say, and oblige the other to cut his words short, as the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases it; but give them leave and time to tell their case, and give the best evidence they can of it: **and judge righteously**; impartially, just as the case really appears to be, and according to the evidence given: **between every man and his brother**; between an Israelite and an Israelite: **and the stranger that is with him**; between an Israelite and proselyte, whether a proselyte of the gate, or of righteousness; the same justice was to be done to them as to an Israelite.

**DEUT. 1:17. Ye shall not respect persons in judgment,** Or pass judgment, and give sentence according to the outward appearances, circumstances, and relations of men; as whether they be friends or foes, rich or poor, old or young, men or women, learned or unlearned; truth and justice should always take place, without any regard to what persons are: **but you shall hear the small as well as the great**; persons in low, life, and in mean circumstances, as well as great and noble personages; or little causes and of no great moment, as well as those of the utmost importance; all must be attended to, a cause about a "prutah" or a farthing, as well as one about a hundred pounds, in which Jarchi instances, and if that came first it was not to be postponed: **ye shall not be afraid of the face of man**; of the frowns and threatenings of rich men, and of such as are in power and authority; not be awed or intimidated by them from doing



justice; (see Job 31:34), *for the judgment [is] God's*; judges stand in the place of God, are put into their office by him, and act under him, and for him, and are accountable to him; and therefore should be careful what judgment they make, or sentence they pass, lest they bring discredit to him, and destruction on themselves: *and the cause that is too hard for you, bring it unto me, and I will hear it*; which is said for their encouragement, as well as was an instruction to them not to undertake a cause too difficult for them; (see Exodus 18:22,26).

**DEUT. 1:18.** *And I commanded you at that time all the things which ye should do.*]

Delivered to them all the laws, moral, ceremonial, and judicial, which were then given him at Mount Sinai.

**DEUT. 1:19.** *And when we departed from Horeb,* As the Lord commanded them to do, when they were obedient: *we went through all the great and terrible wilderness*; the wilderness of Paran, called "great", it reaching from Mount Sinai to Kadeshbarnea, eleven days' journey, as Adrichomius relates; and "terrible", being so hard and dry as not to be ploughed nor sown, and presented to the sight something terrible and horrible, even the very image of death; to which may be added the fiery serpents and scorpions it abounded with, (Deuteronomy 8:15), *which ye saw by the way of the mountain of the Amorites*; that is, in the way that led to the mountain: *as the Lord our God commanded us*; to depart from Horeb, and take a tour through the wilderness towards the said mountain: *and we came to Kadeshbarnea*; having stayed a month by the way at Kibrothhattaavah, where they lusted after flesh, and seven days at Hazereth, where Miriam was shut out of the camp for leprosy during that time.

**DEUT. 1:20.** *And I said unto you, you are come unto the mountain of the Amorites,* Which was inhabited by them, and was one of the seven nations the Israelites were to destroy, and possess their land, and which lay on the southern part of the land of Canaan: *which the Lord our God doth give unto us*; not the

mountain only, but the whole country of that people, and even all the land of Canaan. 13

**DEUT. 1:21.** *Behold, the Lord thy God hath set the land before thee,* The land of Canaan, on the borders of which they then were; (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 1:8"), *go up*; the mountain, by that way of it which was the way the spies went, and up to which some of the Israelites presumed to go when forbidden, they not complying with the call of God: *and possess it, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath said unto thee*; as in (Deuteronomy 1:8), *fear not, neither be discouraged*; though the people of the land were numerous and strong, and their cities large and walled.

**DEUT. 1:22.** *And ye came near unto me everyone of you,* Not every individual of them, but the heads of their tribes, that represented them; this is not to be understood of the present generation personally, but of their fathers, who all died in the wilderness, save a very few of them; but they being the same people and nation, it is so expressed: *and said, we will send men before us*; that is, they thought it was proper and prudent so to do, and came to Moses to consult him about it; for we are not to suppose that they had determined upon it, whether he approved of it or not: *and they shall search us out the land*: that they might know what sort of land it was, whether good or bad, fruitful or not, and whether woody or not: (see Numbers 13:19,20) *and bring us word again by what way we must go up*; or, "concerning the way in which we must go"; which is the best way of entering it, most easy and accessible, where the passes are most open and least dangerous: *and into what cities we shall come*; which it would be the most proper to attack and subdue first.

**DEUT. 1:23.** *And the saying pleased me well,* Taking it to be a rational and prudent scheme, not imagining it was the effect of fear and distrust: *and I took twelve men of you out of a tribe*; whose names are given in (Numbers 13:4-15).

**DEUT. 1:24.** *And they turned and went up into the mountain,* As they were ordered and

directed by Moses, (Numbers 13:17) 14 **and came unto the valley of Eshcol**; so called from the cluster of grapes they cut down there, as they returned: **and searched it out**; the whole land, and so were capable of giving a particular account of it.

**DEUT. 1:25. And they took of the fruit of the land in their hands**, Besides the cluster of grapes, which was carried between two men on a staff; even pomegranates and figs, (Numbers 13:23), **and brought it down unto us**; who lay encamped at the bottom of the mountain: **and brought us word again**; what sort of a land it was: **and said, it is a good land which the Lord our God doth give us**; that is, Caleb and Joshua, two of the spies, said this, as the Targum of Jonathan expresses it, and so Jarchi; yea, all of them agreed in this, and said at first that it was a land flowing with milk and honey, (Numbers 13:27).

**DEUT. 1:26. Notwithstanding, ye would not go up**, And possess it, as the Lord had bid them, and Moses encouraged them to do, as well as Joshua and Caleb, who were two of the spies sent into it: **but rebelled against the commandment of the Lord your God**; disregarded the word of the Lord, and disobeyed his command, and thereby bitterly provoked him, which rebellion against him, their King and God, might well do.

**DEUT. 1:27. And ye murmured in your tents**, Not in a private manner; for though the murmurs began there, they having wept all night after the report of the spies; yet it became general and public, and they gathered together in a body, and openly expressed their murmurs against Moses and Aaron, (Numbers 14:1,2), **and said, because the Lord hated us, he hath brought us forth out of the land of Egypt**; a strange expression indeed! when it was such a plain amazing instance of his love to them, as could not but be seen by them; being done in such a remarkable and extraordinary manner, by inflicting judgments on their enemies in a miraculous way, giving them favour in their eyes, to lend them their clothes and jewels, and bringing them out with such an high hand, openly and publicly in the sight of them, where

they had been in the most wretched slavery for many years; yet this is 15 interpreted an hatred of them, and as done with an ill design upon them, as follows: **to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us**; which now, under the power of their fears and unbelief, they thought would be quickly their case; (see Deuteronomy 4:37).

**DEUT. 1:28. Whither shall we go up?** What way can we go up into the land? where is there any access for us? the mountain we are come to, and directed to go up, is possessed by the Amorites, a strong and mighty people, who keep and guard the passes, that there is no entrance: **our brethren have discouraged our hearts**; ten of the spies; for Joshua and Caleb encouraged them with very powerful arguments, which had they listened to, it would have been well for them: **saying, the people is greater and taller than we**; more in number, larger in bulk of body, and higher in stature: **the cities are great, and walled up to heaven**; an hyperbolical expression; their fears exaggerated the account of the spies; they told them they were great, large, and populous, walled, and strongly fortified; which appeared in their frightened imaginations as if their walls were so high as to reach up to heaven, so that it was impossible to scale them, or get possession of them: **and, moreover, we have seen the sons of the Anakims there**; the giants so called from Anak, the son of Arba, the father of them; their names are given, (Numbers 13:22,23 Joshua 14:15 15:13,14).

**DEUT. 1:29. Then I said unto you, dread not, neither be afraid of them.**] With such like words he had exhorted and encouraged them before the spies were sent, and he still uses the same, or stronger terms, notwithstanding the report that had been made of the gigantic stature and walled cities of the Canaanites. This speech of Moses, which is continued in the two following verses, is not recorded in (Numbers 14:5), it is only there said, that Moses and Aaron fell on their faces, but no account is given of what was said by either of them.

**DEUT. 1:30. The Lord your God, which goeth before you**, In a pillar of cloud by day, and in a

pillar of fire by night: 16 **he shall fight for you**; wherefore, though their enemies were greater and taller than they, yet their God was higher than the highest; and cities walled up to heaven would signify nothing to him, whose throne is in the heavens: **according to all that he did for you in Egypt before your eyes**: which is observed to encourage their faith in God; for he that wrought such wonders in Egypt for them, which their eyes, at least some of them, and their fathers, however, had seen, what is it he cannot do?

**DEUT. 1:31. And in the wilderness**, Where he had fed them with manna, brought water out of rocks for them, protected them from every hurtful creature, had fought their battles for them, and given them victory over Amalek, Sihon, and Og: **where thou hast seen how the Lord thy God bare thee as a man doth bear his son**; in his arms, in his bosom, with great care and tenderness: **in all the way that ye went, until ye came into this place**; supplying their wants, supporting their persons, subduing their enemies, and preserving them from everything hurtful to them; and therefore having God on their side, as appeared by so many instances, of his favour to them, they had nothing to dread or fear from the Canaanites, though ever so mighty.

**DEUT. 1:32. Yet in this thing ye did not believe the Lord your God.**] That they might go up and possess the land at once, and that he would fight for them, and subdue their enemies under them; or notwithstanding the favours bestowed upon them, and because of them, they did not believe in the Lord their God, and which was a great aggravation of their unbelief, and was the cause of their not entering into the good land, (Hebrews 3:19).

**DEUT. 1:33. Who went in the way before you, to search you out a place to pitch your tents in**, For when the cloud was taken up they journeyed, and when that rested, there they pitched their tents; and hereby they were directed to places the most convenient for water for them and their flocks, or for safety from those that might annoy them: **in fire by night, to show you by what way ye should go**;

which otherwise they could not have found in dark nights, in which they sometimes travelled, and in, a wilderness where there were no tracks, no beaten path, no common way: 17 **and in a cloud by day**; to shelter them from the scorching sun, where there were no trees nor hedges to shade them, only rocky crags and hills.

**DEUT. 1:34. And the Lord heard the voice of your words**, Of their murmurings against Moses and Aaron, and of their threatenings to them, Joshua and Caleb, and of their impious charge of hatred of them to God for bringing them out of Egypt, and of their rash wishes that they had died there or in the wilderness, and of their wicked scheme and proposal to make them a captain, and return to Egypt again: **and was wroth, and swore**; by his life, himself; (see Numbers 14:28), **saying**; as follows.

**DEUT. 1:35. Surely there shall not one of these men of this evil generation see the good land**, The land of Canaan; not only not one of the spies that brought the ill report of that land, but of that body of people that gave credit to it, and murmured upon it: **which I swear to give unto your fathers**; Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; (see Deuteronomy 1:8).

**DEUT. 1:36. Save Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, he shall see it**, Enter into it, and enjoy it: **and Joshua** also; who was the other spy with him, that brought a good report of the land; (see Deuteronomy 1:38), **and to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children**: not the whole land of Canaan, but that part of it which he particularly came to and searched; and where the giants were, and he saw them, and notwithstanding was not intimidated by them, but encouraged the people to go up and possess it; and the part he came to particularly, and trod on, was Hebron, (Numbers 13:22) and which the Targum of Jonathan, Jarchi, and Aben Ezra, interpret of that; and this was what was given to him and his at the division of the land, (Joshua 14:13-15 15:13,4), **because he hath wholly followed the Lord**; (see Numbers 14:24).

**DEUT. 1:37. *Also the Lord was angry with me for your sakes,*** Not at the same time, though, as some think, at the same place, near thirty eight years 18 afterwards, they provoking him to speak unadvisedly with his lips; (see Numbers 20:10-12 Psalm 106:32,33), ***saying, thou shalt not go in thither:*** into the land of Canaan; and though he greatly importuned it, he could not prevail; (see Deuteronomy 3:25-27).

**DEUT. 1:38. *[But] Joshua, the son of Nun, which standeth before thee,*** His servant and minister, which this phrase is expressive of: ***he shall go in thither:*** into the good land, instead of Moses, and as his successor, and who was to go before the children of Israel, and introduce them into it, as a type of Christ, who brings many sons to glory: ***encourage him;*** with the promise of the divine Presence with him, and of success in subduing the Canaanites, and settling the people of Israel in their land; and so we read that Moses did encourage him, (Deuteronomy 31:7,8) ***for he shall cause Israel to inherit it;*** go before them as their captain, and lead them into it; fight their battles for them, conquer their enemies, and divide the land by lot for an inheritance unto them; so the heavenly inheritance is not by the law of Moses, and the works of it, but by Joshua, or Jesus, the Saviour, by his achievements, victories, and conquests.

**DEUT. 1:39. *Moreover, your little ones, which ye said should be a prey,*** To the Amorites, into whose hands they expected to be delivered, (Deuteronomy 1:27) (see Numbers 14:3) ***and your children, which in that day had no knowledge between good and evil;*** not being at years of understanding, and which is a common description of children; it is particularly expressed "in that day", for now they were the very persons Moses was directing his speech unto, and relating this history, it being thirty eight years ago when this affair was, so that now they were grown up to years of discretion: ***they shall go in thither, and unto them will I give it, and they shall possess it:*** the relation of which now might serve greatly to encourage their faith, as well as

it would be a fulfilment of the promise of the land made unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which was not made of none effect through the unbelief of the Israelites, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness, since their posterity was to enjoy it, and did. 19

**DEUT. 1:40. *But as for you, turn ye,*** From the mountain of the Amorites, the border of the land of Canaan: ***and take your journey into the wilderness, by the way of the Red sea:*** (see Numbers 14:25). Jarchi says this wilderness was by the side of the Red sea, to the south of Mount Seir, and divided between the Red sea and the mount; so that now they drew to the side of the sea, and compassed Mount Seir, all the south of it, from west to east.

**DEUT. 1:41. *Then ye answered, and said unto me,*** Not being willing to go into the wilderness again, though they wished they had died in it; nor to go the way of the Red sea, which was their way back again to Egypt, though they had been for appointing a captain, and returning thither; but now they repented of what they had said and done: ***we have sinned against the Lord;*** by murmuring against his servants, and disobeying his commands: ***we will go up and fight according to all that the Lord our God hath commanded us;*** which is more than they were bid to do; they were only ordered to go up and possess the land, and it was promised them the Lord would fight for them: ***and when ye had girded on every man his weapon;*** his sword upon his thigh; a large number of them, for all of them were not so disposed, though many were: ***ye were ready to go unto the hill;*** though before backward enough, when they were bid to do it. De Dieu, from the use of the word in the Arabic language, renders it, "ye reckoned it easy to go up unto the hill"; before it was accounted very difficult, by reason the passes were kept and guarded by the Amorites; but now there was no difficulty, when they were bid to go another way, but were ready at once to go up, which comes to the same sense; he further observes, that the word, in another conjugation in the same language, signifies to make light of, or despise; and so may be rendered, "and ye despised"; that is, rejected

and despised the order given them to go into the wilderness by the way of the Red sea in the preceding verse, by their attempting to go up the hill; though the word so taken will bear another sense, agreeable to the first, that they now made a light matter of it, as if it was nothing, and there was no difficulty in it to go up the hill, which before was too hard and heavy for them. 20

**DEUT. 1:42. *And the Lord said unto me,*** When the people had armed themselves, and were in motion, or ready to set forward to ascend the hill: ***say unto them, go not up, neither fight;*** neither go up the hill, and if they did, contrary to this order, and should meet with enemies, not fight them, but retreat: ***for I am not among you:*** the ark of the covenant, the symbol of his presence, was then among them, but it did not go with them, it continued in the camp, (Numbers 14:44) nor did the Lord exert his power, or show himself present with them, or to be on their side, but left them to themselves, and to their enemies: ***lest ye be smitten before your enemies;*** God not being with them to fight for them, protect and defend them, and give them victory.

**DEUT. 1:43. *So I spake unto you,*** The words, the orders he had received from the Lord to deliver to them: ***and ye would not hear;*** so as to obey them, and act according to them: ***but rebelled against the commandment of the Lord:*** as before, by not going up when he would have had them gone, and now by attempting it when he forbid them: ***and went presumptuously up into the hill;*** that is, of themselves, in their own strength, disregarding the commandment of God, and what they were threatened with; this they endeavoured to do, for they were not able to effect it; the Amorites, perceiving them to make up the hill, came pouring down upon them in great numbers, and stopped them, and obliged them to retreat; (see Numbers 14:45).

**DEUT. 1:44. *And the Amorites which dwelt in the mountain,*** Elsewhere called Canaanites, being one, and a principal one of the seven nations of Canaan, and who were joined and assisted in the attack by the Amalekites,

(Numbers 14:45) ***came out against you, and chased you, as bees do;*** which being disturbed in their hives come out in great numbers, and with great fury and ardour (for, though a small creature, it has a great deal of spirit); and pursue the aggressor, and leave him not till they have stung him, though thereby they lose their stings, and quickly their lives, at least their usefulness; so these Amorites, being irritated at the approach of the Israelites on their borders, 21 came out in great numbers and with great wrath, and fell upon them and smote them, and pursued them a long way, as is after expressed, though these in the issue were destroyed themselves. The Syriac version renders it, "as bees that are smoked": or irritated by smoke; which is a method that has been used, and was anciently: to dispossess them of their hives, and get their honey, as Bochart from various writers has shown, as from Virgil, Ovid, and others; and when they are too much smoked become exceeding angry as Aristotle and Pliny observe; and which some writers take notice of the strength and force of their stings, as that they will kill with them the largest animals, even horses have been killed by them; and, though such small feeble creatures, are not afraid to attack men and beasts; yea, sometimes people have been obliged to leave their habitations, and have been driven out of their country by them, of which Aelianus gives an instance; all which shows the aptness and propriety of this simile; (see Psalm 118:12) and destroyed you in Seir, even unto Hormah; pursued them as far as Mount Seir, even to another place on the borders of Edom, which was called Hormah, either from the destruction now or afterwards made here; (see Gill on "Numbers 14:45"), though some take it not to be the proper name of a place, but an appellative, and render it, "even unto destruction"; so the Jerusalem Targum; that is, destroyed them with an utter destruction.

**DEUT. 1:45. *And ye returned and wept before the Lord,*** Those that remained when the Amorites left pursuing them, returned to the camp at Kadesh, where Moses and the Levites were, and the rest of the people; and here they

wept at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and hence said to be "before the Lord"; they wept because of the slaughter that had been made among them, and because of their sin in going contrary to the will of God, and because they were ordered into the wilderness; and very probably they cried and prayed unto the Lord, that they might not be turned back, but that he would go with them, and bring them now into the promised land: **but the Lord would not hearken to your voice,** nor give ear unto you; was inexorable, and would not repeal the order to go into the wilderness again, where he had sworn in his wrath their carcasses should fall; the sentence was irrevocable.

**DEUT. 1:46. *So ye abode in Kadesh many days,*** Yea, some years, as some think: **22 *according to the days that ye abode there;*** that is, according to Jarchi, as they did in the rest of the journeys or stations; so that as they were thirty eight years in all at several places, they were nineteen years in Kadesh; the same is affirmed in the Jewish chronology. Maimonides says they were eighteen years in one place, and it is very probable he means this; but Aben Ezra interprets it otherwise, and takes the sense to be, that they abode as many days here after their return as they did while the land was searching, which were forty days, (Numbers 13:25), but without fixing any determinate time, the meaning may only be, that as they had been many days here before this disaster, so they continued many days after in the same place before they marched onward into the wilderness again. 23

## Deuteronomy 2

In this chapter Moses goes on with his account of the affairs of the people of Israel, and what befell them, how they turned into the wilderness again; but passes over in silence their travels there, till they came to Mount Seir, where having been some time they were bid to depart, (Deuteronomy 2:1-3), and were directed not to meddle with the Edomites, or take anything from them, but pay them for what they should have of them, since they

lacked not, (Deuteronomy 2:4-8), nor to distress the Moabites, of whose country, as formerly inhabited, and also of Edom, some account is given, (Deuteronomy 2:9-12), when they were bid to go over the brook Zered, to which from their coming from Kadeshbarnea was the space of thirty eight years, in which time the former generation was consumed, (Deuteronomy 2:13-16) and now passing along the borders of Moab, they were ordered not to meddle with nor distress the children of Ammon, of whose land also, and the former inhabitants of it, an account is given, (Deuteronomy 2:17-23), then passing over the river Arnon, they are bid to fight with Sihon king of the Amorites, and possess his land, (Deuteronomy 2:24,25) to whom they sent messengers, desiring leave to pass through his land, and to furnish them with provisions for their money, as the Edomites and Moabites had done, (Deuteronomy 2:26- 29) but he refusing, this gave them an opportunity to attack him, in which they succeeded, slew him and his people, and took possession of his country, (Deuteronomy 2:30-37).

**DEUT. 2:1. *Then we turned,*** From Kadesh, where they had been many days, and so also their backs on the land of Canaan, on the borders of which they had been: ***and took our journey into the wilderness, by the way of the Red sea, as the Lord spake unto me;***

(Deuteronomy 1:40) ***and we compassed Mount Seir many days;*** many think by Mount Seir is meant the whole mountainous country of Edom, about which they travelled to and fro in the wilderness that lay near it for the space of thirty eight 24 years, which they suppose are meant by many days; but I rather think they came to this mount towards the close of the thirty eight years, before they came to Kadesh, from whence they sent messengers to Edom, which they went round about for several days,

**DEUT. 2:2. *And the Lord spake unto me,*** While about Mount Seir: ***saying;*** as follows.

**DEUT. 2:3. *Ye have compassed this mountain long enough,*** It was time to be gone from thence, as from Horeb, (Deuteronomy 1:6), ***turn you northward;*** from the southern border

of Edom towards the land of Canaan, which lay north. It was from Eziongeber in the land of Edom, from whence the Israelites came to Kadesh, where they sent messengers to the king of Edom, to desire a passage through his land; (see Numbers 33:36 20:14).

**DEUT. 2:4. *And command thou the people,*** Give them a strict charge: *saying, ye are to pass through the coast of your brethren the children or Esau:* not through the midst of their country, for that the king of Edom would not admit of, but by or on the border of it: *and they shall be afraid of you;* lest such a numerous body of people as Israel were should seize upon their country, and dispossess them of it, they having been so long, wanderers in a wilderness near them: *take ye good heed unto yourselves therefore;* that they did not take any advantage of their fears, and fall upon them, and do them mischief, or that they did not provoke them to battle and overcome them.

**DEUT. 2:5 *Meddle not with them,*** Contend not with them in battle, nor provoke them to it: *for I will not give you of their land, no not so much as a foot breadth;* or as the sole of a man's foot can tread on, signifying that they should not have the least part of it, not any at all. Jarchi makes mention of an exposition of theirs, that he would give them nothing of it until should come the day of the treading of the sole of the foot in the mount of Olives, (Zechariah 14:4), meaning not till the days of the Messiah, when Edom should be a possession of Israel; (see Numbers 24:18), (Obidiah 1:19) 25 *because I have given Mount Seir unto Esau for a possession;* and therefore not to be taken away from them; they have a right of inheritance of it; (see Genesis 36:8 Joshua 24:4).

**DEUT. 2:6 *Ye shall buy meat of them for money, that ye may eat,*** That is, if they would, as Aben Ezra observes; for though they had manna daily, yet if they would they might buy other food when they had an opportunity, as they would now have of Edom; but then they were not to take it by force or stealth, but pay for it, which they were able to do. The same writer observes, that some read the words with

an interrogation, "shall ye buy meat?" no, there is no need of it; for the Lord had blessed them with a sufficiency of it: *and ye shall also buy water of them for money; that ye may drink;* which was usual in those hot countries; (see Gill on "Numbers 20:19") or dig water that is, pay for digging of wells for water, or buy water out of wells dug in the land of Edom. Jarchi says in maritime places they express buying by this word, and so it is used in the Arabic language; (see Gill on "Hosea 3:2").

**DEUT. 2:7. *For the Lord thy God hath blessed thee in all the works of thine hands,*** Had increased their cattle and substance, even though in a wilderness: *he knoweth thy walking through this great wilderness;* every step they took, and he owned them and prospered them in all things in which they were concerned: *these forty years the Lord thy God hath been with thee:* not only to protect and defend them, but to provide all things necessary for them. This number of years was not fully completed, but the round number is given instead of the broken one: *thou hast lacked nothing:* and since they had wherewith to pay for their food and drink, they are directed to do it, and not take anything from the Edomites in an unjust way; nor make themselves look poor when they were rich, as Jarchi says.

**DEUT. 2:8. *And when we passed by from our brethren the children of Esau, which dwelt in Self,*** Along their coasts, by the borders of their country: 26 *through the way of the plain;* the wilderness of Zin, where Kadesh was: *from Elath and Eziongeber;* the two ports on the shore of the Red sea in the land of Edom; it was from the latter they came to Kadesh; (see Numbers 33:35,36). Elath was ten miles from Petra, the metropolis of Edom, to the east of it, as Jerom says; it is by Josephus called Aelana, and by the Septuagint here Ailon; from whence the Elanitic bay has its name; he speaks of it as not far from Eziongeber, which he says was then called Berenice: *we turned and passed by the way of the wilderness of Moab;* the wilderness which is before Moab, towards the sun rising or the east, (Numbers 21:11).

**DEUT. 2:9.** *And the Lord said unto me*, When upon the borders of Moab: ***distress not the Moabites, neither contend with than in battle***; besiege not any of their cities, nor draw them into a battle, or provoke them to fight: ***for I will not give thee of their land for a possession***; at least not as yet, the measure of their sins not being fully up, and the time of their punishment not come; otherwise in David's time they were subdued, and became tributaries to him, and the Edomites also, (2 Samuel 8:2,14), ***because I have given Ar unto the children of Lot for a possession***; so the Moabites were, they sprung from Moab, a son of Lot by his firstborn daughter, (Genesis 19:37). Ar was the metropolis of Moab, called Ar of Moab, (Isaiah 15:1) and is here put for the whole country of Moab; so Aben Ezra interprets it of Moab. Jarchi says it is the name of the province; in the Septuagint version it called Aroer.

**DEUT. 2:10.** *The Emims dwelt there in time past*, We read of them as early as the times of Chedorlaomer, (Genesis 14:5) when their dwelling was in Kirjathaim, a city which Sihon king of the Amorites took from the Moabites, and which being taken from him, was with others given to the tribe of Reuben, (Numbers 32:37). These are by some thought to be the same with the Yemim which Anah found and met with in the wilderness, and defeated, which we render "mules", (Genesis 36:24). They had their name from the fear and terror they put men into because of their gigantic stature and great strength, as follows: it is probable they were the descendants of Ham: 27 ***a people great and many, and tall as the Anakims***; who were very numerous, of a very bulky size of body, and of high stature, like the giants the spies had seen at Hebron, the sons of Anak, a noted giant there, (Numbers 13:22,23).

**DEUT. 2:11.** *Which also were accounted giants, as the Anakims*, Because of their bulky size and tall stature; or, "the Rephaim were they accounted, even they as the Anakims;" they were reckoned Rephaim, a name for giants in early times, even as the Anakims were; (see Genesis 14:5) ***but the Moabites called them***

***Emims***; to distinguish them from the Rephaim; so that it seems this name of Emims was not originally their name, but they are called so by a prolepsis, or anticipation, in (Genesis 14:5) since they had it from the Moabites, a people of a later date.

**DEUT. 2:12.** *The Horims also dwelt in Seir before time*, Which is the name of a mount, and so of the country, from it; so called from Seir the Horite, who dwelt in it before it was possessed by Esau and his sons; but who the Horim or Horites were, from whence they had their name, is difficult to say; they were as early as the times of Chedorlaomer, (Genesis 14:6). They seem to be so called from their dwelling in holes and caves in rocks, which the southern part of Edom or Idumea was full of, and to be the same the Greeks call Troglodytae: ***but the children of Esau succeeded them***; Esau and his sons marrying among them, made way for getting the country into their possession, as appears from (Genesis 36:2,8,12,20,25) and in which they afterwards settled themselves by the dint of sword, since it follows: ***when they had destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their stead***; even in Seir where they had dwelt, afterwards called Edom, from one of the names of Esau, (Genesis 36:8,9,20) ***as Israel did in the land of his possession, which the Lord gave unto them***; because this is said before the Canaanites were drove out of their land, and it was possessed by the Israelites, some think this was written by Ezra, or some other hand; but there is no need to suppose that; Moses, by a spirit of prophecy, and in faith of the promises and prophecies of God relating to this affair, which were just now about to be fulfilled, might write this; 28 besides, it may refer to what was already done to the kingdoms of Sihon and Og, kings of the Amorites; which had been taken from them, and given to the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh; and the above instances as well as this may be observed, to encourage the people of Israel that they should succeed in dispossessing the Canaanites, and settling in their land, in like manner as dispossessions of this kind had already been made.



**DEUT. 2:13. *Now rise up, said I, and get you over the brook Zered,*** It is called the valley of Zered, (Numbers 21:12), the word used signifying both a valley and a brook; and it is very probable there were both a valley and a brook of the same name; it must be near Dibongad, since in one place it is said the Israelites came from Ijim and pitched in Zered; and in another place that they came from thence, and pitched in Dibongad, (Numbers 21:11,12) and ***Numbers 33:45 and we went over the brook Zered;*** which was fordable, or perhaps at this time dried up.

**DEUT. 2:14. *And the space in which we came from Kadeshbarnea,*** The space of time; or, "the days"; the number of them: ***until we were come over the brook Zered, was thirty and eight years;*** that is, from the time that the spies were sent and searched the land, and brought a report of it; for they were sent from Kadeshbarnea, (Numbers 32:8) unto the passage of the Israelites over Zered, were thirty eight years; so long they had been travelling in the wilderness, after they were come to the borders of the land: ***until all the generation of the men of war were wasted out from among the host;*** all that were twenty years old and upwards, and fit to go out to war upon occasion, when the people were first numbered after they came out of Egypt; all that generation was now consumed within the above space of time, excepting two, Caleb and Joshua; ***as the Lord sware unto them;*** (Numbers 14:21,23,30).

**DEUT. 2:15. *For indeed the hand of the Lord was against them,*** His power was exerted in a way of wrath and vengeance on them, for their murmurings at the report of the spies; and therefore, it is no wonder they were consumed, for strong is his hand, and high is his right hand; and when lifted up it falls heavy, and there is no standing up under it, or against it: it smote them with one disease or another, or brought one judgment or another upon them: as the sword of Amalek, by which many were cut off, and the plague at Shittim in the plains of Moab, in which died 24,000; besides the destruction of Korah and his company, which was quickly after the affair of the spies, and the

plague at that time, of which died 14,700; and thus, by one stroke after another, he went on to ***destroy them from among the host until they were consumed,*** even all of them but two, as follows.

**DEUT. 2:16. *So it came to pass, when all the men of war were consumed,*** By wasting diseases and judgments of one kind or another: ***and dead from among the people;*** the rising and surviving generation.

**DEUT. 2:17. *That the Lord spoke unto me,*** At the brook Zered, having passed that, or at Dibongad, which was their next station: ***saying;*** as follows.

**DEUT. 2:18. *Thou art to pass over through Ar,*** That is, over the river Arnon, by the city Ar of Moab, which was situated by it; (see Deuteronomy 2:9) and so Moses and the people of Israel were to pass along by that, ***and by the coast of Moab;*** for they were not admitted to enter the land and pass through it; only to travel on the borders of it, and that they were to begin to do this day; the day the Lord spake to Moses.

**DEUT. 2:19. *And when thou comest nigh over against the children of Ammon,*** Who dwelt near the Moabites, and were brethren, both descending from Lot, (Genesis 19:37,38) ***distress them not, nor meddle with them;*** lay no siege to any of their cities, nor provoke them to war, nor engage in battle with them: ***for I will not give thee of the land of the children of Ammon any possession;*** that is, any part of it which was now in their hands; otherwise half their land was given to the tribe of Gad; but then that was what Sihon king of the Amorites had taken from them, and which Israel retook from him, and so possessed it not as the land of the Ammonites, but of the Amorites, one of the seven nations, whose land they were to inherit; (see Joshua 13:25 Judges 11:13-23), ***30 because I have given it unto the children of Lot for a possession;*** the Ammonites were the children of Lot by his second daughter, (Genesis 19:38).

**DEUT. 2:20. *That also was accounted a land of giants,*** Ammon was so reckoned as well as Moab, (Deuteronomy 2:10,11) ***giants dwelt***

*therein in old time*; the Rephaim dwelt there, as they did also in Ashteroth Karnaim, (Genesis 14:5) *and the Ammonites call them Zamzummims*; they are thought to be the same with the Zuzims in (Genesis 14:5) who had their name, as Hillerus thinks, from Mezuzah, a door post, from their tall stature, being as high as one; and for a like reason Saph the giant might have his name, (2 Samuel 21:18). The word Zamzummims, according to him, signifies contrivers of evil and terrible things; they were inventors of wickedness, crafty and subtle in forming wicked and mischievous designs, which struck terror into people, and made them formidable to them.

**DEUT. 2:21. *A people great and many, and tall as the Anakims***, As the Emims were, (Deuteronomy 2:10) but the Lord destroyed them before them; destroyed the Zamzummims before the children of Amman; or otherwise they would have been an too much for them, being so numerous, and of such a gigantic stature: *and they succeeded them, and dwelt in their stead*; and in this way, and by these means, he gave them their land for a possession, (Deuteronomy 2:19).

**DEUT. 2:22. *As he did to the children of Esau which dwelt in Seir***, He did the like things for them as he did for the Ammonites: *when he destroyed the Horims from before them*: which is repeated from (Deuteronomy 2:12), other instances of the like kind being here recited: *and they succeeded them, and dwelt in their stead, even unto this day*; (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 2:12").

**DEUT. 2:23. *And the Avim, which dwelt in Hazerim, even unto Azzah***, The same with the Avites, who appear to have inhabited some part of the land of the Philistines, in which Azzah or Gaza was, which was one of the five lordships of the Philistines, (Joshua 13:3). The word Hazerim signifies courts, and a learned man interprets it of tents or huts placed in 31 a square or circular form, so as to have an area in the middle; and in such the Avim may be supposed to dwell, while in Palestine, as far as Gaza: *the Caphtorim, which came from out of Caphtor, destroyed them*; according to the

Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan, and the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions, these were Cappadocians, that came out of Cappadocia; but it seems manifest that they were originally of Egypt, (see Genesis 10:14) and Bochart thinks they went from thence into that part of Cappadocia that was near Colchis; but things not answering their expectations, they returned, and drove out the Avim from their country: *and dwelt in their stead*; (see Gill on "Jeremiah 47:4") (see Gill on "Amos 9:7"). Though it seems as if they were not utterly destroyed, but some escaped into Assyria, and settled there, where was a place called Ava from them; and from whence they were sent by the king of Assyria to repeople the cities of Samaria, after the captivity of the ten tribes; (see 2 Kings 17:24). Now these several instances are observed to encourage the children of Israel to hope and believe that they should be able to dispossess the Canaanites, and inherit their land; such dispossessions having been very frequent, when it was the will of God they should take place.

**DEUT. 2:24. *Rise ye up, take your journey, and pass over the river Arnon***, Which was on the border of Moab, and divided between Moab and the Amorites, (Numbers 21:13) *behold, I have given into thy hand Sihon, the Amorite, king of Heshbon*, and his land; that is, he had determined to give it to the Israelites, for as yet it was not actually given; of this king, and the place he was king of, (see Gill on "Numbers 21:21 see Gill on "Numbers 21:26") begin to possess it, and contend with him in battle; provoke him to war, fight with him, take his land from him, and enter upon the possession of it, hereby assuring of victory.

**DEUT. 2:25. *This day will I begin to put the dread of thee***, And so fulfil the prophecies delivered by Moses in (Exodus 15:14-16) *and the fear of thee upon the nations that are under the whole heaven*; not only the neighbouring nations, the Edomites, Moabites, Ammonites, Philistines, and Canaanites, but nations more remote even throughout the whole world: 32 *who shall report of thee*; of what was done for Israel in Egypt, and at the

Red sea, and in the wilderness; and particularly of the delivery of Sihon and Og, kings of the Amorites, and of their kingdoms into their hands: **and shall tremble, and be in anguish because of thee**; lest they should proceed on, and make conquests of their lands also; (see Joshua 2:9- 11).

**DEUT. 2:26. And I sent messengers out of the wilderness of Kedemoth**, A city in the tribe of Reuben, and given by them to the Levites in later times, having been taken from the Amorites with others; near this lay a wilderness, which took its name from it, and seems to be the same with Jeshimon, (Numbers 21:20,21 Joshua 13:18 21:37). Aben Ezra takes it to be the wilderness of Matthanah, which according to Jerom was situated on Arnon, twelve miles to the east of Medeba; see (Numbers 21:18,30) from hence messengers were sent by Moses, **unto Sihon king of Heshbon, with words of peace**; in a peaceable and respectful manner, desiring to be at peace and in friendship with him, and a continuance of it, which was done to leave him inexcusable; as afterwards a like method was ordered to be taken, when they came to any city, to proclaim peace, and if an answer of peace was given, no hostilities were to be committed, (Deuteronomy 20:10), **saying**; as follows.

**DEUT. 2:27. Let me pass through thy land, (See Gill on "Numbers 21:22"), I will go along by the highway**; the king's highway, as in the place referred to, the public road: **I will neither turn to the right hand nor to the left**; to go into his fields and vineyards, and gather the fruit, or tread down the corn and vines, or do any manner of mischief to them; see the above place.

**DEUT. 2:28. Thou shalt sell me meat for money, that I may eat**, If they thought fit to have provision of them, they desired no other but to pay for it: **and give me water for money, that I may drink**; (see Deuteronomy 2:6), **33 only I will pass through on my feet**; for they were all footmen, (Numbers 11:21), of the phrase, (see Gill on "Numbers 20:19").

**DEUT. 2:29. As the children of Esau which dwell in Seir, and the Moabites which dwell in Ar, did unto me**, Which respects, as Jarchi observes, not the affair of passing through their land requested, for neither of them granted that, but buying food and drink; for though the Edomites at first seem not to have granted that, yet afterwards they did. The mountain of Seir, and the city Ar, are put for the whole countries of Edom and Moab: **until I shall pass over Jordan into the land which the Lord our God giveth us**; this is observed to remove any suspicion or jealousy of their seizing his country, and taking possession of it, and dwelling in it; since they only proposed to pass through it on their journey to the land of Canaan, which lay on the other side Jordan, over which they must pass in order to possess it, which they had a right unto by the gift of God.

**DEUT. 2:30. But Sihon king of Heshbon would not let us pass by him**, Or through his country, as was desired: **for the Lord had hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate**; as he did Pharaoh's, for whom he will he hardens; so that he would not listen to the proposals made to him, nor grant the requests asked of him, but with pride and haughtiness of spirit despised and disdained Israel: **that he might deliver him into thine hand**; that so an opportunity might offer of fighting with him, and taking his country from him; whereas, had he been peaceable and flexible, he had continued in the enjoyment of his land, and Israel would not have had that advantage against him; but God, who has the hearts of kings and of all men in his hands, so wrought upon him that he should take the steps he did, which made way for the delivery of him and his country into the hands of the Israelites: **as appeareth this day**: for when Moses made this speech, the kingdom of Sihon was possessed by the Israelites, (Numbers 21:24,25).

**DEUT. 2:31. And the Lord said unto me**, After or about the time when the messengers were sent to Sihon, perhaps when they had returned and had brought his answer: **34 behold, I have begun to give Sihon and his land before thee**; by hardening his heart, which was a sure token

of his ruin, and a leading step to the delivery of him into the hands of Israel: **begin to possess, that thou mayest inherit his land**; move towards it and enter into it, not fearing any opposition made by him.

**DEUT. 2:32. Then Sihon came out against us**, Perceiving they were upon their march towards his land or into it, he gathered all his people and went out of Heshbon their capital city, where he resided: **he and all his people, to fight at Jahaz**; a city which he had taken from the king of Moab, and which in later times, after the captivity of the ten tribes, came into their hands again, (Isaiah 15:4 Jeremiah 48:21), (See Gill on "Numbers 21:21").

**DEUT. 2:33. And the Lord our God delivered him before us**, With their lands: **and we smote him and his sons, and all his people**; with the edge of the sword; slew them all: the Cetib or textual reading is "his son", though the Keri or margin is "his sons", which we follow. So Jarchi observes, it is written "his son", because he had a son mighty as himself, he says.

**DEUT. 2:34. And we took all his cities at that time**, As Heshbon, and others mentioned in (Numbers 21:25,30,32 32:3,34-38), **and utterly destroyed the men, and the women, and the little ones of every city, we left none to remain**; for the Amorites were one of the seven nations who were devoted to destruction, the measure of whose iniquity was now full, and therefore vengeance was taken.

**DEUT. 2:35. Only the cattle we took for a prey unto ourselves**, These they did not destroy, but preserved alive for their own use and profit, and took them as their own property: **and the spoil of the cities which we took**; as household goods, gold, silver, and whatever valuable was found by them; this they took as plunder, and shared it among themselves.

**DEUT. 2:36. From Aroer, which is by the brink of the river Arnon** Upon the border of Moab, and the principal city of it; (see Jeremiah 48:19) **35 and from the city that is by the river**; or even the city that is in the midst of the river, the city Aroer, which seems to be meant; (see Joshua 12:2 13:9). This river is afterwards

called the river of Gad, (2 Samuel 24:5) in the midst of it Aroer was, perhaps because it was possessed by the tribe of Gad: **even unto Gilead**; Mount Gilead and the country adjacent to it, which belonged to Og king of Bashan: **there was not one city too strong for us**; that could hold out against them, when attacked and besieged by them, but presently surrendered: **the Lord our God delivered all unto us**; Moses ascribes all the victories and success they had unto the Lord, not to their own might and power, but to the power of God with them, and his blessing on them.

**DEUT. 2:37. Only unto the land of the children of Ammon thou camest not**, Which was then in their possession; otherwise what Sihon had took away from them, that the children of Israel came into and enjoyed, as before observed, (Deuteronomy 2:19) **nor unto any place of the river Jabbok**; any town or city situated on this river, which was the border of the children of Ammon, (Deuteronomy 3:16), (See Gill on "Genesis 32:22"), **nor unto the cities in the mountains**; much less did they penetrate into the innermost parts of their country, the mountainous part thereof, and the cities there: **nor unto whatsoever the Lord our God forbad us**: whether in Edom, Moab, or Ammon, particularly the latter, of which he is more especially and peculiarly speaking. 36

### Deuteronomy 3

In this chapter the account is carried on of the conquest of the Amorites by Israel, of Og king of Bashan, and his kingdom, (Deuteronomy 3:1-11), and of the distribution of their country to the tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh, (Deuteronomy 1:12-17) and then the command to the said tribes is observed, to go out armed before their brethren, and assist them in the conquest of the land of Canaan, and then return to their possessions, (Deuteronomy 3:18-20) and also that to Joshua not to fear, but to do to the Canaanitish kings and kingdoms what he had seen done to the two kings of the Amorites, (Deuteronomy 3:21,22). After which Moses relates the request he made, to go over Jordan and see the good land, which was denied

him, only he is bidden to look from the top of an hill to see it, (Deuteronomy 3:23-27). And the chapter is closed with the charge he was to give Joshua, (Deuteronomy 3:28) which was received in the valley where they abode, (Deuteronomy 3:29).

**DEUT. 3:1.** *Then we turned and went up the way to Bashan*, Which seems to have been higher than the kingdom of Sihon: this was a fine country for pasturage, for the breeding of cattle, larger and lesser, and was famous for its oaks: it is the same country which in Josephus and others goes by the name of Batanea: *and Og the king of Bashan came out against us*; got his forces together, and came out from Ashteroth, the royal city where he dwelt: *he and all his people, to battle at Edrei*; another city in his kingdom, about six miles from the former; (see Deuteronomy 1:4 Numbers 21:33).

**DEUT. 3:2.** *And the Lord said unto me*, When Og was marching with all his forces against Israel: *fear him not*, etc; (See Gill on "Numbers 21:34"). 37

**DEUT. 3:3.** *So the Lord our God delivered into our hands Og also the king of Bashan, and all his people*, As well as Sihon king of Heshbon: *and we smote him, till none was left to him remaining*; or left alive, all were slain with the sword; (See Gill on "Numbers 21:35").

**DEUT. 3:4.** *And we took all his cities at that time*, Not only Edrei where the battle was fought, and Ashteroth his capital city, but all the rest in his kingdom: *there was not a city which we took not from them*; not one stood out, but all surrendered on summons; the number of which follows: *three score cities*; which was a large number for so small a country, and shows it to be well inhabited: *all the region of Argob*; which was a small province of *the kingdom of Og in Bashan*: Aben Ezra and Jarchi observe, that it was called after a man, i.e. whose name was Argob; the Targum of Onkelos names it Tracona, and the Targum of Jonathan Targona, the same with Trachonitis in Josephus and other authors; (see Luke 3:1), Jerom relates that in his time, about Gerasa, a city of Arabia, fifteen miles from it to the west, there was a

village which was called Arga, which seems to carry in it some remains of the ancient name of this country; and the Samaritan version, in all places where Argob is, calls it Rigobaah; and in the Misnah mention is made of a place called Ragab, beyond Jordan, famous for its being the second place for the best oil.

**DEUT. 3:5.** *All these cities were fenced with high walls, gates, and bars*, That is, all the cities in the kingdom of Bashan; and though they were, it hindered not their falling into the hands of the Israelites; and this might serve to encourage them against those fears they were possessed of by the spies, with respect to the cities in the land of Canaan; (see Numbers 13:28 Deuteronomy 1:28) *besides unwall'd towns a great many*; small towns and villages adjacent to the several cities, as is common.

**DEUT. 3:6.** *And we utterly destroyed them*, Not the cities, but the inhabitants of them: *38 as we did to Sihon king of Heshbon*; they did not destroy his cities, for they took them and dwelt in them; but the people that lived there, as follows here: *utterly destroying the men, women, and children, of every city*; (see Deuteronomy 2:34).

**DEUT. 3:7.** *But all the cattle, and the spoil of the cities*, The oxen and sheep, camels and asses; their gold and silver, and the furniture of their houses; their stores of corn, and of other fruits of the earth, even all their substance of whatsoever kind: *we took for a prey to ourselves*; made them their own property, and used them for their own profit and service, whereby they became greatly enriched.

**DEUT. 3:8.** *And we took at that time out of the hands of the two kings of the Amorites*, Sihon king of Heshbon, and Og king of Bashan; *the land that [was] on this side Jordan*; where Moses then was, being in the plains of Moab, and was the country beyond Jordan, with respect to the land of Canaan, and when in that: *from the river of Arnon unto Mount Hermon*; Arnon was a river which divided Moab and the Amorites, (Numbers 22:13) and Hermon was a mountain of Gilead, which ended where Lebanon began, and was the northerly border

of this country. It was remarkable for the dew that fell on it; (see Gill on "Psalm 133:3").

**DEUT. 3:9.** *Which Hermon the Sidonians call Sirion*, Which name it has in (Psalm 29:6) a name the inhabitants of Sidon gave it, but for what reason it is not easy to say; however, that it was well known to Tyre and Sidon, appears from snow in summer time being brought to the former, as will be hereafter observed: *and the Amorites call it Shenir*; in whose possession it was last. Bochart thinks it had its name from the multitude of wild cats in it, Shunar in the Chaldee tongue being the name of that creature; but Jarchi says Shenir in the Canaanitish language signifies "snow"; so, in the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan, it is called the mountain of snow; and the Hebrew who read to Jerom, and taught him, affirmed to him that this mountain hung over Paneas, from whence snow in summer time was brought to Tyre for 39 pleasure, and the same is confirmed by Abulfeda. There is said to be upon the top of it a famous temple, which is used for worship by the Heathens, over against Paneas and Lebanon; and it is highly probable there was one even at this time, when it was possessed by the Amorites, since it is called Mount Baalhermon, (Judges 3:3), from the worship of Baal, or some other idol upon it, as it should seem. Besides these, it had another name, Mount Sion, (Deuteronomy 4:48) but to be distinguished from Mount Zion near Jerusalem. The names of it in this place are very differently interpreted by Hillerus; though he thinks it had them all on account of the snow on it, which was as a net all over it; for Hermon, he observes, signifies a net, a dragnet, and Shenir an apron, and Sirion a coat of mail, all from the covering of this mount with snow.

**DEUT. 3:10.** *All the cities of the plain*, There was a plain by Medeba, and Heshbon and her cities were in a plain, with some others given to the tribe of Reuben, (Joshua 13:16,17) *and all Gilead*; Mount Gilead, and the cities belonging to it, a very fruitful country, half of which fell to the share of the Reubenites, and the rest to the half tribe of Manasseh: *and all Bashan*; of which Og was king, called Batanea, a very fertile

country, as before observed: *unto Salcah and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan*; which seem to be frontier cities of the latter: (see Deuteronomy 1:4 3:1). The former, Adrichomius says, was situated by the city Geshur and Mount Hermon, and was the boundary of the country of Bashan to the north; and according to Benjamin of Tudela, it was half a day's journey from Gilead: as Edrei seems to be its boundary to the south.

**DEUT. 3:11.** *For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of giants*, The meaning seems to be, either that he was the only one that was left of the race of the giants the Ammonites found when they took possession of this country, (Deuteronomy 2:20) or that was left when the Amorites took it from the Ammonites; and who having by some means or other ingratiated himself into their affections, because of his stature, strength, and courage, and other qualifications they might discern in him, made him their king: *behold, his bedstead was a bedstead of iron*: his body being so large and bulky, he might think it most proper and safest for him to have a bedstead made of iron to lie upon, or to prevent noxious insects harbouring in it; nor was it unusual to have bedsteads made of other materials than wood, as of gold, silver, and ivory; (see Gill on "Amos 6:4"). Some learned men have been of opinion, that the beds of Typho in Syria, made mention of by Homer, refer to this bedstead of Og: *is it not in Rabbath of the children of Ammon?* which was the royal city of the Ammonites, in the times of David, (2 Samuel 12:26), now called Philadelphia, as Jerom says. This bedstead might be either sent thither by Og, before the battle at Edrei, for safety, or rather might be sold by the Israelites to the inhabitants of Rabbath, who kept it, as a great curiosity: *nine cubits was the length thereof, and four cubits the breadth of it, after the cubit of a man*; a common cubit, so that it was four yards and a half long, and two yards broad. Onkelos renders it, after the king's cubit; and the king's cubit at Babylon, according to Herodotus, was larger by three fingers than the common one; such as the cubit in (Ezekiel

40:5), which was a cubit and an hand's breadth; and this makes the dimensions of the bedstead yet larger. And by this judgment may be made of the tallness of Og's stature, though this is not always a sure rule to go by; for Alexander, when in India, ordered his soldiers to make beds of five cubits long, to be left behind them, that they might be thought to be larger men than they were, as Diodorus Siculus and Curtius relate; but there is little reason to believe that Og's bedstead was made with such a view. Maimonides observes, that a bed in common is a third part larger than a man; so that Og, according to this way of reckoning, was six cubits high, and his stature doubly larger than a common man's; but less than a third part may well be allowed to a bed, which will make him taller still; the height of Og is reckoned by Wolfius to be about thirteen feet eleven inches of Paris measure.

**DEUT. 3:12.** *And this land, which we possessed at that time,* Or took possession of, having conquered it; for it still remained in their possession: *from Aroer, which is by the river Arnon:* on the borders of Moab, from thence as far as Gilead was the land which was taken from Sihon king of Heshbon, (Deuteronomy 2:36) *and half Mount Gilead, and the cities thereof:* which were taken from Og king of Bashan, (Deuteronomy 3:10) *41 gave I unto the Reubenites, and to the Gadites;* at their request, on certain conditions to be performed by them, afterwards repeated.

**DEUT. 3:13.** *And the rest of Gilead,* The other half of the mount, with the cities belonging to it: *and all Bashan, being the kingdom of Og, gave I unto the half tribe of Manasseh;* (see Numbers 32:33) *all the region of Argob, with all Bashan;* the region of Trachonitis, in Bashan; (see Deuteronomy 3:4), *which was called the land of giants;* or of Rephaim; this Jarchi says is the country of the Rephaim given to Abraham, (Genesis 15:20).

**DEUT. 3:14.** *Jair the son of Manasseh took all the country of Argob,* Or Trachonitis; the small towns belonging to Gilead, as in (Numbers 32:41) *unto the coasts of Geshuri and Maachathi;* these were little kingdoms in Syria,

on which the country of Argob bordered, and had kings over them in the time of David, and came not into the possession of the Israelites; (see Joshua 13:13 2 Samuel 3:3 10:6,8 15:8) *and called them after his own name, Bashanhavothjair, unto this day;* (see Numbers 32:41).

**DEUT. 3:15.** *And I gave Gilead unto Machir.]* The son of Manasseh; not to him personally, who cannot be thought to have been living at this time, but to his posterity, to the Machirites; (see Numbers 32:40).

**DEUT. 3:16.** *And unto the Reubenites, and unto the Gadites,* The tribes of Reuben and Gad: *I gave from Gilead even unto the river Arnon:* (see Deuteronomy 3:12) *half the valley and the border;* or rather half the river, the river Arnon; and so it is rendered "the middle of the river", in (Joshua 12:2) and so here the middle of the torrent by the Vulgate Latin and Septuagint versions, and by Onkelos: *even unto the river Jabbok, which is the border of the children of Ammon;* beyond which the land given to the tribes of Reuben and Gad reached not; (see Deuteronomy 2:37). 42

**DEUT. 3:17.** *The plain also, and Jordan,* The plain by Jordan, the plains of Moab on the side of it, together with the river: *and the coast thereof;* the country adjoining to it: *from Chinnereth even unto the sea of the plain, [even] the salt sea;* that is, from Gennesaret, as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan, called the land of Gennesaret, (Matthew 14:34), from thence to the sea of Sodom, the sea of the plain, where the cities of the plain stood, Sodom, Gomorrah, etc. and the salt sea, so called from the salt and nitrous waters of it, the lake Asphaltites: *under Ashdothpishgah eastward;* mentioned among the cities given to the tribe of Reuben, (Joshua 13:20) rendered "the springs of Pishgah", (Deuteronomy 4:49), the word having the signification of effusions, pourings out; so the Targums.

**DEUT. 3:18.** *And I commanded you at that time,* Not all Israel, but the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh; for what follows only concerns them: *saying, the*

**Lord your God hath given you this land to possess it;** the land before described, lately in the hands of Sihon and Og; this at their request Moses gave them, by the direction of the Lord, on the following condition: **you shall pass over armed before your brethren the children of Israel, all [that] are meet for the war;** that is, they should pass over Jordan with the rest of the tribes, being armed to assist them in the conquest of Canaan: for this phrase, which we render “before your brethren”, does not signify that they went in the forefront of them, only that they were present with them, and joined them in their war against their enemies; (see Numbers 32:29,30) and therefore should be rendered “with your brethren”; even as many of them as were able to bear arms, at least as many as Joshua would choose to take of them; for he did not take them all by a great many; (see Joshua 4:13).

**DEUT. 3:19. But your wives, and your little ones, and your cattle,** These were to be left behind: for **I know that ye have much cattle;** which made the countries of Gilead and Bashan, so famous for pasturage, agreeable to them; (see Numbers 32:1) these, under the care of servants, and also their wives and children, **shall abide in your cities which I have given you;** and which they rebuilt and repaired, (Numbers 32:34-42).

**DEUT. 3:20. Until the Lord have given rest unto your brethren, as well as unto you,** Rest from their enemies, and habitations to dwell quietly in; so the land of Canaan is called a rest, (Deuteronomy 12:9) typical of the rest which remains for the people of God: **and until they also possess the land which the Lord your God hath given them beyond Jordan;** for so Canaan was with respect to Moses and the people with him, who were then in the plains of Moab; otherwise the country in which he was with respect to Canaan is usually called beyond Jordan; this the Lord had given in promise to Israel, and they were just now ready to enter into and possess it, by virtue of his gift, and which made it sure unto them: **and then shall ye return every man unto his possession,**

**which I have given you;** as accordingly they did, (Joshua 22:1-34).

**DEUT. 3:21. And I commanded Joshua at that time,** After the conquest of the two kings, and the assignment of their countries to the above tribes; and after Moses had it made known to him that he should quickly die, and Joshua should be his successor; then, by the direction of God, he gave him the following charge: **saying, thine eyes have seen all that the Lord your God hath done unto these two kings;** Sihon and Og; how their kingdoms were taken from them, and given to Israel, and they slain with the sword; this Joshua was an eyewitness of, and was, no doubt, greatly concerned in the battles with them, being the general in the Israelitish armies; at least this was sometimes his post, and he cannot be thought to have been unemployed in these wars: **so shall the Lord do unto all the kingdoms whither thou passest;** all the kingdoms in the land of Canaan, where there were many, thirty one at least; these would be all conquered and put into the hands of the Israelites, and their kings slain.

**DEUT. 3:22. Ye shall not fear them,** On account of the numbers, strength, courage, and gigantic stature of the inhabitants, at least some of them; nor on account of their walled towns, and fortified cities: **44 for the Lord your God he shall fight for you;** as he did, particularly at Jericho, the walls of which city fell at the sound of rams’ horns; and at Gibeon, when he cast down hailstones on their enemies, and more were slain by them than with the sword; and in all their battles it was he that gave them success and victory.

**DEUT. 3:23. And I besought the Lord at that time,** When he was told he should die, and Joshua should succeed him; or when the two kings were slain, and their kingdoms conquered; this being the beginning, pledge, and earnest of what God had promised to do for the people of Israel; Moses was very desirous of living to see the work completed, and therefore sought the Lord by prayer and supplication: **saying;** as follows.



**DEUT. 3:24. *O Lord God, thou hast begun to show thy servant thy greatness and thy mighty hand,*** To give a specimen of the greatness of his power in subduing the two kings and their kingdoms, and delivering them up into the hands of the Israelites. Moses had seen instances of the mighty power of God in Egypt, at the Red sea, and in the wilderness; but this was the beginning of his power, in vanquishing the Canaanites, and putting their land into the possession of the Israelites, as he had promised; of which the Amorites were a part, and a principal nation of them: and thus God, when he begins a work of grace upon the soul of man, begins to show the exceeding greatness of his power, and which is further exerted in carrying it on, and bringing it to perfection: ***for what God is there in heaven or in earth that can do according to thy works, and according to thy might?*** here Moses speaks according to the notion of Heathens, who supposed there were other gods in heaven and in earth besides the true God; and upon this supposition observes, let there be as many as they will, or can be imagined, there is none of them like the Lord God of Israel for power and might; or are able to do such works as he has done, in nature, in the creation of all things out of nothing, in providence, in supporting what he has made, and in governing the world; and in those amazing instances of his power, in bringing down judgments upon wicked men, kings, and kingdoms; and in the deliverance of his own people from them, and putting them and their kingdoms into the possession of them; which were the wondrous works of might Moses had in view, and a sense of which was impressed on his mind at this time. 45

**DEUT. 3:25. *I pray thee, let me go over and see the good land that is beyond Jordan,*** The land of Canaan, the land flowing with milk and honey; a land which he describes as a most excellent one, (Deuteronomy 8:7,8). To see this land, he was very desirous of going over the river Jordan, beyond which it lay with respect to the place where he now was: ***that goodly mountain, and Lebanon;*** or, "that goodly mountain, even Lebanon"; which lay to the

north of the land of Canaan, and was famous for cedar and odoriferous trees. But if two distinct mountains are meant, the goodly mountain may design Mount Moriah, on which the temple was afterwards built, and of which Moses might have a foresight; and some by Lebanon think that is meant, which was built of the cedars of Lebanon, and therefore goes by that name, (Zechariah 11:1) and a foreview of this made the mountain so precious to Moses, and desirable to be seen by him. So the Targum of Jonathan; "that goodly mountain in which is built the city of Jerusalem, and Mount Lebanon, in which the Shechinah shall dwell" to which agrees the note of Aben Ezra, who interprets the goodly mountain of Jerusalem, and Lebanon of the house of the sanctuary. In the Septuagint it is called Antilibanus. Mount Libanus had its name not from frankincense growing upon it, as some have thought; for it does not appear that any did grow upon it, for that came from Seba in Arabia Felix; but from the whiteness of it, through the continual snows that were on it, just as the Alps have their name for the same reason; and so Jerom says of Lebanon, that the snow never leaves from the tops of it, or is ever so overcome by the heat of the sun as wholly to melt; to the same purpose also Tacitus says, and Mr. Maundrell, who was there in May, speaks of deep snow on it, and represents the cedars as standing in snow.

**DEUT. 3:26. *But the Lord was wroth with me for your sakes,*** Not at this time, and for this prayer of his, but on account of he and Aaron not sanctifying him at the waters of Meribah; or of some expressions of unbelief, and unadvised words, which dropped from his lips through their provocation of him; (see Numbers 20:12 Psalm 106:32,33) ***and would not hear me;*** now, and grant the above request, having before declared that he and Aaron should not bring the people of Israel into the land he had given them; and Moses with all his entreaties could not prevail upon him to repeal the sentence: 46 ***and the Lord said unto me, let it suffice;*** that he had seen the conquest of the two kings, and the delivery of their kingdoms into the hands of Israel; and that he had

brought the people through the wilderness to the borders of the land of Canaan, and that he should have a distant sight of the land, as after directed: ***speaking no more unto me of this matter***; intimating it would be in vain, and to no purpose, to solicit such a favour, since it would never be granted; it was a determined point, and he would never recede from it.

**DEUT. 3:27. *Get thee up into the top of Pisgah***, Which was the highest eminence of Mount Nebo, and so a very proper place to take a prospect from; (see Deuteronomy 32:49 34:1) ***and lift up thine eyes westward, and northward, and southward, and eastward***; to all the four points of the heaven, and to all the four quarters and borders of the land of Canaan: ***and behold it with thine eyes***; even the land of Canaan, and particularly Lebanon, though it lay to the north of it, that mountain he had such a desire to see. Moses, though old, his natural sight was very strong, and not in the least dim; and it is not improbable that it might be more than ordinarily increased and assisted at this time: ***for thou shalt not go over this Jordan***; into the land of Canaan; this affair, of not being suffered to enter there, Moses frequently takes notice of, no less than four or five times, it being what lay near his heart.

**DEUT. 3:28. *But charge Joshua, and encourage him, and strengthen him***, Charge him to take the care of the children of Israel, to introduce them into the good land, and put them into the possession of it; encourage him against all fear of his and their enemies, and strengthen him with promises of the presence of God, and of his gracious help and assistance: ***for he shall go over before this people***; over the river Jordan, at the head of them, as their leader and commander; a type of Christ, the leader and commander of his people, who as their King goes forth at the head of them, and will introduce them all into his Father's kingdom and glory: ***and he shall cause them to inherit the land which thou shalt see***; and no more; not enter into, but Joshua should; and having conquered it, should divide it by lot for an inheritance to them, and their children after them; a 47 type of Christ, in whom and by whom

the saints obtain an inheritance by lot, (Ephesians 1:11).

**DEUT. 3:29. *So we abode in the valley over against Bethpeor.***] In the plains of Moab, over against a temple built for Baalpeor upon a mountain, so called from that idol, or that idol from the mountain; this is the valley where Moses was buried, (Deuteronomy 34:6). 48

#### Deuteronomy 4

This chapter contains an exhortation to Israel to keep the commands, statutes, and judgments of God, urged from the superior excellency of them to those of all other nations, (Deuteronomy 4:1-8), from the manner in which they were delivered, out of the midst of fire, by a voice of words, but no similitude seen, (Deuteronomy 4:9-15), and particularly the Israelites are cautioned against idolatry, from the consideration of the goodness of God to them, in bringing them out of Egypt, (Deuteronomy 4:16-20), and the rather Moses is urgent upon them to be diligent in their obedience to the laws of God, because he should quickly be removed from them, (Deuteronomy 4:21-24), and should they be disobedient to them, it would provoke the Lord to destroy them, or to carry them captive into other lands, (Deuteronomy 4:25-28) though even then, if they repented and sought the Lord, and became obedient, he would be merciful to them, and not forsake them, (Deuteronomy 4:29-31) and they are put in mind again of the amazing things God had done for them, in speaking to them out of fire, and they alive; in bringing them out of another nation, and driving out other nations to make room for them; all which he improves, as so many arguments to move them to obedience to the divine commands, (Deuteronomy 4:32-40) and then notice is taken of the three cities of refuge, separated on this side Jordan, (Deuteronomy 4:41-43), and the chapter is concluded with observing, that this is the law, and these the testimonies, Moses declared and repeated to the children of Israel in the country of Sihon and Og, who were delivered into their hands, and their lands possessed by them,

which laid them under fresh obligations to yield obedience to God, (Deuteronomy 4:44-49).

**DEUT. 4:1.** *Now therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the judgments,* The laws of God, moral, ceremonial, and judicial, which they are exhorted to attend to and obey, in consideration of the great and good things the Lord had done for them, ever since they came from Horeb, where they were given them; such as providing for them, and feeding them 49 in the wilderness, preserving them from every hurtful thing, and delivering their enemies into their hands, the two kings of the Amorites, which they are put in mind of in the preceding chapters; hence this begins with "therefore hearken"; for nothing is a greater incentive to obedience than the kindness and goodness of God: *which I teach you for to do that ye may live;* the law was taught by Moses, but the Gospel of grace and truth by Jesus Christ; and it was taught by him, as well as it was to be hearkened to by them, in order to yield obedience to it; for not bare hearing, but doing the law, is the principal thing of any avail; and which was to be done, that they might live; not a spiritual and eternal life, which are not by the works of the law, but are had only from Christ, through his grace and righteousness; but a corporeal life, and a comfortable enjoyment of the blessings of it, and particularly that that might be continued to them: *and go in and possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers giveth you;* the land of Canaan, which the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, had promised to give to their posterity, and which they were to hold by their obedience to his laws.

**DEUT. 4:2.** *Ye shall not add to the word which I command you, nether shall you diminish ought from it,* Neither make new laws of their own, and join them to the law of God, and set them upon a level with it, or prefer them before it; as the Scribes and Pharisees did in Christ's time, who by their traditions made the word of God of none effect, as do the Papists also by their unwritten traditions; nor abrogate nor detract from the law of God, nor make void any part of it: or else the sense is, neither do that

which is forbidden, nor neglect that which is commanded; neither be guilty of sins of omission nor commission, nor in any way break the law of God, and teach men so to do by word or by example; not a jot or tittle is either to be put to it, or taken from it, (Proverbs 30:5,6 Matthew 5:18,19 Revelation 22:18,19) *that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you;* in his name; or which he delivered unto them as his commandments, and which were to be kept just as they were delivered, without adding to them, or taking from them.

**DEUT. 4:3.** *Your eyes have seen what the Lord did because of Baalpeor,* Because of the idolatry the people of Israel fell into by worshipping that 50 idol, being drawn into it by the daughters of Moab and Midian, through the counsel of Balaam, with whom they committed fornication; which led them to the other sin, and both highly provoking to God. The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan are, "what the Word of the Lord has done to the worshippers of the idol Peor;" *for all the men that followed Baalpeor, the Lord thy God hath destroyed them from among you;* 24,000 persons died on that account; which being a recent thing, fresh in memory, and what they were eyewitnesses of, was a caution to them to avoid the same sins, as it is to us on whom the ends of the world are come, (Numbers 23:9 1 Corinthians 10:6-8,11).

**DEUT. 4:4.** *But ye that did cleave unto the Lord your God,* To the worship of the Lord your God, as the Targum of Jonathan; attended the service of the sanctuary, were observant of the laws of God, and walked in his statutes and judgments; did not apostatize from him by idolatry or otherwise, but kept close unto him, and followed him fully: *are alive everyone of you this day;* which is very remarkable, that in such a vast number of people not one should die in such a space of time, it being several months since that affair happened; and besides, in that time there was a war with the Midianites, and yet not one person died in that war, nor as it seems by this account by any disease or disaster whatever; (see Numbers 31:49).

**DEUT. 4:5.** *Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me,* He had faithfully delivered them, without adding them, or diminishing from them, and had diligently instructed the Israelites in them, had taken pains to lead them into a thorough knowledge and understanding them: *that ye should do so in the land whither ye go possess it;* do in like manner as the commandments the Lord direct to; or that which is right ; proper and fitting to be done, by doing which they continue in the land they were about to possess, therefore when in it were to be careful to them; some of them could not be done till they came into it, and all were to be done in it.

**DEUT. 4:6.** *Keep therefore and do them,* . Observe them, take notice of what is expressed by them, and perform them, both as to matter and manner, as they require: 51 *for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations;* that is, their wisdom and understanding would appear to other nations by their observance of the commands of God: *which hear all these statutes;* which they had a report, got knowledge of by some of the philosophers who travelled into those parts, and by the translation of the Bible into the Greek language: *and say, surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people;* that had such a body of laws, in which they were instructed, and according to which they were governed, and in which they walked; that were so agreeable to reason, truth, justice, and equity; insomuch that so far as they became known they were admired and copied after, both by Greeks and Romans; and hence it was that the oracle declared, that only the Chaldeans and Hebrews were a wise people; the Hebrews came from Chaldea, as Abraham the father of them.

**DEUT. 4:7** *For what nation is there so great,* Not so much for their number, for they were the fewest of all people; nor for the largeness of their territories, for the land they were going to possess was but a small country; nor for their wealth and riches, and warlike exploits, though they were not contemptible in either; but for

their happy constitution in church and state, being directed and governed in both by laws which came immediately from God himself; for their knowledge of divine things, and for spiritual blessings and privileges they were favoured with, of which a special instance is given: *who hath God so nigh unto them as the Lord our God is, in all things that we call upon him for?* God was nigh unto them in respect of relation, being their covenant God and Father, and they his sons and daughters, to whom the adoption belonged; and with respect to place and presence, his tabernacle being in the midst of them, the seat of his Shechinah, or divine Majesty, being in the most holy place, between the cherubim over the mercy seat; and he going before them in the pillar of cloud by day, and in the pillar of fire by night, and who might be applied unto at all times for whatsoever they stood in need of; and who was always near unto them, to give them advice and counsel, help and assistance; to hear their prayers, and communicate unto them things temporal and spiritual they stood in need of: and so the Lord is nigh to all that call upon him in faith, with fervency, and in sincerity and truth; and herein the glory and greatness of a people, as of Israel, lies, in being nearly related to God, a people near unto 52 him, both as to union and communion; and in having a communication of good things from him. God is both a God at hand and afar off, (Jeremiah 23:23 Psalm 145:18).

**DEUT. 4:8.** *And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous,* Founded in justice and equity, and so agreeable to right reason, and so well calculated and adapted to lead persons in the ways of righteousness and truth, and keep them from doing any injury to each other's persons and properties, and to maintain good order, peace, and concord among them: *as all this law which I set before you this day?* which he then repeated, afresh declared, explained and instructed them in; for otherwise it had been delivered to them near forty years ago. Now there was not any nation then in being, nor any since, to be compared with the nation of the

Jews, for the wise and wholesome laws given unto them; no, not the more cultivated and civilized nations, as the Grecians and Romans, who had the advantage of such wise lawgivers as they were accounted, as Solon, Lycurgus, Numa, and others; and indeed the best laws that they had seem to be borrowed from the Jews.

**DEUT. 4:9.** *Only take heed to thyself*, To walk according to this law, and not swerve from it: *and keep thy soul diligently*; from the transgressions and breaches of it: *lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen*; either the statutes and judgments set before them, and the circumstances of the delivery of them; or the punishment inflicted on the breakers of them; or the favours bestowed on those that observed them: *and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life*; out of thy mind and memory, and have no place in thy affections, through a neglect and disuse of them: *but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons*; their children and grandchildren, that they may be trained up in them in their youth, and so not depart from them when grown up, and in years; (see Deuteronomy 6:7).

**DEUT. 4:10.** *Specially the day that thou stoodest before the Lord in Horeb*, Above all things Moses would have them take care not to forget the 53 day the law was given from Mount Sinai, which was so awful and solemn, when they saw the fire, the smoke, the lightning, and heard the thunder and the sound of the trumpet; all which were very shocking and terrifying: and though the men of this generation were but young then, being under twenty years of age, yet many of them were old enough to observe these things, and which one would think should never wear out of their minds: *when the Lord said unto me, gather me the people together*; not the elders of the people only, but the whole body of the people, as he did, and brought them to the foot of Mount Sinai, (Exodus 19:17), *and I will make them hear my words*; the ten commands which were spoken by the Lord himself aloud, with an articulate voice, in the hearing of all the people; and was such a terrible voice of words, that

they that heard it entreated it might be spoken to them no more, (Hebrews 12:19) *that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth*; to reverence him the lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy; to fear to offend him by breaking his laws, so holy, just, and good, and delivered in such an awful and solemn manner: *and that they may teach their children*; the words they had heard, teach them obedience to them, and to be careful not to act contrary to them; since that would bring down judgments upon them, and deprive them of the favour they enjoyed, of which they had seen instances.

**DEUT. 4:11.** *And ye came near and stood under the mountain*, At the foot of it, in the lower part of the mountain, as the Targum of Jonathan, and agrees with (Exodus 19:17) *and the mountain burnt with fire unto the midst of heaven*; the flame and smoke went up into the middle of the air: with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness; which thick darkness was occasioned partly by the smoke, which went up like the smoke of a furnace, and partly by the thick clouds, which were on the mount, and covered the face of the heavens, which were black and tempestuous with them; the Septuagint renders it a "tempest", (Exodus 19:18 Hebrews 12:18), which denotes the obscurity of the law, and the terrors it works in the minds of men. 54

**DEUT. 4:12.** *And the Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire*, For the Lord descended on Mount Sinai in a cloud, in fire, and was in the thick darkness, from whence he delivered out the ten commands: *ye heard the voice of the words*; distinctly and plainly, not only the sound of them, but the words themselves, and so as to understand what was meant by them; *but saw no similitude*; not any likeness of the person speaking, by which they could form any idea of him in their minds, which was purposely done to prevent idolatry: *only ye heard a voice*; that was all.

**DEUT. 4:13.** *And he declared unto you his covenant*, So the law was called, because it contained, on the part of God, things which he would have done or avoided, to which were

annexed promises of long life and happiness in the land he gave them; and they, on their part, agreed to hearken to it, and obey it, (Exodus 24:3,7), **which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments**; which see at large in (Exodus 20:1-17), and in this book afterwards repeated, (Deuteronomy 5:6-21), **and he wrote them upon two tables of stone**; to denote the durability of them; the Targum of Jonathan says on tables of sapphire; but it is most likely that they were written on tables of marble, since there were great quantities of it in Mount Sinai; (see Gill on "Exodus 31:18").

**DEUT. 4:14. And the Lord commanded me at that time**, When the ten commandments were delivered on Mount Sinai, and Moses was ordered to come up to God in the mount: **to teach you statutes and judgments**; laws ceremonial and judicial, besides the ten commands given them: **that ye may do them in the land whither ye go over to possess it**; the land of Canaan, which was on the other side of Jordan, and over which they must go in order to possess it; and when they came there, they were to hold the possession of it by attending to those laws which forbade the sins for which the old inhabitants of it were expelled out of it; and besides these, there were also several laws, both ceremonial and judicial, which 55 were to be peculiarly observed in the land, as well as others they were obliged to do while without it.

**DEUT. 4:15. Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves**, As to keep all the laws given them, so particularly to avoid idolatry: **for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day the Lord spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire**; and therefore, as they had nothing that directed and led them, so they had nothing that could be a temptation to them, to make any form or likeness, and worship it.

**DEUT. 4:16. Lest ye corrupt yourselves**, And not themselves only, but the word and worship of God, by idolatry, than which nothing is more corrupting and defiling, nor more abominable to God: **and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure**; a graven image, in the likeness of any figure, an idea of which they had formed in their minds; **the likeness of male or**

**female**; of a man or a woman; so some of the Heathen deities were in the likeness of men, as Jupiter, Mars, Hercules, Apollo, etc. and others in the likeness of women, as Juno, Diana, Venus, etc. Some think Osiris and Isis, Egyptian deities, the one male, the other female, are respected; but it is not certain that these were worshipped by them so early.

**DEUT. 4:17. The likeness of any beast that is on the earth**, As there are scarce any but the likeness of them has been made and worshipped, or the creatures themselves, as the ox by the Egyptians, the sheep by the Thebans, the goat by the Mendesians, and others by different people: **the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air**; as the hawk, and the bird called Ibis, and another by the name of Cneph by the Egyptians, and the eagle by others.

**DEUT. 4:18. The likeness of anything that creepeth on the ground**, As serpents by many; and indeed that creature is introduced into almost all the idolatries of the Heathens, which seems to take its rise from the serpent Satan made use of to deceive our first parents: **the likeness of any fish that is in the waters beneath the earth**; as the crocodile and hippopotamus, or river horse, by the Egyptians; and Dagon 56 and Derceto, supposed to be figures in the form of a fish, among the Phoenicians.

**DEUT. 4:19. And lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven**, The starry heaven, which to do in itself is not sinful; and may be lawfully and commendably done, to raise admiration at the wonderful works of God in them, and lead to adore the author of them: but if not guarded against may be ensnaring: **and when thou seest the sun and the moon, and the stars, [even] all the host of heaven**; those bright luminaries, so glorious to behold, and so useful and beneficial to the earth, and the inhabitants of it: **shouldest be driven to worship them, and serve them**; should have an impulse on their minds and their hearts, be inclined and drawn to the worship of them, partly by considering their splendour, glory, and usefulness, and partly by the example of others;

for the worshipping of these seems to be and is the first kind of idolatry men gave into, at least it was very ancient; (see Job 31:26,27), **which the Lord thy God hath divided unto all nations under the whole heaven**; the sun and the moon by their constant revolutions visit all the parts of the world, and stars are fixed in both hemispheres, so that all nations of the earth receive the benefit and advantage of all these heavenly bodies; but were never designed to be the objects of their worship, as might be learnt from their being divided to them, sometimes one part of the earth enjoying them, and then another, and not present with them all at one and the same time, which, if deities, would have been necessary; (see Psalm 19:6 Matthew 5:45).

**DEUT. 4:20. But the Lord hath taken you, and brought you forth out of the iron furnace,** The allusion is to the trying and melting of metals, and fleeing them from dross, by putting them into furnaces strongly heated, some of which are of earth, others of iron; the word, as the Jewish writers observe, signifies such an one in which gold and silver and other things are melted; (see Psalm 12:6 Proverbs 17:3) even "out of Egypt"; which is here compared to an iron furnace, because of the cruelty with which the Israelites were used in it, the hardships they were put under, and the misery and bondage they were kept in; but out of all the Lord brought them, as he does all his people sooner or later out of their afflictions, sometimes called the furnace of affliction, (Isaiah 48:10) where their 57 graces are tried, and they are purged, purified, and refined from their dross and tin. This the Lord did to Israel, he brought them out of their distressed state and condition: **to be unto him a people of inheritance, as ye are this day**: to be the Lord's inheritance, as they now were, (Deuteronomy 32:9) as well as they were quickly to inherit the land of Canaan, for which they were brought out of the land of Egypt; and indeed they were already, even that day, entered on their inheritance, the kingdom of the Amorites being delivered into their hands.

**DEUT. 4:21. Furthermore the Lord was angry with me for your sakes,** (see Deuteronomy 3:26): **and swear that I should not go over Jordan**; this circumstance of swearing is nowhere else expressed: **and that I should not go in unto that good land**; the land of Canaan; he might see it, as he did from Pisgah, but not enter into it: **which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance**; to them and to their children after them.

**DEUT. 4:22. But I must die in this land,** The land of Moab, in a mountain in it he died, and in a valley there he was buried, (Deuteronomy 32:50 34:5,6), **I must not go over Jordan**; this he repeats, as lying near his heart; he had earnestly solicited to go over, but was denied it: **but ye shall go over, and possess that good land**; this he firmly believed and assures them of, relying on the promise and faithfulness of God.

**DEUT. 4:23. Take heed unto yourselves,** Since he should not be long with them, to advise, instruct, and caution them: **lest ye forget the covenant of the Lord your God**, which he made with you; what that required of them, and what was promised unto them on the performance of it, and what they must expect should they break it, and particularly be so forgetful of it, and the first articles in it, as follows: **and make you a graven image, or the likeness of anything which the Lord thy God hath forbidden thee**; a graven image in the likeness of men or women, of any beast on the earth, or fowl in heaven, or fish in the sea. 58

**DEUT. 4:24. For the Lord thy God is a consuming fire,** To his enemies; his wrath is like fire to burn up and destroy all that oppose him and break his commands, and especially idolaters; whose sin of all others is the most provoking to him, since it strikes at his being, his honour and glory; wherefore it follows, **even a jealous God**; who is jealous of his honour in matters of worship, and will not suffer his glory to be given to another, nor his praise to graven images, without resenting it or punishing for it.

**DEUT. 4:25. *When thou shalt beget children, and children's children,*** Children and grandchildren, and several ages and generations have passed: ***and shalt have remained long in the land;*** many years and even ages, or have grown old in it: now they were in their infancy, and as such they were about to enter into it; during the times of the judges, they were in their childhood, or youth; in the times of David and Solomon, they were in their manhood; after that, in their decline; and in the times of Jeconiah and his brethren in their old age, when for their sins they were carried captive: ***and shall corrupt yourselves, and make a graven image, or the likeness of anything;*** (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 25:16"). ***and shall do evil in the sight of the Lord thy God, to provoke him to anger;*** that sin of idolatry, that God provoking sin, is chiefly intended.

**DEUT. 4:26. *I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day,*** Should they be guilty of such a sin, since they were so strongly and publicly cautioned against it; and even the heaven and the earth were called upon as witnesses of the law being set before them, which so expressly forbids it, (Deuteronomy 30:19) ***that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto you go over Jordan to possess it;*** though they were now about to go over Jordan and inherit the land of Canaan, yet they would not enjoy it long, but be taken and carried captive out of it; as the ten tribes were by Shalmaneser king of Assyria, and the two tribes by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and both for their idolatry and other crimes.

**DEUT. 4:27. *And the Lord shall scatter you among the nations,*** As they were by both captivities; the ten tribes were dispersed among the cities of the Medes, and the two tribes throughout the empire of Babylon: 59 ***and ye shall be left few in number among the Heathen, whither the Lord shall lead you;*** or be "men of number", so few that they might be easily numbered; which intimates that it should be other wise with them than when in Egypt; there they were multiplied and increased the

more they were afflicted, but in these captivities they should be greatly diminished.

**DEUT. 4:28. *And there ye shall serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone,*** Idols made by men, cut out of wood and stone; these they should be enticed into the service of, or compelled to serve; which was still more brutish and stupid than to worship the sun, moon, and stars, which were not the works of men's hand, but the glorious works of the eternal God. But since in their captivities they were not subject to idolatry, but were cured of it thereby, another sense of the words is given by some, as by Onkelos and Jonathan, who paraphrase the words of serving the people, that serve idols; but what follows confirms the first sense: ***which neither see, nor hear, nor taste, nor smell;*** senseless things, which have none of the senses of seeing, hearing, and smelling, nor the faculty of eating, which they need not to support life, of which they are destitute; and therefore it must be monstrous stupidity to worship such lifeless, senseless, objects; (see Psalm 115:4-7).

**DEUT. 4:29. *But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God,*** By prayer and supplication, acknowledging and confessing sin, and desiring that God would be gracious and forgive it, and bring them out of their miserable condition; even if out of those depths of affliction and distress, and though scattered about in the world, and in the uttermost parts of it: ***thou shalt find him;*** to be a God hearing and answering prayer, gracious and merciful, ready to help and deliver: ***if they seek him with all their heart and with all their soul;*** sincerely and affectionately.

**DEUT. 4:30. *When thou art in tribulation,*** In a strange land, in the power of a foreign enemy, and used ill: ***and all these things are come upon thee;*** captivity, thralldom, hard labour, and want of the necessaries of life: ***[even] in the latter days;*** in their present captivity for the rejection of the Messiah: 60 ***if thou turn to the Lord thy God;*** as the Jews will when they are converted and brought to a sense of their sin, and of their need of Christ, and seek to him as their Saviour, as they will do in the latter day,



(Hosea 3:5 2 Corinthians 3:16) **and shall be obedient unto his voice**; not of the law only, but of the Gospel also, proclaiming peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation by him whom they have pierced.

**DEUT. 4:31. For the Lord thy God is a merciful God**, In Christ, in whom he has proclaimed his name as such, of which Moses had a comfortable view, (Exodus 34:6-8) and therefore could attest it from his own knowledge and experience: **he will not forsake thee**; though in a strange country, but bring them from thence into their own land again, and favour them with his gracious presence in his house and ordinances: **neither destroy thee**; from being a people; and in a very wonderful manner are they preserved among the nations of the earth to this day: **nor forget the covenant of thy fathers, which he swore unto them**; that a Saviour should come and turn away ungodliness from them, and take away their sins; (see Romans 11:26,27).

**DEUT. 4:32. For ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee**, Inquire into and consult the annals of former times, of ages past: **since the day that God created man upon the earth**; trace them quite up to the creation of the world, and men in it: **and [ask] from the one side of heaven to the other**; traverse the whole globe, and examine the records of every nation in it in both hemispheres: **whether there hath been any such [thing] as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it?** whether they can give any account of anything seen, heard, or done like what follows; suggesting that they cannot furnish out an instance to be mentioned with it.

**DEUT. 4:33. Did [ever] people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of fire**, None ever heard the voice of God as they did, much less speaking such words as they heard, and still less out of the midst of fire, which was their case, (Deuteronomy 4:12,15) **61 as thou hast heard, and live?** which was stranger still, when they might have expected they should, and doubtless feared they would be, as it was wonderful they were not, consumed by it.

**DEUT. 4:34. Or hath God assayed to go and take him a nation from the midst of another nation**, As he now had done, namely, the nation of Israel out of the nation of the Egyptians; this he not only had assayed to do, but had actually done it; whereas no such instance like it could be produced, and especially as done in the manner this was: **by temptations, by signs, and by wonders, and by war**; the word "temptations" may be considered as a general word, as Aben Ezra thinks, and may signify the temptations by signs, etc. or the various essays and trials, ways, means, and methods taken by the Lord to bring about the event; by "signs" may be meant those which were required of Moses, and done by him before the people of Israel, and before Pharaoh, as proofs of his mission from the Lord, (Exodus 4:1-9,30 7:9) and by "wonders", the ten plagues of Egypt, which were done by a supernatural and miraculous operation, and were amazing things; (see Psalm 78:11-13); and by "war", either the slaying of the firstborn, with the destruction of the judges and gods of Egypt, as Aben Ezra; or the Lord's fighting for Israel at the Red sea, as Jarchi; he saved them and destroyed the Egyptians, and showed himself to be a man of war, (Exodus 14:14,25 15:3) **and by a mighty hand and stretched out arm**; phrases frequently used when this affair is spoken of, and are expressive of the mighty power of God in the above instances, and in the issue of them, bringing Israel out of Egypt; though Aben Ezra interprets it of the pillar of fire and cloud in which the Lord went before them: **and by great terrors**; which the same writer interprets of the drowning of Pharaoh and his host in the sea, and dividing it for Israel; but may be understood not only of the terrors which possessed him and his people then, but at other times, especially at the time of the thunder and lightning, and when they sat in thick darkness, and particularly when all their firstborn were slain; (see Deuteronomy 26:8), **according to all that the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes**; among the men of Egypt, as the above writer, Pharaoh and his courtiers: the above things were done as

before them for their terror, so before Israel for their encouragement. 62

**DEUT. 4:35.** *Unto thee it was showed*, What the Lord did in Egypt: *that thou mightest know that the Lord he [is] God, [there is] none else besides him*; that he is the one only living and true God, and there is no other: this phrase is often used by the Prophet Isaiah, to express the same great article of faith.

**DEUT. 4:36.** *Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice, that he might instruct thee*, Thunder is the voice of God, and by which he instructs men in the greatness of his power, (Job 26:14 40:9 Psalm 29:3), etc. unless his voice in giving the law, which was for the instruction of Israel, is meant; for that was heard on earth, on Mount Sinai, to which the following refers: *and upon earth he showed thee his great fire*; on Mount Sinai, which burned with it: *and thou heardest his words out of the midst of the fire*; the ten commands, and therefore may well be called, a fiery law; (see Deuteronomy 4:12,15,33).

**DEUT. 4:37.** *And because he loved thy fathers*, Not their immediate fathers, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness, and entered not into the good land because of their unbelief, but their more remote fathers or ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who had some singular testimonies of the love of God to them, Abraham is called their friend of God, and Isaac was the son of promise in whom the seed was called; and Jacob is particularly said to be loved by God, when Esau was hated: *therefore he chose their seed after them*; not to eternal life and salvation, but to the enjoyment of external blessings and privileges, to be called by his name, and to set up his name and worship among them, and to be a special people to him above all people on the earth, as to outward favours, both civil and ecclesiastical: *and brought thee out in his sight with his mighty power out of Egypt*; which was done not only in the sight of the Egyptians openly, they not daring to hinder them, as the wonders wrought to oblige them to let them go out, done in the sight of the Israelites as before observed, but in the sight of God, he going before them in the

pillar of cloud and fire, smiling upon them the Israelites, and looking with a frown upon the host of the Egyptians, and conducting the people by the angel of his presence. 63

**DEUT. 4:38.** *To drive out nations from before thee, greater and mightier than thou art*, The seven nations of the land of Canaan, which were more in number and mightier in power and strength than they, and particularly the Amorites, who were already driven out and dispossessed of their country, even the kingdoms and nations of Sihon and Og: *to bring thee in to give thee their land for an inheritance, as [it is] this day*; referring, as Aben Ezra observes, to the inheritance of the land of the two kings of the Amorites, which the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, were put into the possession of already.

**DEUT. 4:39.** *Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart*, Own and acknowledge it now with thy mouth, and lay it up and consider it in thine heart hereafter, as a truth of the greatest importance to be professed and held fast, and to be thought of and meditated upon continually, and never to be forgotten: *that the Lord he is God in heaven above*, and upon the earth beneath; that he has made both, and is the possessor and Lord of them, and does what he pleases with them; that the one is his throne, his dwelling place, and the other his footstool; and that the inhabitants of both are his creatures, and under his authority and command, and he can dispose of them as he pleases: *[there is] none else*; no God in heaven or in earth beside him.

**DEUT. 4:40.** *Thou shall keep therefore his statutes, and his commandments*, All his laws, moral, ceremonial, and judicial, partly being under obligation to him for all the great and good things done by him for them before enumerated, and partly and chiefly because he is the Lord God in heaven and in earth, and has a right to command and ought to be obeyed: *which I command thee this day*; in the name of the Lord, and which he repeated, opened, and explained, and charged them afresh to observe; otherwise they were such that had been given

long ago: **that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee**; that they and theirs might enjoy temporal mercies, and continue in the land of Canaan, and partake of all the blessings in it, as follows, and of the sanctuary of the Lord, and the privileges of it: **and that thou mayest prolong thy days upon the earth, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for ever**; that is, that they and theirs might live long in the land of Canaan, which the Lord gave for an inheritance for ever, provided they kept his law, and were obedient to his commands; (see Deuteronomy 6:25 Isaiah 1:19), and though they have had several interruptions by their captivities, and especially by their present very long one, yet when they shall return and seek the Lord their God, and David their king, they shall have their land restored to them again, and shall never more be dispossessed of it.

**DEUT. 4:41. Then Moses severed three cities**, To be cities of refuge, according to the command of God, (Numbers 35:14) this he did when he had conquered the two kingdoms of the Amorites, that God had given them for an inheritance to the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, (Deuteronomy 4:38) though Jarchi says, and so other Jewish writers, that persons were not received into them until the three cities appointed in the land of Canaan were separated for the like use; (see Gill on "Numbers 35:14") and these were, **on this side Jordan, toward the rising sun**; on that side of the river on which the plains of Moab lay, and the kingdoms of the Amorites, and to the east of Jordan: so Jarchi remarks, "on that side which is on the east of Jordan;" (see Joshua 20:8).

**DEUT. 4:42. That the slayer might flee thither**, For refuge; the slayer of a man, but not any slayer, but **which should kill his neighbour unawares**; by accident to him, without any design and intention to kill him; ignorantly, as the Septuagint version; and so Onkelos: **and hated him not in times past**; it having never appeared that there had been a quarrel between them, and that the slayer had shown any enmity to the man slain any time

before the fact, or bore a grudge against him, or spite unto him: **and that, fleeing unto one of these cities, he might live**; in peace and safety unto his own death, or unto the death of the high priest, when he was 65 released from his confinement to the city of his refuge, and might return to his tribe, house, family, and possessions.

**DEUT. 4:43. [Namely], Bezer in the wilderness**, In (Joshua 20:8), it is added "upon the plain"; this perhaps was the wilderness of Moab, in the plains of it, the same with Bozrah, (see Jeremiah 48:24 Deuteronomy 2:8) and in the Apocrypha: "Hereupon Judas and his host turned suddenly by the way of the wilderness unto Bosora; and when he had won the city, he slew all the males with the edge of the sword, and took all their spoils, and burned the city with fire," (1 Maccabees 5:28) it was in the **plain country of the Reubenites**, or lay in that part of the country which was allotted to them, and which they gave to the Levites, (1 Chronicles 6:78), **and Ramoth in Gilead of the Gadites**; it lay in that part of Mount Gilead, and among the cities of it, which fell to the share of the tribe of Gad, and was by them given to the Levites, (1 Chronicles 6:80), this city is frequently in Scripture called Ramothgilead; (see 1 Kings 4:13 22:20) **and Golan in Bashan, of the Manassites**, or "Gaulon", as the Septuagint, and from hence the country round about was called Gaulanitis; all Bashan, the kingdom of Og, was given to the half tribe of Manasseh, and out of it this city was given by them to the Levites, (1 Chronicles 6:71), and appointed a city of refuge: now as these cities were typical of Christ, there may be something observed in the names of them as agreeing with him. "Bezer" signifies "a fortified place"; Christ is the fortress, mountain, and place of defence for his people, and strong hold to which the prisoners of hope turn, the strong tower whither the righteous run and are safe. "Ramoth" signifies "exaltations"; which may point both at the exaltation of Christ in human nature at the right hand of God, and the exaltation of his people by him, who are raised by him from a low estate to sit among princes,

and to inherit the throne of glory, and by whom he is exalted in his person, office, and grace.

“Golan” signifies “revealed” or “manifested”: so Christ has been manifest in the flesh, and is revealed to sinners, when they are called by his grace; to whom they flee for refuge, and lay hold on him, the hope set before them. 66

**DEUT. 4:44.** *And this is the law which Moses set before the children of Israel.*] Not the law concerning the cities of refuge, but the law of the ten commands repeated in the following chapter; so Jarchi remarks, “this which he should set in order after this section;” as he does in the next chapter, where he repeats in order the ten precepts, and makes observations on the manner of the delivery of them, and urges obedience to them.

**DEUT. 4:45.** *These are the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments,* The laws, moral, ceremonial, and judicial, delivered in the following chapters; which are renewed, repeated, and explained: which Moses spake unto the children of Israel, after they came forth out of Egypt; in the third month after they came from thence these laws were delivered to him at Mount Sinai, and he declared them to them; and now afresh, near forty years after, repeated them to them in the plains of Moab.

**DEUT. 4:46.** *On this side Jordan, in the valley, over against Bethpeor,* Where the Israelites abode some time; (see Deuteronomy 3:29), *in the land of Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heshbon;* which was now conquered, and in the hands of the Israelites: *whom Moses and the children of Israel smote, after they came out of Egypt;* not as soon as, or quickly after they came from thence; for it was but a few months ago since this conquest was made, whereas it was near forty years since they came out of Egypt.

**DEUT. 4:47.** *And they possessed his land, and the land of Og king of Bashan,* Seized upon them, and took them as their own, and divided them for an inheritance among two of their tribes and half another: *two kings of the Amorites;* which is more than once observed, that it might be taken notice of that these were

of the nations of the Canaanites Israel were to root out, and possess their land: *which were on this side Jordan, toward the sun rising;* which lands and kingdoms lay to the east of Jordan, on that side of it on which were the plains of Moab, where Moses and Israel now were. 67

**DEUT. 4:48.** *From Aroer, which is by the bank of the river Arnon,* A city of Moab, which was situated on the bank of the river Arnon, that was on the border of Moab, (Deuteronomy 2:36 3:12), *even unto Mount Sion, which [is] Hermon;* the meaning is, that the lands of these two kings conquered by Israel reached from the city Aroer on the river Arnon to Mount Hermon, the one being the southern, the other the northern boundary of them. Here Hermon has another name Sion, and is to be carefully distinguished from Mount Zion near Jerusalem; it lying in a different country, and being written with a different letter in the Hebrew language. In the Septuagint version it is called Seon, and by the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem the mount of snow; (see Gill on “Deuteronomy 3:9”).

**DEUT. 4:49.** *And all the plain on this side Jordan eastward,* The plains of Moab, on that side of Jordan to the east: *even unto the sea of the plain;* the sea of Sodom, the salt sea: *under the springs of Pishgah;* that rose from Mount Pishgah, the same with Ashdothpishgah, (Deuteronomy 3:17). 68

## Deuteronomy 5

In this chapter Moses, after a short preface, (Deuteronomy 5:1-5), repeats the law of the decalogue, or ten commands, with some little variation, (Deuteronomy 5:6-21), and then reminds the Israelites of the terrible manner in which it was delivered to them, (Deuteronomy 5:22,23) which put them upon making a request that Moses might be a mediator between God and them, and hear what the Lord had to say, and report it to them; to which they promised obedience, (Deuteronomy 5:24-27) and which being agreeable to the Lord was granted, (Deuteronomy 5:28-31), and this laid them under a greater obligation to observe the

commands of God, and keep them, (Deuteronomy 5:32,33).

**DEUT. 5:1.** *And Moses called all Israel,* The heads of the various tribes, and elders of the people, as he had on occasion been used to do; unless it can be thought that at different times he repeated the following laws to separate parties and bodies of them, until they had all heard them: *and said unto them, hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day;* the laws, moral, ceremonial, and judicial, which he was about to repeat, and afresh declare unto them, being what they had all a concern in, and under obligation to regard.

**DEUT. 5:2.** *The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb.*] Which is Sinai, as Aben Ezra observes; it being the same mountain, only it had two tops, which bore these different names; for certain it is that the decalogue after repeated was given at Sinai, and had the nature and form of a covenant; (see Exodus 24:7,8).

**DEUT. 5:3.** *The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers,* That is, not with them only, as Jarchi, Aben Ezra, and Abendana remark; for certain it is that this covenant was made, or law was given, to the immediate fathers of this present generation of Israelites, whose carcasses had fallen in the wilderness; unless this is to be understood of their more remote ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with whom the covenant of grace was made, or afresh made manifest, especially with the former; when the law, the covenant here spoken of, was not delivered until four hundred and thirty years after, (Galatians 3:16,17), *but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day;* many of them were then present at the giving of the law, and though under twenty years of age, could remember it, and the circumstances of it; and besides, they were the same people to whom it was given, though not consisting wholly of the same individuals.

**DEUT. 5:4.** *The Lord talked with you face to face in the mount,* Meaning, not in that free, friendly, and familiar manner, in which he

sometimes talked with Moses, of whom this phrase is used, (Exodus 33:11), but publicly, audibly, clearly, and distinctly, or without the interposition of another; he did not speak to them by Moses, but to them themselves; he talked to them without a middle person between them, as Aben Ezra expresses it: without making use of one to relate to them what he said; but he talked to them directly, personally: *out of the midst of the fire;* in which he descended, and with which the mountain was burning all the time he was speaking; which made it very awful and terrible, and pointed at the terrors of the legal dispensation.

**DEUT. 5:5.** *I stood between the Lord and you at that time,* Between the Word of the Lord and you, as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan; that is, about that time, not at the exact precise time the ten commandments were delivered, for these were spoken immediately to the people; but when the ceremonial law was given, which was ordained by angels, in the hand of a mediator, (Galatians 3:19), and which was at the request of the people as follows, terrified by the appearance of the fire out of which the moral law was delivered: *to show you the word of the Lord;* not the decalogue, that they heard with their own ears, but the other laws which were afterwards given, that were of the ceremonial and judicial kind: *for ye were afraid by reason of the fire, and went not up into the mount;* lest they should be consumed by it: and indeed bounds were set about the mount, and they were charged not to break through: *70 saying;* this word is in connection with the preceding verse, the Lord's talking out of the midst of the fire, when he said what follows.

**DEUT. 5:6-11.** *I am the Lord thy God,* This is the preface to the ten commandments, and is the same with that in (Exodus 20:2), (see Gill on "Exodus 20:2"), and those commands are here delivered in the same order, and pretty near in the same words, with a little variation, and a few additions; which I shall only observe, and refer to (Exodus 20:1-17) for the sense of the various laws.

**DEUT. 5:12,13. *Keep the sabbath day to sanctify it,*** Or observe it, by setting it apart as a time of natural rest, and for the performance of holy and religious exercises; (see Exodus 20:8), where the phrase is a little varied, “remember the sabbath day to keep it holy”; it having been instituted before: ***as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee;*** not at Sinai only, for the same might then have been observed of all the rest of the commands, but before the giving of the law, at the first of the manna; (see Exodus 16:23).

**DEUT. 5:14. *Nor thine ox, nor thine ass,*** In (Exodus 20:10), it is only in general said, ***nor thy cattle:*** here by way of illustration and explanation the ox and the ass are particularly mentioned; the one being used in ploughing ground, and treading out the corn, and the other in carrying burdens; and it is added, ***nor any of thy cattle;*** as their camels, or whatever else they were wont to use in any kind of service; they were none of them to do any kind of work on the sabbath day. The following clause also is not used before, which expresses the end of this institution: ***that thy manservant and thy maidservant may have rest as well as thee;*** which if the cattle had not rest, they could not have, being obliged to attend them at the plough or elsewhere; and this respects not only hired, but bond servants and maidens.

**DEUT. 5:15. *And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt,*** Even a bondservant; for Egypt was an house of bondage, and there the Israelites were made to serve in hard bondage; of which they are reminded, that their hearts might be touched with it, and inclined to show pity to 71 persons in somewhat similar circumstances; calling to mind how sweet a little rest would have been unto them when in Egypt: ***and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence, through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm;*** signifying that their deliverance from their state of bondage was not owing to themselves, nor to any creature, but to the mercy and kindness of God, and to his almighty power; and therefore they were under the greatest obligations to observe any command and

institution of his he should think fit to make; and particularly this of the sabbath, which was made on that account, as follows: ***wherefore the Lord thy God commandeth thee to keep the sabbath day;*** in commemoration of their rest from Egyptian bondage.

**DEUT. 5:16. *Honour thy father and thy mother, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee,*** And is the first commandment with promise, as the apostle observes, (Ephesians 6:2,3) with a promise of long life and happiness in the land of Canaan, as follows: ***that thy days may be prolonged;*** (see Exodus 20:12) here it is added, ***and that it may go well with thee;*** and which the apostle also has in the place referred to: ***in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee;*** the land of Canaan; which the same apostle explains to a greater latitude, ***that thou mayest live long on the earth;*** applying it to Christians under the Gospel dispensation, whether Jews or Gentiles.

**DEUT. 5:17-20. *Thou shalt not kill,*** The following commands begin with the copulative “and”, different from the manner in which they are expressed, (Exodus 20:17) which joins these together, and them with the preceding ones; hence the law is by some said to be one copulative, and may serve to illustrate a passage in (James 2:10).

**DEUT. 5:21. *Neither shalt thou desire thy neighbour's wife,*** Here a neighbour's wife is put before his house, different from (Exodus 20:17) and “his field” is added, which with what follows take in everything that is a man's property; and which is not to be desired or coveted in an unlawful manner by another, and much less should any means be made use of to deprive him of it; but “lust” is the thing intended and prohibited, be it after 72 what it may, which is another man's: (see Matthew 5:28 Romans 7:7), of a man's field, (see Isaiah 5:8 Micah 2:2).

**DEUT. 5:22. *These words the Lord spake unto all your assembly in the mount,*** The above ten words or commands, which were spoken so audibly and loudly by the Lord himself on Mount Sinai, that the whole congregation of the

people of Israel heard them: *out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness*; in which the Lord was; (see Deuteronomy 4:11), *with a great voice, and he added no more*; ceased speaking; after he had delivered the ten commands, he said no more at that time. The Targum of Jonathan is, "with a great voice which ceased not." It ceased not until all were delivered, and then it did; it was a continued voice, yet clear and distinct: *and he wrote them in two tables of stone*; marble stone, as the Targum of Jonathan; which is much more likely than what the paraphrase has on (Deuteronomy 4:13), this is an emblem of the duration of the law: *and delivered them unto me*; to Moses, and by him to be delivered to the people, who though they had heard them would be apt to forget them; and therefore they were written, that they might read them, and meditate on them, and be careful to keep them.

**DEUT. 5:23.** *And it came to pass, when ye heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness*, The thick darkness, where God was, and with which the mountain was covered, (Exodus 20:21) *for the mountain did burn with fire*; which is a reason both why the Lord spoke out of the midst of the fire, the mountain on which he descended burning with it and also for his speaking out of the midst of darkness, because not only a thick cloud covered the mountain, but it was altogether on a smoke, which ascended as the smoke of a furnace, (Exodus 19:16,18) *that ye come near unto me, even all the heads of your tribes and your elders*; or wise men, as the Targum of Jonathan; by which it appears, that 73 not only the common people were frightened at what they heard and saw on Mount Sinai, but those of the first rank and eminence among them, who were the most famous for their authority and wisdom.

**DEUT. 5:24.** *And ye said, behold, the Lord our God hath showed us his glory and his greatness*, In descending on Mount Sinai in the manner he did, and giving the law from thence with such solemnity; for there was a glory in the ministration of it, as the apostle argues (2 Corinthians 3:7- 11), it being delivered with so

much majesty, and such a glorious apparatus attending it; (see Deuteronomy 33:2). Aben Ezra interprets this of the appearance of fire in which the Lord was, "and his greatness", of the thunders and lightnings, and the voice of the trumpet: *and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire*; the ten words, as the same interpreter rightly notes, which were vocally and audibly expressed out of the fire: *we have seen this day, that God doth talk with man, and he liveth*; they had proof of it in themselves; God had been talking with them out of the fire, and yet it did not reach and consume them, but they were still alive.

**DEUT. 5:25.** *Now therefore why should we die?* Since we are now alive, and have so wonderfully escaped the danger we were exposed unto, let us be careful that we are not liable to it again: *for this great fire will consume us*: if it continues, and we are exposed to it; perhaps some of them might remember the fire that burnt in the uttermost parts of the camp at Taberah, and the destruction of Korah and the two hundred and fifty men with him by fire, (Numbers 11:1 16:35), *if we hear the voice of the Lord our God any more, then we shall die*; for it was such a voice of words they could not endure as to the matter of them, and therefore entreated the word might not be spoken to them any more; it being the killing letter, and the ministration of condemnation and death; and the manner in which it was delivered was so terrible, that they concluded they could not live, but must die if they heard it again; and imagined that if the fire continued, the flames of it would spread and reach them, and they would not be able to escape them.

**DEUT. 5:26.** *For who [is there] of all flesh*, What man was there in any age, that was ever heard of or can be named: <sup>74</sup> *that hath heard the voice of the living God*; who lives in and of himself, and is the author and giver of life to all his creatures, whereby he is distinguished from and is opposed unto the lifeless deities of the Gentiles; and which makes him and his voice heard the more awful and tremendous, and especially as *speaking out of the midst of the fire*: which was the present case: *as we [have],*

*and lived?* of this there never was the like instance; for though some had seen God and lived, as Jacob did, and therefore called the name of the place where he saw him Penuel, (Genesis 32:30), and Moses had heard the voice of the angel of the Lord out of a bush, which seemed to be burning, and was not consumed, (Exodus 3:2,4), yet none ever heard the voice of the Lord out of real fire, and particularly expressing such words as he did, but the Israelites. Zoroastres, the founder of the Magi among the Persians, and of their religion, seems to have had respect to this, and to have applied falsely this to himself, which belonged to Moses and the people of Israel; for it is said, "one reason the Persians have fire in so much veneration is, because they say that Zoroastres, being caught up to heaven, did not see God, but heard him speaking with him out of the midst of fire."

**DEUT. 5:27.** *Go thou near,* To the mount, and to God on it: *and hear all that the Lord our God shall say;* for they supposed, by the continuance of the Lord on the mount, and the fire burning on it, that he had more to say, which they were not averse to hear; but desired it might be not immediately delivered to them, but by the means of Moses; the sound of the words, and the sight of the fire, being so terrible to them: *and speak thou unto us all that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee:* they did not doubt, knowing the faithfulness of Moses, his declaring all unto them that should be told him by the Lord; and they were desirous that he should, they did not want to have anything withheld from them, only they could not bear to see and hear things immediately from the Lord: *and we will hear it and do it;* hearken to it, and receive it, as the word of God, and not man, and yield a ready and cheerful obedience, even to everything that should be required; (see Exodus 20:19 24:3-7). 75

**DEUT. 5:28.** *And the Lord heard the voice of your word, when ye spake unto me,* Not only in a general way, as he hears and knows all that is spoken by men; for there is not a word on the tongue, formed upon it, and uttered by it, but what is altogether known to him; but in a

special and particular manner observed, took notice of, approved, and was well pleased with what these people said: *and the Lord said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people which they have spoken unto thee;* not only heard the sound of them, but took notice of the sense and meaning of them, and listened to them with pleasure and delight: *they have well said all that they have spoken;* expressing such an awe and reverence of the divine Majesty, desiring to have a mediator between God and them, and purposing and promising to hearken to and obey whatsoever he should command by him.

**DEUT. 5:29.** *O that there were such an heart in them,* Not that there is properly speaking such volitions and wishes in God; but, as Aben Ezra observes, the Scripture speaks after the language of the children of men; and may be considered as upbraiding them with want of such an heart, and with weakness to do what they had promised; and, at most, as approving of those things they spoke of as grateful to him, and profitable to them: the words may be rendered, "who will give that they had such an heart"; not to me, but to them, as Aben Ezra notes; they cannot give it to themselves, nor can any creature give it to them; none but God can, and therefore they ought to have prayed to him to give them an heart to hearken and do; agreeably to which is the Arabic version, "it is to be wished by them, that such an heart would continue with them;" which they by their language signified was in them: that they would fear me; which is not naturally in the heart of man, is a gift of God, a part of the covenant of grace, is implanted in regeneration, and is no inconsiderable branch of it; it is opposed to pride, and is consistent with faith and joy, and is increased by views of the grace and goodness of God, and is a distinguishing character of a good man: *and keep all my commandments always;* not only one, but all, and not only at some certain times, but continually; and which are to be kept in faith from a principle of love, with a view to the glory of God, and in the 76 strength of Christ; and to this the fear of God is necessary, for where there is no fear of God,



there is no regard to his commandments; but where there is a reverential fear of God, there are faith, hope, love, and every other grace; yea, the Spirit, the author of all, who is in the saints, to enable them to walk in the statutes of the Lord, and to keep his judgments and do them; and such keep the commandments of God, not from a slavish fear, but from a sense of divine goodness: **that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever**; for the fear of God, and the keeping of his commandments, issue in the good of men, in their own good, their inward peace, and spiritual welfare; in the good of others, their neighbours, servants, and children, by way of example and instruction; and even in the public peace and prosperity of a nation in which they dwell: not that these things are meritorious of eternal life, but are what are approved of by the Lord, and are grateful to him; which is the chief view in the expression of the text.

**DEUT. 5:30. Go say to them, get you into your tents again.**] Which they had left, being brought by Moses, at the direction of God, to the foot of Mount Sinai, to receive the law from his mouth; this being done, they are ordered to return to their tents again, to their families, wives, and children.

**DEUT. 5:31. But as for thee, stand thou here by me,** On the mount by him whither he was called up; Moses was not permitted to go to his tent when the children of Israel were, but was ordered to wait upon the Lord to receive instructions from him, which he was to communicate to the people, being a kind of a mediator between God and them, as they requested, and which was granted them: **and I will speak unto thee all the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments**: all laws, moral, ceremonial, and judicial, which belong to them as men, as in a church state, and members of a body politic: **which thou shalt teach them, that they may do them**; for all doctrine is in order to practice, without which all instructions, and theoretical notions, signify little: and these they were more especially to do, and some of them peculiarly, **in the land which I give them to possess it**: the land of

Canaan, and which laid on them no small obligation to do the commandments of God; since of his free favour and good will, and as a pure gift of his, he had bestowed upon them a land flowing with milk and honey, into which he was just now <sup>77</sup> about to bring them; as nothing can more strongly engage souls to a cheerful obedience to the service of God, whether in private or in public, than the consideration of the great and good things which God of his rich grace bestows upon them, and has promised to them, and prepared for them, and will quickly put them into the possession of; and upon such an account Moses presses the observance of the commands of God in the following verses.

**DEUT. 5:32. Ye shall observe to do therefore as the Lord your God doth command you,** Observe every precept, as to matter and manner, which the Lord has commanded, and that under a sense of the great obligations laid on them by him, in giving them freely so good a land to possess: **you shall not turn to the right hand or to the left**; but walk in the way of the commandments of God, and not depart from them at all, but follow the Lord in his own ways fully. The phrase is expressive of a strict and close attention to the word of God, without deviating from it in the least; for every sin, which is a transgression of some command of God or another, is a going out of the way that directs unto; (see Isaiah 30:21).

**DEUT. 5:33. Ye shall walk in all the ways which the Lord your God hath commanded you,** None are to be avoided or departed from on any consideration whatever; (see Psalm 119:6) an instance of this we have in Zacharias and Elizabeth, (Luke 1:6) that ye may live; corporeally, comfortably, in all the outward enjoyments of life needful for them, particularly in the possession of the land of Canaan, and the benefits of it; for these promises of life upon obedience seem to reach no further, unless as types and emblems of what is enjoyed through the obedience and righteousness of Christ, as the following phrases show: **and [that] it [may] be well with you, and [that] ye may prolong your days in the land which ye shall**

*possess*; the land of Canaan; though the Jewish writers carry it further, even to heaven and eternal happiness; and so may we in the sense before given.

### Deuteronomy 6

In this chapter Moses proceeds on in his exhortations to the people of Israel, to attend to the commandments of God, that it might be well with them, (Deuteronomy 6:1-3), and begins with a principal and fundamental article of religion, which deserved their first and chief regard, the unity of God, and the love of him, (Deuteronomy 6:4,5), which they were carefully to instill their children in, and ever to be mindful of themselves, (Deuteronomy 6:6-9), and when they were come into the land of Canaan, and into a plentiful enjoyment of all good things in it, they are exhorted to be careful not to forget the Lord, their kind benefactor; but to fear him, serve him, and not go after other gods, since he is jealous of his honour and worship, (Deuteronomy 6:10-15) and not to tempt him, as they had done, but diligently keep, his commandments, that it might be well with them in that land, (Deuteronomy 6:16-19), and when their children inquired the reason and meaning of such testimonies, statutes, and judgments, that were enjoined them, they were to give them the history of their case in Egypt, their deliverance from thence, the wonders that were wrought for them, and the introduction of them into the good land of Canaan; and to let them know that these commands were some of them in commemoration of these blessings; and by these they were laid under obligation to regard them all, and the rather, since they were not only for the glory of God, but for their own good, (Deuteronomy 6:20-25).

**DEUT. 6:1. *Now these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments,*** Not the ten commandments repeated in the preceding chapter, but all others, whether moral, ceremonial, or judicial, afterwards declared; for what Moses now did was only to give a repetition and fresh declaration of such laws as he had before received, and delivered to the people; and so

the Targum of Jonathan thus paraphrases this clause, "this is a declaration of the commandments, statutes, and judgments:" 79 ***which the Lord your God commanded to teach you;*** that is, which he commanded him, Moses, to teach them, though not fully expressed, as may be learned from (Deuteronomy 4:1,5 5:31) ***that ye might do them in the land whither ye go to possess it;*** this is often observed, to imprint upon their minds a sense of their duty, even of obedience to the laws of God, which they were carefully and diligently to perform in the land of Canaan they were going into, and by which they were to hold their possession of it.

**DEUT. 6:2. *That thou mightest fear the Lord thy God,*** Being taught to know the greatness of his being, and the nature of his mind and will, and the manner of his worship; and not with a slavish fear, but with a filial one, a reverential affection for God; being instructed in their duty, as of children, to their God and Father; (see Deuteronomy 5:29) ***to keep all his statutes, and his commandments, which I command thee;*** not in his own name, but in the name, and by the authority of God, whose minister and messenger he was; and all, having the stamp of divine authority on them, were to be observed and kept, and not one to be neglected or departed from: ***thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life;*** a man and his children, and grandchildren; he was to take care that they kept all the commandments of the Lord as long as he lived, and had any concern with them: ***and that thy days may be prolonged;*** long life being reckoned a very great outward mercy; a long enjoyment of, and continuance in the land of Canaan, is chiefly designed, which is usually expressed when this is observed; (see Deuteronomy 4:26,40 5:16,33).

**DEUT. 6:3. *Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it,*** Or them, the commandments given them: ***that it may be well with thee;*** in body and estate: ***and that ye may increase mightily;*** not only in wealth and riches, but chiefly in numbers: ***as the Lord God of thy fathers hath promised thee;*** a promise of

increase of numbers was frequently made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; as that their seed should be as the stars of heaven, and as the dust of the earth, and 80 the sand on the sea shore, innumerable; (see Genesis 15:5 22:17 25:4 28:14) and this especially *in the land that floweth with milk and honey*; a very common periphrasis of the land of Canaan, because of the plenty of good things in it; (see Exodus 3:8).

**DEUT. 6:4. *Hear, O Israel***, These are the words of Moses, stirring up the people to an attention to what he was about to say of this great and momentous article, the unity of God, to prevent their going into polytheism and idolatry. From one of the words here used, the Jews call this section Kiriathshema, which they oblige themselves to read twice a day, morning and evening; the last letter of the first word in this verse, "Shema", meaning "hear", and the last letter of the last word in it, "Echad", meaning "one", are greater than ordinary; which seems designed to excite the attention to what is contained in this passage: *the Lord our God is one Lord*; the doctrine of which is, that the Lord, who was the covenant God and Father of his people Israel, is but one Jehovah; he is Jehovah, the Being of beings, a self-existent Being, eternal and immutable; and he is but one in nature and essence; this appears from the perfection of his nature, his eternity, omnipotence, omnipresence, infinity, goodness, self-sufficiency, and perfection; for there can be but one eternal, one omnipotent, one omnipresent, one infinite, one that is originally and of himself good; one self, and all sufficient, and perfect Being; and which also may be concluded from his being the first cause of all things, which can be but one; and from his relations to his creatures, as their King, ruler, governor, and lawgiver. And for this purpose these words are cited in (Mark 12:29,30) but then they no ways contradict the doctrine of a trinity of persons in the unity of the divine essence, the Father, Word, and Holy Spirit, which three are one; the one God, the one Jehovah, as here expressed; (see 1 John 5:7) and so the ancient Jews understood this passage. In an ancient book of theirs it is said

Jehovah, Elohenu, Jehovah (i.e. Jehovah, our God, Jehovah); these are the three degrees with respect to this sublime mystery; "in the beginning God (Elohim) created the heavens and the earth"; and again, Jehovah, Elohenu, Jehovah, they are one; the three forms (modes or things) which are one; and elsewhere it is observed, there are two, and one is joined to them, and they are three; and when the three are one, he says to (or of) them, these are the two names which Israel heard, Jehovah, Jehovah, and Elohenu (our God) is joined 81 unto them; and it is the seal of the ring of truth, and when they are joined they are one in one unity; which is illustrated by the three names the soul of man is called by, the soul, spirit, and breath; and elsewhere they say the holy blessed God, and his Shechinah, are called one; (see John 10:30).

**DEUT. 6:5. *And thou shalt love the Lord thy God***, Which is the first and chief commandment in the law, the sum and substance of the first table of it; and includes in it, or at least has connected with it, knowledge of God, esteem of him, delight in him, faith and trust in him, fear and worship of him, and obedience to him, which when right springs from it. God is to be loved because of the perfections of his nature, and the works of his hand, of nature, providence, and grace; and because of the relations he stands in to men, and especially to his own people; and because of his peculiar love to them; and, indeed, he is to be loved by all men for his care of them, and blessings of goodness bestowed on them; the manner in which this is to be done follows: *with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might*; with a superlative love, above all creatures whatever; with the whole of the affections of the heart, with great fervency and ardour of spirit, in the sincerity of the soul, and with all the strength of grace a man has, with such love that is as strong as death. Jarchi interprets loving God with all the heart, that is, with thy heart not divided about God, a heart not divided between God and the creature; "all thy might" he interprets of mammon or substance; and, indeed, that is one way in which

men may show their love to God, by laying out their substance in his service, and for the support of his cause and interest in the world. Aben Ezra by “the heart” understands knowledge, and by the “soul” the spirit of man that is in his body, and by might perfect love in the heart.

**DEUT. 6:6. *And these words, which I command thee this day,*** To hearken to, observe, and take notice of, that God is one, and is to be loved in the strongest manner that possibly can be: ***shall be in thine heart;*** on the table of the heart, as the Targum of Jonathan; (see 2 Corinthians 3:3), be cordially received, have a place in the affections of the heart, and be retained in mind and memory.

**DEUT. 6:7. *And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children,*** Care and diligence are to be used, and pains taken, to instruct children, as soon as they are capable, in the knowledge of God, and of his commandments; 82 that they are to love him, fear him, serve, and worship him; this is to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, (Ephesians 6:4), it may be rendered “thou shalt whet or sharpen them”, the words or commandments; it is expressive of diligence and industry in teaching, by frequent repetition of things, by inculcating them continually into their minds, endeavouring to imprint them there, that they may be sharp, ready, and expert in them: ***and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house;*** at the time of meals, or at leisure hours, or even when employed in any business in the house which will admit of it; every opportunity should be taken to instil the knowledge of divine things into their tender minds: ***and when thou walkest by the way;*** in a journey, and any of his children with him; or for diversion, in the garden, field, or vineyard; occasion may be taken on sight of any of the works of creation to lead into a discourse concerning God, his nature, perfections, and works, and the obligations his creatures lie under to love, fear, and serve him: and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up; at the time of going to bed, and rising from it; which,

as they are seasons of prayer to God, may be improved in instruction of children.

**DEUT. 6:8. *And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand,*** As a man ties anything to his hand for a token, that he may remember somewhat he is desirous of; though the Jews understand this literally, of binding a scroll of parchment, with this section and others written in it, upon their left hand, as the Targum of Jonathan here interprets the hand: ***and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes;*** and which the same Targum interprets of the Tephilim, or phylacteries, which the Jews wear upon their foreheads, and on their arms, and so Jarchi; of which (see Gill on “Matthew 23:5”).

**DEUT. 6:9. *And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thine house, and on thy gates.***] To put them in mind of them when they went out and came in, that they might be careful to observe them; this the Jews take literally also, and write in a scroll of parchment this section with some passages; and, as the Targum of Jonathan here, fix them in three places, over against the bed chamber, upon the posts of the house, and on the gate at the right hand of it; and this is what they call the Mezuzah; and the account given of it is this. In a parchment prepared for the purpose, they write the words in (Deuteronomy 6:4-9 11:13-20) and then roll up the parchment, and write on it “Shaddai”; and put it either into a cane (or reed), or else into a 83 like hollow piece of wood, and so fasten it to the wall on the posts of the door at the right hand of entrance; and thus, as often as they go in and out, they make it a part of their devotion to touch this parchment, and kiss it .

**DEUT. 6:10. *And it shall be, when the Lord thy God shall have brought thee into the land,*** The land of Canaan, on the borders of which they now were, and were just going into: ***which he swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee;*** of his own free favour and good will, without any merit and desert of theirs, and in which would be found ***great and goodly cities, which thou buildedst not;*** large and capacious, delightfully situated, well built, and strongly fortified, without any pains or expense of theirs; all

ready for them to take possession of, and dwell in; and so should no longer reside in tents or booths, as they had for forty years past, but in spacious and noble cities.

**DEUT. 6:11.** *And houses full of all good things which thou filledst not*, Not only full of good, convenient, and rich household furniture, but of the fruits of the earth, of corn, and wine, and oil, and also, perhaps, of gold and silver: *and wells digged which thou diggedst not*; which in those hot and dry countries were in much esteem, and of great worth; (see Genesis 26:18-22), *vineyards and olive trees which thou plantedst not*; which Canaan abounded with much more than Egypt, where there were but few vines and olive trees, though of both these there were more where the Israelites lived than elsewhere; (see Gill on "Genesis 47:11") and these therefore might be such as they had seen in Egypt, in that part of it in which they dwelt, Goshen, which was in the Heracleotic nome, and that Strabo says only produced perfect olives, and fruit bearing trees, but the rest of Egypt wanted oil; and this home is the same which the Arabs now call the province of Fium, of which Leo Africanus says, it produces a large quantity of olives; so that this might be observed for the encouragement of the Israelites: *when thou shalt have eaten and be full*; having such plenty of good things the land would furnish them with. 84

**DEUT. 6:12.** *Then beware lest thou forget the Lord*, To love, fear, and worship him, and keep his commands; creature enjoyments being apt to get possession of the heart, and the affections of it; (Proverbs 30:9) *which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage*; into a land abounding with all the above good things, and therefore under the highest obligations to remember the Lord and his kindnesses, and to serve and glorify him: (Exodus 20:2).

**DEUT. 6:13.** *Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him*, Serve him through fear; not through slavish fear, a fear of hell and damnation; but through filial fear, a reverential affection for that God that had brought them out of a state of bondage into great and glorious

liberty, out of Egypt into Canaan's land, out of a place of misery into a land of plenty; and therefore should fear the Lord and his goodness, and from such a fear of him serve him, in every part of worship, public and private, enjoined; this passage Christ refers to (Matthew 4:10) *and shalt swear by his name*; when they made a covenant with any, or were called to bear a testimony for the decision of any controversy which could not be otherwise finished; or whenever they took an oath on any account, which should never be taken rashly or on any trivial account, and much less falsely; it should be taken not in the name of any idol, or of any other but the true and living God; the Targum of Jonathan is, "in the name of the Word of the Lord, in truth ye shall swear."

**DEUT. 6:14.** *Ye shall not go after other gods*, To serve and worship them, and swear by them; and which indeed are no gods, only nominal and fictitious ones; idols which are nothing in the world, and ought to have no veneration and adoration given them; to go after them is to worship them, and this is to depart from the true God, and go a whoring after false deities: *of the gods of the people which are round about you*; the gods of the Edomites, Ammonites, Moabites, Philistines, and Egyptians; all of which had their peculiar deities.

**DEUT. 6:15.** *For the Lord thy God is a jealous God among you*, He was near to them, in the midst of them, his tabernacle being placed between their camps; and was a God jealous of his honour and glory in matters of worship, and would resent any affront given him in that way: *lest the anger of the Lord thy God be kindled against thee*; there being nothing more apt to stir up his wrath than idolatry: *and destroy thee from off the face of the earth*; suffer them to be carried captive out of their own land, and to be scattered among the nations of the world, and be utterly destroyed.

**DEUT. 6:16.** *Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God*, By striving with him or against him, by murmuring at or complaining of his providential dealings with them, or by requiring a sign of him, or miracles to be done

by him; this is another passage used by Christ to repel the temptations of Satan, (Matthew 4:7), **as tempted him in Massah**; a place so called from the Israelites tempting the Lord there, (Exodus 17:7), the Targum of Jonathan adds, with ten temptations; (see Numbers 14:21).

**DEUT. 6:17. You shall diligently keep the commandments of the Lord your God**, Not only the ten commands, but all others: **and his testimonies, and his statutes, which he hath commanded thee**; those of a judicial and ceremonial kind.

**DEUT. 6:18. And thou shalt do that which is right and good in the sight of the Lord**, And what is such appears from the declaration of his mind and will in the commandments he has given, and obeying which is therefore doing what is right and good; for his commandment is holy, just, and good, being agreeable both to his nature and will, (Romans 7:12) that it may be well with thee; as it is with those that fear God, and keep his commandments: **and that thou mayest go in and possess the good land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers**; to give to them and to their posterity, even the land of Canaan; but if they did not what was right and good in the sight of God, they might expect to be kept out of it, as their immediate parents were, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness.

**DEUT. 6:19. To cast out all thine enemies from before thee**, This the Lord promised, and as it seems with an oath, that he would do for them; drive out their enemies, and make way for the settlement of them in their country: **86 as the Lord hath spoken**; (see Genesis 15:18,19,20 22:17 Exodus 23:28).

**DEUT. 6:20. And when thy son asketh thee in time to come**, Or "tomorrow"; that is, in later times, as Jarchi interprets it; any time after this, and particularly after they were come into the land of Canaan, when the several laws, statutes, and ordinances appointed, would take place and be obeyed: **what [mean] the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments, which the Lord our God hath commanded you?** what is the reason of the various rites, customs, and

usages, the observance of which is directed to, such as the feasts of passover, pentecost, tabernacles, sacrifices, and other duties of religion?

**DEUT. 6:21. Then shall thou say unto thy son**, In order to lead him into the spring and original of them, and to acquaint him with the goodness of God, which laid them under obligation to observe them: **we were Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt**; were brought into bondage and slavery to Pharaoh king of Egypt, into whose country their ancestors came, and where they resided many years, and at length were reduced to the utmost servitude and misery: **and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand**; by the exertion of his mighty power, which the Egyptians and their king could not withstand, as a token of his care and kindness to us; by the ties of which we are bound in gratitude to observe his commands. The Targum of Jonathan is, "the Word of the Lord brought us, etc." and it was Christ the Son of God that was from first to last concerned in that affair, even from the appearance to Moses in the bush to Israel's coming out of Egypt.

**DEUT. 6:22. And the Lord showed signs and wonders, great and sore**, Meaning the ten plagues, which were signs of the power of God, marvellous works, great, above the power of nature, and very sore or "evil"; very distressing to the Egyptians; for they came and lay heavy **upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his household, before our eyes**; upon the king, his courtiers, and the whole land, and which were done **87 publicly in the sight of the people of Israel, as well as the Egyptians; and there were some then living, though at that time when wrought under twenty years, who saw with their own eyes what were done to them, and could never forget them.** Here also the Targum of Jonathan has it, "and the Word of the Lord sent signs, etc"

**DEUT. 6:23. And he brought us out from thence**, By means of those miraculous plagues, even out of a state of bondage and misery: and in order **that he might bring us in, to give us the land which he sware unto our fathers**; to bring them into the land of Canaan, give it to

them, and put them in the possession of it; and so fulfil his promise and his oath made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

**DEUT. 6:24.** *And the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes*, Some of which were designed on purpose to commemorate the wonderful deliverance out of Egypt, as particularly the passover; and all of them they were obliged in gratitude to obey, in consideration of such great favours bestowed upon them: *to fear the Lord our God, for our good always*: as it is always for the good of men, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, to fear the Lord; for there is no want to them that fear him, nor will the Lord withhold good things from them; (see Psalm 34:9,10), *that he might preserve us alive, as it is at this day*; in bodily health and strength, and in the enjoyment of the good land, and all the blessings and benefits of it.

**DEUT. 6:25.** *And it shall be our righteousness*, Or a mercy, benefit, and blessing to us; or this shall be reckoned our righteousness, and that by which we shall be justified: *if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, as he hath commanded us*; in order to have such a justifying righteousness, a man must keep all the commandments of God, not one excepted; and that perfectly, without the least breach of them in thought, word, or deed; and that before the Lord, in his sight, not as it may appear to a man himself, or to others, but as it appears to God, who sees the heart, and weighs all actions; and a man must keep them in the manner the Lord has 88 commanded, even with all his heart, soul, and strength, as in (Deuteronomy 6:5) and this is not possible for a sinful man to do; and therefore righteousness cannot be by the law. Only Christ could thus keep all the commandments of God, and his obedience is our righteousness; and he only is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believes, and to him we must seek for it. 89

## Deuteronomy 7

In this chapter the Israelites are exhorted to destroy the seven nations of the land of Canaan, when they entered into it, and to make no alliances with them of any kind, nor suffer any remains of idolatry to continue, (Deuteronomy 7:1-5) to observe which, and other commands of God, they are urged from the consideration of their being freely chosen of God above all other people, and of their being redeemed out of the house of bondage, and of the Lord's being a covenant keeping God to them, (Deuteronomy 7:6-11) and it is promised them, for their further encouragement to keep the commands of God, that they should have an increase of all temporal good things, and no evils and calamities should come upon them, (Deuteronomy 6:12-16), and, lest they should be disheartened at the numbers and might of their enemies, they are put in mind of what God had done for them in Egypt, and of what he had promised to do for them now, (Deuteronomy 7:17-20) and they are assured that the nations should be cast out before them by little and little, until they were utterly destroyed, (Deuteronomy 7:21-24) and the chapter is concluded with an exhortation to destroy their images, and not admit anything of that sort to be brought into their houses, (Deuteronomy 7:25,26).

**DEUT. 7:1.** *When the Lord thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it*, The land of Canaan they were just now going into to take possession of; their introduction into which is here, as in many other places, ascribed not to themselves, or their leaders, but to the Lord as their covenant God: *and hath cast out many nations before thee*; even all that were in it, the seven following: *the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites*; the Canaanites were a particular nation in the land of Canaan, which had their name from Canaan himself; the rest were called from different sons of his; (see 90 Genesis 10:15-17), the country of the Gergesenes, the

same with the Girgashites, continued its name unto the times of Christ, (Matthew 8:28), ***seven nations greater and mightier than thou***; more in number, and more robust in body, some being of a gigantic stature; there were ten of these nations in Abraham's time, three of them were since sunk or swallowed up among the rest, the Kenites, and Kenizires, and the Rephaim; for instead of the Kadmonites the Hivites are here put, which seem to be the same.

**DEUT. 7:2. *And when the Lord thy God shall deliver them before thee***, Into their hands: ***thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them***; men, women, and children; which was ordered not merely to make way and room for the people of Israel to inherit their land, but as a punishment for capital crimes they had been guilty of, such as idolatry, incest, murder, etc. wherefore though they were reprieved for a while for Israel's sake, till their time was come to possess the land, they were at length righteously punished; which observed, abates the seeming severity exercised upon them: ***thou shalt make no covenant with them***; to dwell in their cities and houses, and enjoy their lands and estates, on any condition whatever; and though they did make a league with the Gibeonites, that was obtained by fraud, they pretending not to be of the land of Canaan, but to come from a very distant country: ***nor show mercy unto them***; by sparing their lives, bestowing any favours upon them, or giving them any help and assistance when in distress: the Jews extend this to all other Heathen nations besides these seven; wherefore, if an Israelite, as Maimonides says, should see a Gentile perishing, or plunged into a river, he may not take him out, nor administer medicine to a sick person. Hence Juvenal the poet upbraids them with their unkindness and incivility; and says that Moses delivered it as a Jewish law, in a secret volume of his, perhaps referring to this book of Deuteronomy, that the Jews might not direct a poor traveller in his way unless he was one of their religion, nor one athirst to a fountain of water; and which led Tacitus, the Heathen historian, to make this

remark upon them, that they entertained an hostile hatred against all other people.

**DEUT. 7:3. *Neither shalt thou make marriages with them***, Unless they became proselytes, as Rahab, who was married by Salmon, and so those of 91 other nations, as Ruth the Moabitess, and so any captive taken in war; otherwise it was not lawful, bad consequences have followed upon it, which it is the design of this law to prevent; that is, being snared and drawn aside into idolatry, which was the case of Solomon: ***thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son***; for, according to the Targum of Jonathan, whosoever marries with them, it is as if he married with their idols: and this law, according to the Jewish writers, is binding with respect to other nations besides the seven; and whosoever marries any Heathen, of whatsoever nation, is to be beaten.

**DEUT. 7:4. *For they will turn away thy son from following me***, From the pure worship of God, his word, statutes, and ordinances: ***that they may serve other gods***; worship their idols; that is, the daughters of Heathens, married to the sons of Israelites, would entice them from the worship of the true God to idolatry; so the Targum of Jonathan; as Solomon's wives drew him aside: or "he will turn away thy son"; meaning, as Jarchi observes, that the son of an Heathen, that marries the daughter of an Israelite, will turn away the son born of her to idolatry, called here the grandfather's son; though Aben Ezra says this respects the son mentioned in the preceding verse, that is, the son married to an Heathen woman, and not to a son born in such marriage: ***so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly***; by some immediate judgment striking dead at once; there being nothing more provoking to God than idolatry, that being directly contrary to his being, nature, perfections, honour, and glory, of which he is jealous.

**DEUT. 7:5. *But thus shall ye deal with them***, The inhabitants of the land of Canaan: ***ye shall destroy their altars***; on which they sacrificed



to their idols: **and break down their images**; of their gods, and the statues and pillars erected to the honour of them: **and cut down their groves**; sacred to idols, which were usually planted on hills, and about Heathen temples, and under which idols were placed to be worshipped. The Targum of Jonathan calls them trees of their adoration, under which they worshipped; though there was a worship paid to them, 92 not indeed directly to them, or for their sakes, but for the sake of the idols they were sacred to, or were placed under them; so Maimonides says, a tree which at first was planted to be worshipped is forbidden of any use (or profit); and this is the **hrqa**, or "grove", spoken of in the law, a tree planted and lopped, of which a graven image is made for an idol; and so the tree that has been worshipped, though the body of it is, not forbidden, all the shoots and leaves, and the branches, and the fruits it produces all the time it is worshipped, are forbidden to be used: though the word here used sometimes seems to signify, not a grove of trees, but some image itself, since we read of it in the temple, (2 Kings 21:7 23:6), **and burn their graven images with fire**; distinguished from their molten images, which may be meant in a preceding clause, and which are particularly mentioned as to be destroyed as well as these, (Numbers 33:52).

**DEUT. 7:6. For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God**, Not sanctified in a spiritual sense, or having principles of grace and holiness in them, from whence holy actions sprang, at least not all of them; but they were separated from all other people in the world to the pure worship and service of God in an external manner, and therefore were to avoid all idolatry, and every appearance of it: **the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself above all people that are upon the face of the earth**; for special service and worship, and to enjoy special privileges and benefits, civil and religious; though they were not chosen to special grace here, and eternal glory hereafter; at least not all of them, only a remnant, according to the election of grace; yet they were typical of the chosen people of God in

a special sense; who are chosen out of the world to be a peculiar people, to be holy here and happy hereafter; to enjoy communion with God in this life and that to come, as well as to serve and glorify him now and for evermore.

**DEUT. 7:7. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you**, He had done both, and the one as the effect and evidence of the other; he loved them, and therefore he chose them; but neither of them, **because ye were more in number than any people**; not for the quantity of them, nor even for the quality of them: 93 **for ye were the fewest of all people**; fewer than the Egyptians, from whence they came, and than the Canaanites they were going to drive out and inherit their land, (Deuteronomy 7:1). Those whom God has loved with an everlasting love, and as a fruit of it has chosen them in Christ before the world began to grace and glory, holiness and happiness, are but a small number, a little flock; though many are called, few are chosen; nor are they better than others, being by nature children of wrath even as others, and as to their outward circumstances the poor of this world.

**DEUT. 7:8. But because the Lord loved you**, With an unmerited love; he loved them, because he loved them; that is, because he would love them; his love was not owing to any goodness in them, or done by them, or any love in them to him, but to his own good will and pleasure: **and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers**; the promise he had made, confirmed by an oath: **hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand**; out of the land of Egypt: **and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen**; where they were bondmen to the Egyptians: **from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt**; who detained them, and refused to let them go.

**DEUT. 7:9 Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God**, The only true and living God, and not the idols of the Gentiles, who are false and lifeless ones, and therefore not the proper objects of adoration: **the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy**; as appeared by fulfilling the promise made to their fathers, in bringing them out of Egypt, and now them to

the borders of the land of Canaan given them for an inheritance: ***with them that love him, and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations***; (see Exodus 20:6) which are not the causes or conditions of his covenant and mercy, nor of his keeping them, but descriptive of the persons that enjoy the benefit thereof.

**DEUT. 7:10. *And repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them***, Openly, publicly, and at once, they not being able to make any resistance. Onkelos interprets it in their lifetime, and so Jarchi which agrees 94 with the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem: "or to his face"; the face of God; that is, he will punish them that hate him to his face, who are audacious, bold, impudent sinners; sinners before the Lord, as the men of Sodom were, (Genesis 13:13), ***he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face***; not defer the execution of his judgment and vengeance, which may seem to slumber and linger, but will quickly and openly bring it upon the sinner; this also the Chaldee paraphrases explain as before.

**DEUT. 7:11. *Thou shalt therefore keep the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments***, The laws, moral, ceremonial, and judicial, urged thereunto both by promises and threatenings, in hopes of reward, and through fear of punishment: ***which I command thee this day, to do them***; in the name of the Lord, and by his authority; by virtue of which he made a new declaration of them to put them in mind of them in order to observe them.

**DEUT. 7:12. *Wherefore it shall come to pass, if ye hearken to these judgments, and keep and do them***, Attentively listen to the declaration made of them, and be careful to observe them: ***that the Lord thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which he sware unto thy fathers***; to bring them into the land of Canaan, and continue them in it; yea, to send the Messiah to them, and bring him the salvation of Israel out of Zion; (see Luke 1:68-73).

**DEUT. 7:13. *And he will love thee***, As he has done, and rest in his love, and give further

instances and proofs of it: ***and bless thee, and multiply thee***; that is bless thee with a multiplication of offspring, which was what was often promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; that their seed should be as the stars of heaven, the dust of the earth, and the sand of the sea: ***he will also bless the fruit of thy womb***; not only give strength to conceive, but carry on the pregnancy, preserve the foetus, and prevent miscarrying: ***and the fruit of thy land, thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil***; which were the principal produce of it: 95 ***the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep***: their larger and lesser cattle, oxen and sheep: in the land which he sware unto thy fathers to give thee; the land of Canaan, given in promise, and that established by an oath.

**DEUT. 7:14. *Thou shalt be blessed above all people***, Even with temporal blessings, besides those of a religious kind; they having the oracles of God, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises, (Romans 3:1,2 9:4), ***there shall not be male or female barren among you***; which to be was reckoned a reproach, and the contrary a blessing, (Luke 1:25 Psalm 127:5) (Psalm 128:3,4) ***or among your cattle***; the Targum of Jonathan is, nor thy beasts barren of wool, and milk, and lambs.

**DEUT. 7:15. *And will take away from thee all sickness***, Bodily sickness and diseases, prevent the coming of them, or remove them when come: ***and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt which thou knowest upon thee***; meaning either the plagues that were inflicted upon them to oblige them to let the Israelites go, of which they had perfect knowledge; or else some noxious and nauseous diseases, which were common among, and peculiar to, the Egyptians, particularly what is called the botch of Egypt; see (Exodus 15:26), likewise the leprosy; (see Gill on "Leviticus 13:2"), (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 28:27"). ***but will lay them upon all them that hate thee***; with which God sometimes punishes his and his people's enemies; (see Judges 5:9 Revelation 16:10,11).

**DEUT. 7:16. *And thou shalt consume all the people which the Lord thy God shall deliver***

*thee*, All the inhabitants of the land of Canaan, which the Lord should deliver into their hands; them they were not to spare, but utterly destroy men, women, and children: ***thine eye shall have no pity upon them***; (see Gill on “Deuteronomy 7:2”), ***neither shall thou serve their gods, for that will be a snare unto thee***; which will bring into utter ruin and destruction; (see Exodus 23:33). 96

**DEUT. 7:17. *If thou shall say in thine heart***, Should have secret thoughts arise in the heart, misgivings of heart, fears and doubts there, which, though not outwardly expressed, might be inwardly retained: ***these nations are more than I***; seven to one, and perhaps anyone of them as powerful as Israel: ***how can I dispossess them?*** of the land they inherit, and take possession of it.

**DEUT. 7:18. *Thou shalt not be afraid of them***, Neither on account of their number, nor their strength: ***but shall well remember what the Lord thy God did unto Pharaoh, and unto all Egypt***; a people more numerous and potent than the Canaanites, among whom the Lord wrought such wonderful things by his power, which obliged them to let Israel go; and his power was now the same, he could do as great things to the Canaanites as he had to the Egyptians; and as he had delivered them out of the hands of the Egyptians, he could as easily deliver the Canaanites into their hands, and put them into the possession of their country.

**DEUT. 7:19. *The great temptations which thine eyes saw, and the signs, and the wonders***, The miracles wrought in Egypt; (see Deuteronomy 4:34) ***and the mighty hand, and stretched out arm, whereby the Lord thy God brought thee out***; that is, out of Egypt, which was an instance and proof of his almighty power: ***so shall the Lord thy God do unto all the people of whom thou art afraid***; not perform the same miraculous operations among them, but exert the same power in the destruction of them, and in dispossessing them of their land, as in destroying the Egyptians, and delivering Israel from among them.

**DEUT. 7:20. *Moreover, the Lord thy God will send the hornet among them***, Not a single one, but several of them, and which may be understood of creatures so called, which resemble wasps, only twice as large, an insect very bold and venomous; (see Exodus 23:28). Aben Ezra interprets it of the leprosy: 97 ***until they that are left, and hide themselves from thee, be destroyed***; such of the Canaanites who escaped the sword of the Israelites, and hid themselves in holes and caverns of the earth; these the hornets would find out and sting them to death, until they were all destroyed. Thus God can make use of small creatures, even insects, to destroy nations the most populous and mighty.

**DEUT. 7:21. *Thou shalt not be affrighted at them***, At their numbers, nor at their gigantic stature: ***for the Lord thy God is among you***: in the tabernacle, in the holy of holies, which was in the midst of them, and besides would give proof of his powerful presence among them, in protecting them, and destroying their enemies; ***a mighty God and terrible***; mighty to save his people, and terrible to others.

**DEUT. 7:22. *And the Lord thy God will put out those nations before thee by little and little***, Which is observed for their encouragement, who seeing that all were not destroyed at once, might fear the work would never be thoroughly accomplished; (see Exodus 23:30), ***thou mayest not consume them at once***; though it was in the power of their hands to do it, there being some wise reasons for sparing them awhile, at least for not cutting them off all at once, and one follows: ***lest the beasts of the field increase upon thee***; through so many places being waste without inhabitants, and there being none to destroy these creatures; and who therefore in course would become more numerous, and so more troublesome and distressing to the Israelites. The Targum of Jonathan adds, by way of explanation, “when they shall come to devour their carcasses,” the carcasses of the slain Canaanites; who, if destroyed at once, would be so many, that they would lie unburied, which would invite the beasts of the field to come out of their lurking

places to feed upon them, and which might lead them on to mischief among the Israelites.

**DEUT. 7:23.** *But the Lord thy God shall deliver them unto thee*, Gradually, by little and little, until at length they should all come into their 98 hands: and shall destroy them with a mighty destruction until they be destroyed; even all of them.

**DEUT. 7:24.** *And he shall deliver their kings into thine hand*, Who were very numerous, for though there were but seven nations, there were more kings, even one and thirty, (Joshua 12:9-24), *thou shalt destroy their name from under heaven*; not only destroy the name of the reigning kings, so as that they should not be remembered and made mention of any more, but put an end to the name and race of kings among them, so that they should never have any more, as they never had: *there shall no man be able to stand before thee*, until thou have destroyed them; the nations and their kings.

**DEUT. 7:25.** *The graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire*, Which is repeated from (Deuteronomy 7:5), that it might be the more observed and strictly performed, and which unless done, they could not expect the utter destruction of their enemies, who were left in the land to try and prove them with respect to this very thing: *thou shalt not desire the silver or gold that is on them*: the raiment of gold or silver with which they were bedecked, or the plates of gold and silver with which they were covered, or any ornament about them, as chains and the like, that were of either of these metals; (see Ezekiel 16:16,17,18 Jeremiah 10:9), *nor take it unto thee, lest thou be snared therein*; nor take it into their possession, or bring it into their houses, as in the next verse, lest they should be under a temptation to worship it, or keep it as a superstitious relic: *for it is an abomination to the Lord thy God*; not only the idol itself, being put in the place of God, and so derogatory to his honour and glory, but the gold and silver on it, being devoted to a superstitious and idolatrous use; and even the taking of it, and appropriating

it to a man's own use, was an abomination, and resented by the Lord as such.

**DEUT. 7:26.** *Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thy house*, An idol, so the Targum of Jonathan, the abominations of idols and their utensils, or what is ministered to them, with anything that appertains to them, or is used in the service of them, as well as the gold and silver upon 99 them; this care was taken as much as possible to prevent idolatry, and all appearance of it, and to show what might lead on and be a temptation to it: *lest thou be a cursed thing like it*; as an idol is, and so is everyone that worships it; for what more exposes to the curse of God than idolatry, a breach of the first table of the law? and therefore subjects a man to the curse of it; nay, the bringing of an idol into a man's house brings a curse into it, and makes him liable thereunto; for if the curse enters into the house of the thief or perjurer, much more into the house of a man guilty of idolatry in any degree of it; (see Zechariah 5:3,4) but thou shalt utterly detest it; the Targum of Jonathan adds, as the pollution of an abominable thing: *and thou shalt utterly abhor it, for it is a cursed thing*; devoted to destruction; and to have anything to do with it is the way to entail a curse, and bring to everlasting ruin and destruction; (see Revelation 21:8). 100

## Deuteronomy 8

In this chapter Moses repeats the exhortation to observe the commands of God, and urges the Israelites to it, from the consideration of the great and good things God had done for them in the wilderness, and even in those instances which were chastisements, and were of an humbling nature, (Deuteronomy 8:1-6), and on the consideration of the blessings of the good land they were going to possess, (Deuteronomy 8:7-9) for which blessings they are exhorted to be thankful, and are cautioned against pride of heart through them, and forgetfulness of God, and of his goodness to them while in the wilderness, and when brought into the land of Canaan, which they were to ascribe to his power and goodness, and not their own,

(Deuteronomy 8:10-18), and the chapter is concluded with a warning against idolatry, lest they perish through it as the nations before them, (Deuteronomy 8:19,20).

**DEUT. 8:1.** *All the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do,* It is repeated over and over again, to impress it on their minds, and to show the importance and necessity of it, how greatly it was expected from them, and how much it was incumbent on them: *that ye may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the Lord sware unto your fathers;* for their temporal life, and the mercies and comforts of it, the multiplication of their offspring, and of their substance, their entrance into the land of Canaan, possession of it, and continuance in it, all depended on their obedience to the commands of God; (see Deuteronomy 19:20).

**DEUT. 8:2.** *And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness,* For this was now the fortieth year of their coming out of Egypt into the wilderness, into which they quickly came after their departure from thence, and had been in one wilderness or another ever since, in which God went before them in a pillar of cloud and fire, and directed their way; and now they are called upon to remember all the occurrences in the way, what favours and mercies had 101 been bestowed upon them, what provisions had been made for them, what enemies they had been delivered from or overcome, as well as what afflictions and chastisements had attended them: and so the people of God should call to mind how they were brought to see their wilderness state and condition by nature; how they were brought out of it, and stopped in their career of sin, and turned from their evil ways, and led to Christ; what gracious promises have been made to them; what light has been afforded them; what communion they have had with God; what pleasure in his ordinances; what food they have been fed with; what temptations have befallen them, and how delivered out of them; and what afflictions have been laid upon them, and how supported under them, and freed from them: *to*

*humble thee;* under the mighty hand of God, to bring down the pride of their hearts and hide it from them; to lay them low in their own eyes, and clothe them with humility, that the Lord alone might be exalted: and *to prove thee;* whether they would be obedient to his laws, or how they would behave towards him both in prosperity and adversity, and to try their graces, their faith and patience, fear and love: *to know what was in thine heart;* that is, to make it known to themselves and others; for God knew all that was in it, the wickedness of it, the unbelief, rebellion, and frowardness of it, and needed not any ways and means to get into the knowledge of it; (see 2 Chronicles 32:31), *whether thou wouldest keep his commandments or no;* which they had in such a solemn manner promised to do; (Deuteronomy 5:27-29).

**DEUT. 8:3.** *And he humbled thee,* Or afflicted thee with want of bread: *and suffered thee to hunger;* that there might be an opportunity of showing his mercy, and exerting his power: *and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know;* a sort of food they had never seen before, and when they saw it, knew not what it was, but asked, what is it? (Exodus 16:15). Thus the Lord humbles his people by his Spirit and grace, and brings them to see themselves to be in want, and creates in them desires after spiritual food, and feeds them with Christ the hidden manna, whose person, office, and grace, they were before ignorant of: 102 *that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only;* which is the stay and staff of life, and which strengthens man's heart, and is the main support of it, being the ordinary and usual food man lives upon, and is put for all the rest: *but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live:* not so much by the food he eats as by the blessing of God upon it, and who can make one sort of food as effectual for such a purpose as another; for every creature of God is good being received with thankfulness, and sanctified by the word and prayer; and particularly he could and did make such light food as manna was to answer all the purposes

of solid bread for the space of forty years in the wilderness; the Targum of Jonathan is, "but by all which is created by the Word of the Lord is the life of man;" which seems to agree with **1 Timothy 4:3,4** for the meaning is not that the Israelites in the wilderness, and when come into the land of Canaan, should not live by corporeal food only, but by obedience to the commands of God, by means of which they should continue under his protection, which was indeed their case; nor that man does not live in his body only by bread, but in his soul also by the word of God, and the doctrines of it, which is certainly true; spiritual men live a spiritual life on Christ, the Word of God, and bread of life, and on the Gospel and the truths of it, the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus, and are nourished up with the words of faith and sound doctrine, by means of which their spiritual life is supported and maintained; but this is not what is here intended.

**DEUT. 8:4.** *Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee*, etc] They wanted not clothes all the forty years they were in the wilderness; which some account for by the rising generation being supplied with the clothes of those that died in the wilderness, and with the spoils they took from Amalek, (Exodus 17:1) and others, as Aben Ezra observes, remark that they brought much clothes with them out of Egypt, which no doubt they did; (see Exodus 12:35) and he adds, as worthy of notice, that the manna they lived upon did not produce sweat, which is prejudicial to clothes; but be it so, that they were sufficiently provided with clothes, it must be miraculous that these clothes they wore should not wax old. This, in a spiritual sense, may denote the righteousness of Christ, which is often compared to raiment, the property of which is, that it never waxes old, wears out, or decays; it is an everlasting righteousness, and will never be abolished, but will answer for the saints in a time to come; (see Isaiah 51:6,8 Daniel 9:24) neither did thy foot swell these forty years; or puff up like paste, as Jarchi explains it, which is often the case in long journeys; the Septuagint version is, "did not become callous"; a callousness or hardness is

frequently produced by travelling; in (Deuteronomy 29:5) it is explained of the shoes on their feet not waxing old; so Ben Melech, and the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan, and the Syriac and Arabic versions here, "thy feet were not naked", were not without shoes; these were no more wore out by travel than their clothes upon their backs, and this was equally as miraculous: the Gibeonites, pretending to come from a far country, and to have travelled much and long, put on old garments and old shoes, to make it probable and plausible, (Joshua 9:5,13). This may be an emblem of the perseverance of the saints in faith and holiness: shoes upon the feet denote a Gospel conversation, which is very beautiful, (Song of Solomon 7:1) the feet of saints being shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; which, as shoes to the feet, guides and directs the Christian walk, strengthens and makes fit for walking, keeps tight and preserves from slipping and falling, and protects from what is harmful, accompanied by the power and grace of God.

**DEUT. 8:5.** *Thou shalt also consider in thine heart*, Frequently think of, and meditate upon, revolve in their thoughts, well weigh in their minds, and take into thorough and deliberate consideration in their hearts; it being a matter of great moment and importance to them for their peace and comfort and the glory of God, namely, what follows: *that as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee*; that they stood in the same relation to God as a son to a father, and therefore happy and honourable; that all their afflictions came from God, were appointed, sent, directed, and overruled by him for his own glory and their good; that these were the chastenings and corrections of a father, and were not done in wrath, but in love, and therefore should be patiently endured; and it became them to consider well from what hand they came, and in what manner, and for what ends and purposes, how they ought to behave under them, and what they should do, as follows.

**DEUT. 8:6.** *Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God*, Not only

because they are the commands of God, and of a covenant God and Father, which are reasons sufficient for the observance of them; but because the Lord had dealt so bountifully with them, in providing food <sup>104</sup> and raiment for them in the wilderness, which always continued with them; and because, when he afflicted them, it was a fatherly chastisement, with great tenderness and compassion, and for their good; all which laid them under obligations to keep the commands of God, whatsoever he had enjoined them, whether of the moral, ceremonial, or judicial kind: ***to walk in his ways, and to fear him***; to walk in the ways he directed, to be under an awe of his majesty, a fear of offending him, and a reverential affection for him, such as children have to a father.

**DEUT. 8:7. *For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land***, The land of Canaan, abounding with good things after enumerated, a land flowing with milk and honey, having in it plenty of everything both for convenience and delight; which is another reason why they were under obligations to serve the Lord, to walk in his ways and keep his commandments: ***a land of brooks of water***; rivers and torrents, such as Jordan, Jabbok, Kishon, Kidron, Cherith, and others: ***of fountains***; as Siloam, Gihon, Etam, the baths of Tiberias, and others: ***and depths that spring out of valleys and hills***; deep waters, caverns, wells, and lakes, which had their rise from such places, of which there were many. With this agrees the account of it by our countrymen, Mr. Sandys, as it was in the beginning of the last century; that it was adorned with beautiful mountains and luxurious valleys, the rocks producing excellent waters, and no part empty of delight or profit.

**DEUT. 8:8. *A land of wheat and barley***, There were two harvests in it, one a barley harvest, which began at the passover, and the other a wheat harvest, which began at Pentecost: instances of the great plenty of these might be observed in the vast quantities consumed in the times of Solomon, in his household, and in the yearly distribution he made to Hiram, (1 Kings 4:22,28 5:11 2 Chronicles 2:10), yea, there was

such plenty of wheat in this land, that it not only supplied the inhabitants of it, but even furnished other countries with it; with this the merchants of Israel and Judah traded at the market of Tyre, (Ezekiel 27:17 Acts 12:20). According to the Jewish writers, the best fine wheat flour was at Mechumas and Mezonichah, and the next to them was Chephraim, or Ephraim, in the valley : ***105 and vines***; with which this land abounded everywhere; the places most noted were Lebanon, Eshcol, Engedi, Ashkelon, Gaza, and Sarepta; according to the above writers, Cerotim and Hatolim were the first for wine, and the second to them were Beth Rimah and Beth Laban in the mountain, and Caphat Sigmah in the valley; the wine of Sharon is also highly commended by them ***and fig trees and pomegranates***: according to Josephus, the country of Gennesaret furnished with the best grapes and figs for ten months without intermission, and the rest of fruits throughout the whole year. Figs and pomegranates, the spies brought with them when they returned from searching the land, as well as grapes, are a specimen of the fruits of it, (Numbers 13:23) ***a land of oil olive***; the mount of Olives was famous for olive trees, and had its name from thence; the whole land abounded with them, and though oil was so much in common use with the Jews, they supplied their neighbours with it: (see 1 Kings 5:11 2 Chronicles 2:10 Ezekiel 27:17). It was usual also, as we are told, for the ten tribes to send oil into Egypt; according to the Jewish doctors, Tekoah was the first place for oil, and the second, Ragab, beyond Jordan; very probably the same with Argob, (Deuteronomy 3:4). ***and honey***; besides the great quantities of honey produced by bees in this country, there was much of another sort that dropped from trees, called wild honey, the food of John the Baptist in the wilderness, (Matthew 3:4). Pliny speaks of a sort of honey which he calls "eloeomeli", or oil honey, which is said to flow from the olive trees in Syria; but this honey here is generally thought by the Jewish writers to be an honey which was made of the fruit of palm trees, frequent in this country, and

especially about Jericho; of which Josephus says, that the palm trees about Jericho, the fatter of them (i.e. of the fruit of them) being pressed, emit a large quantity of honey, scarce exceeded by any; and Maimonides says, that the honey spoken of in the law, particularly in this place, is honey of palm trees, so Ben Melech; and it was not unusual for people of other nations to make honey of the fruit of them. Herodotus reports, that the Babylonians made honey out of palm trees; so the Arabs call honey of palm trees “dibs, dibis, dipso”, the same with the word here used; agreeably to which both the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem paraphrase the words, “out of whose palm trees honey is made.” 106

**DEUT. 8:9. *A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness,*** That is, should have plenty of all sorts of provisions, which bread is often put for: ***thou shalt not lack anything in it;*** for necessity and convenience, and for delight and pleasure: ***a land whose stones are iron;*** in which were iron mines: ***and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass;*** both which are taken out of the earth and the stones of it, (Job 28:2) and were to be found in the land of Canaan, and particularly in the tribe of Asher, as seems from (Deuteronomy 33:25) and more particularly at Sidon and Sarepta, which were in that tribe; the latter of which seems to have its name from the melting of metals there, and the former is said in Homer to abound with brass.

**DEUT. 8:10. *When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God,*** For as the Lord would furnish them with plenty of food, they might eat of it liberally, provided they did not indulge to intemperance, as everyone may whom God has blessed with a fulness of good things; and this shows that we are to return thanks to God for a plentiful meal, as well as to ask a blessing on it: ***for the good land which he hath given thee;*** which supplied them with such plenty, that they enjoyed full meals every day.

**DEUT. 8:11. *Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God,*** The Father of mercies and fountain of goodness, the author and donor of

every good and perfect gift. Plenty is apt to induce a forgetfulness of God, when on the contrary one would think it should keep him in continual remembrance, and engage to daily thankfulness to him: ***in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day;*** gave a repetition of, and in the name of God afresh enjoined them, even laws moral, ceremonial, and judicial, which, when not observed, God is forgotten.

**DEUT. 8:12. *Lest when thou hast eaten and art full,*** Not only once and again, but continually, day after day, being indulged with great plenty: ***and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt [therein];*** who for forty years had only dwelt in tents, moving from place to place in the wilderness. 107

**DEUT. 8:13. *And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply,*** Having good pasture for them in so fruitful a land: ***and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied;*** by trading with other nations: ***and all that thou hast is multiplied;*** children, servants, and substance.

**DEUT. 8:14. *Then thine heart be lifted up,*** As the heart is apt to be when riches increase; hence the advice in (1 Timothy 6:17) ***and thou forget the Lord thy God;*** from whom all good things come, and who can take them away when he pleases, and therefore should be ever kept in mind, for ever looked to and trusted in for the continuance of them; yet such is the evil heart of man, and such the stupefying nature of riches, that they bring on forgetfulness of the author of them, lead off from dependence on him and obedience to him; in order to prevent which, an enumeration is given of wonderful instances of divine goodness to Israel, as follows: ***which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage;*** into a land abounding with all the above good things, and therefore it must be the highest ingratitude to forget such a God, and disobey his commands.

**DEUT. 8:15. *Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness,*** The wilderness of Paran, which was great and large, reaching



from Sinai to Kadesh, eleven days' journey, and terrible to the sight, nothing being to be seen but dry rocks and barren mountains; (see Deuteronomy 1:19), and especially for what follows: wherein were fiery serpents and scorpions; fiery serpents, such as bit the Israelites, of which (see Numbers 21:6) and scorpions, a kind of serpents, venomous and mischievous, which have stings in their tails they are continually thrusting out and striking with, as Pliny says; and have their name from their great sting; for Aristotle says, this alone of insects has a large sting: **and drought where there was no water**; a dry and barren place where no water was to be had; (see Psalm 63:1) or it may be rather another kind of serpents may be meant, which is called "dipsas"; and so the Vulgate Latin, Septuagint, and Samaritan versions render it; the biting of which produces such a thirst as proves mortal, and which must be intolerable in a wilderness where no water is; and from whence it has its name, which signifies thirsty, as does the Hebrew word here used: 108 **who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint**; which was done both at Horeb and Kadesh, (Exodus 17:6 Numbers 20:11) and was very extraordinary; by striking flint, fire is ordinarily produced, and not water. Dr. Shaw observes, that it may be more properly named, with other sorts of graphite marble here to be met with, "the rock of amethyst", from their reddish or purple colour and complexion.

**DEUT. 8:16. Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna**, Even all the forty years they were in it, (Exodus 16:35) which thy fathers knew not; when they first saw it, (Exodus 16:15) **that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee**; they were kept humble, being dependent on God for their daily bread, having nothing in the wilderness to support themselves with; and this tried them, whether they would trust in God for their daily supply, and be thankful for it, or not: **to do thee good at thy latter end**; that by living on such light bread, and this only and continually, his goodness might appear the greater, and be the sweeter to them, when they came into a land abounding with all good things; which is not to

be understood of the latter end and last days of their commonwealth, as our version, with the Septuagint, Samaritan, Arabic versions, and others, and the Targum of Onkelos; but of time following nearer, and the phrase should be rendered "hereafter"; which better agrees with the promise of a divine blessing; though, come when it would, it was the more acceptable for the trial; as heaven will be the sweeter to the saints, through the afflictions, hardships, straits, and difficulties, which attend them here.

**DEUT. 8:17. And thou say in thine heart**, These words are in connection with the former part of the (Deuteronomy 8:14): **and thou forget the Lord thy God**; the author and giver of all the good things enjoyed, and think within themselves, though they might not express it in words at length: **my power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth**; so ascribing that to themselves, their labour, and diligence, which ought to be ascribed to the bounty and blessing of God; (see Hosea 12:8).

**DEUT. 8:18. But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God**, That he was the author of their beings, the God of their lives and mercies; what great and 109 good things he had done for them in Egypt, and in the wilderness; and particularly in putting them into the possession of such a fruitful country, abounding with all that heart could wish for: **for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth**; for though men may have seeming opportunities for getting wealth, may have capacities for the management of business for the acquisition of it, and may not be wanting in diligence and industry, yet may not attain it; it is the blessing of God that makes rich, and to that it should be imputed whenever it is enjoyed; (see Psalm 127:2 Proverbs 10:22 Ecclesiastes 9:11 1 Chronicles 29:12) **that he may establish his covenant which he swore unto thy fathers, as [it is] this day**; that he would give the land of Canaan to their seed, and make them a rich and flourishing people, as they would be and were when possessed of the land, which is supposed throughout this discourse.

**DEUT. 8:19. And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the Lord thy God**, Either the mercies

they received from him, not acknowledging they came from him, but ascribing them to themselves; or their duty to him, to whom they were so greatly obliged: and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them; which would be to forget him indeed, forsaking his worship, and giving homage and adoration to idols, which is what is intended by these expressions: ***I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish***; by one judgment and calamity or another, as the sword, famine, pestilence, and captivity; there being nothing more provoking to God than idolatry, which so much detracts from his honour and glory: and which besides, in such a people, so highly favoured of God, it argued the basest ingratitude.

**DEUT. 8:20.** ***As the nations which the Lord destroyeth before your face, so shall ye perish***, Be cut off by the sword, or cast out as they were, the same sins, particularly idolatry, being committed by them. This is to be understood of the seven nations of the land of Canaan, which the Lord would be gradually destroying when Israel came into the possession of their land; and they might righteously expect the same treatment, should they be guilty of the same sins: ***because ye would not be obedient to the voice of the Lord your God***; expressed in his law, especially in the two first precepts of it, which require the worship of one God, and forbid the worshipping of idols; or to the 110 Word of the Lord, as the Targum of Jonathan, Christ, the essential Word, in whom the name of the Lord was, and whose voice Israel was to obey, (Exodus 23:20-22). 111

### Deuteronomy 9

In this chapter the Israelites are assured of the ejection of the Canaanites, though so great and mighty, to make room for them, (Deuteronomy 9:1-3), and they are cautioned not to attribute this to their own righteousness, but to the wickedness of the nations which deserved to be so treated, and to the faithfulness of God in performing his promise made to their fathers, (Deuteronomy 9:4-6), and that it might appear that it could not be owing to their

righteousness, it is affirmed and proved that they had been a rebellious and provoking people from their coming out of Egypt to that time, as was evident from their idolatry at Horeb; a particular account of which is given, and of the displeasure of the Lord at it, (Deuteronomy 9:7-21), and of their murmurings, with which they provoked the Lord at other places, (Deuteronomy 9:22-24), and the chapter is closed with an account of the prayer of Moses for them at Horeb, to avert the wrath of God from them for their making and worshipping the golden calf, (Deuteronomy 9:25-29).

**DEUT. 9:1.** ***Hear, O Israel***, A pause being made after the delivery of the preceding discourse; or perhaps what follows might be delivered at another time, at some little distance; and which being of moment and importance to the glory of God, and that Israel might have a true notion of their duty, they are called upon to listen with attention to what was now about to be said: ***thou art to pass over Jordan this day***; not precisely that very day, but in a short time after this; for it was on the first day of the eleventh month that Moses began the repetition of the laws he was now going on with, (Deuteronomy 1:3), and it was not until the tenth day of the first month of the next year that the people passed over Jordan, (Joshua 4:19) which was about two months after this: ***to go in and possess nations greater and mightier than thyself***; the seven nations named (Deuteronomy 7:1) where the same characters are given of them: 112 ***cities great and fenced up to heaven***; as they were said to be by the spies, (Deuteronomy 1:28), and were no doubt both large and strongly fortified, and not to be easily taken by the Israelites, had not the Lord been with them, (Deuteronomy 9:3).

**DEUT. 9:2.** ***A people great and tall***, Of a large bulky size, and of an high stature, so that the spies seemed to be as grasshoppers to them, (Numbers 13:33), ***the children of the Anakims, whom thou knowest***; by report, having had an account of them by the spies, who described them as very large bodied men, and of a gigantic stature, the descendants of one Anak, a

giant; and so the Targum of Jonathan, "a people strong and high like the giants;" from these Bene Anak, children of Anak, or Phene Anak, as the words might be pronounced, the initial letter of the first word being of the same sound, Bochart thinks the country had its name of Phoenicia: **and of whom thou hast heard say, who can stand before the children, of Anak?** or the children of the giants, as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan; which they had heard either from the spies who had suggested the same, (Numbers 13:31) or as a common proverb in the mouths of most people in those days.

**DEUT. 9:3. Understand therefore this day,** Or be it known to you for your encouragement, and believe it: **that the Lord thy God [is] he which goeth over before thee as a consuming fire:** did not only go before them over the river Jordan, in a pillar of cloud and fire, to guide and direct them, and was a wall of fire around them to protect and defend them, but as a consuming fire, before which there is no standing, to destroy their enemies; (see Deuteronomy 4:24 Hebrews 12:29), **he shall destroy them, and he shall bring them down before thy face;** be they as great and as mighty, as large and as tall as they may, they will not be able to stand before the Lord, but will soon be made low, and be easily brought down to the earth by him, and to utter destruction; which would be done in a public and visible manner, so as that the hand of the Lord would be seen in it by the Israelites: **113 so shalt thou drive them out, and destroy them quickly, as the Lord hath said unto thee;** that is, the far greater part of them, and so many as to make room for the Israelites, and which was quickly done. The Jews commonly say, that they were seven years in subduing the land; otherwise they were not to be driven out and destroyed at once, but by little and little: (see Deuteronomy 7:22).

**DEUT. 9:4. Speak not thou in thine heart,** Never once think within thyself, or give way to such a vain imagination, and please thyself with it: **after that the Lord thy God hath cast them out from before thee;** to make way for the Israelites, and put them into the possession of

their land; which is to be ascribed not to them, but to the Lord: **saying, for my righteousness the Lord hath brought me in to possess this land;** such a thought as this was not to be secretly cherished in their hearts, and much less expressed with their lips; nothing being more foreign from truth than this, and yet a notion they were prone to entertain. They were always a people, more or less, from first to last, tainted with a conceit of their own righteousness, and goodness, which they laboured to establish, and were ready to attribute all the good things to it they enjoyed, and nothing is more natural to men, than to fancy they shall be brought to the heavenly Canaan by and for their own righteousness; which is contrary to the perfections of God, his purity, holiness, and justice, which can never admit of an imperfect righteousness in the room of a perfect one; to justify anyone thereby, is contrary to the Gospel scheme of salvation; which is not by works of righteousness men have done, but by the grace and mercy of God through Christ; it would make useless, null, and void, the righteousness of Christ, which only can justify men in the sight of God, give a title to heaven and happiness, and an abundant entrance into it; and would occasion boasting, not only in the present state, but even in heaven itself; whereas the scheme of salvation is so framed and fixed, that there may be no room for boasting, here or hereafter, (see Romans 3:27,28 Ephesians 2:8,9 Titus 3:5,7), **but for the wickedness of these nations the Lord doth drive them out from before thee;** namely, their idolatry, incest, and other notorious crimes; (see Leviticus 18:3-28), which sufficiently justifies God in all his dealings with these nations. 114

**DEUT. 9:5. Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart,** Neither for their external righteousness before men, or their outward conformity to the law, nor for the inward sincerity of their hearts, and their upright intentions in doing good, in which they were defective: **dost thou go to possess their land;** this is repeated, and enlarged on, and explained, that this notion might be entirely

removed from them, and not entertained by them; similar to which is that of men, who fancy that their sincere obedience, though imperfect, will be accepted of God instead of a perfect one, on account of which they shall be justified and saved; but by the deeds of the law no flesh living can be justified in the sight of God, nor by any works of righteousness done by the best of men, and in the best manner they are capable of, will any be saved; **but for the wickedness of those nations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee**; which is repeated, that it might be taken notice of as the true reason of the Lord's dealing with them in such severity; and which because it would be now doing, when the Israelites passed over Jordan, and went in to possess the land, it is expressed in the present tense, "doth drive", the work being not yet finished; sin was the cause of their ejection out of their land, and another thing was the reason of the Israelites possessing it, and not their righteousness next expressed: **and that he may perform the word which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**; it was to fulfil his covenant, and make good his word of promise to their fathers, and not on account of any righteousness of theirs; and the salvation of the Lord's people in a spiritual sense, and their enjoyment of the heavenly Canaan, are owing to the gracious purposes and promises of God, and to his covenant engagements, as well as to the undertakings, obedience, and righteousness of his Son, and not to any righteousness of theirs.

**DEUT. 9:6. Understand therefore that the Lord thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness**, This is again repeated to impress it upon their minds, that it was not for any goodness of theirs, but as a gift of divine goodness to them, that they were put into the possession of the good land, which greatly exceeded any merits of theirs, and was entirely owing to the kindness of God to them, and not to any righteousness of theirs; and this he frequently inculcates, that they might have a thorough understanding of it. And so the doctrines of justification by the righteousness of Christ, and not man's, and of salvation by the

grace 115 of God, and not the works of men, are points of knowledge and understanding; and to lead men into an acquaintance with them is the general design of the Gospel; and he cannot be reckoned an understanding man, but ignorant of God and his righteousness, of the law and the spirituality of it, of Christ and the way of salvation by him, of the Spirit and of spiritual things, of the Gospel and its doctrines, nor can he be wise unto salvation, who expects to get to heaven by his own works of righteousness; and it might be added, that he is ignorant of himself, of his state and condition, of his sinfulness and vileness, and of the nature of his best works; as the Israelites in a good measure seemed to be, whose conviction is laboured in the following part of this chapter: **for thou art a stiffnecked people**; refractory and unruly, like an heifer unaccustomed to the yoke, that draws back from it, and wriggles its neck out of it; so untoward and perverse were this people, and disobedient to the commands of God; wherefore there was no show of reason that they were put into the possession of Canaan for their righteousness; and to make it appear that they were such a people as here described, several instances are given.

**DEUT. 9:7. Remember, and forget not how thou provokedst the Lord thy God to wrath in the wilderness**, Aben Ezra remarks that this was after they journeyed from Horeb; but before they came thither, even as soon as, they were in the wilderness, they provoked the Lord, as by their murmuring for water at Marah, when they had been but three days in the wilderness; and for bread in the wilderness of Sin, and for water again at Rephidim; all which were before they came to Horeb or Sinai, and which agrees with what follows: **from the day that thou didst depart out of the land of Egypt until ye came unto this place, ye have been rebellious against the Lord**; though they had such a series of mercies, yet their life was a continued course of rebellion against the Lord: which is a sad character of them indeed, and given by one that thoroughly knew them, was an eyewitness of facts, and had a hearty respect for them too, and cannot be thought to

exaggerate things; so that they were far from being righteous persons in themselves, nor was there any reason to conclude it was for their righteousness the land of Canaan was given them.

**DEUT. 9:8.** *Also in Horeb ye provoked the Lord to wrath*, The word “also” shows that they had provoked him before, but this instance is given 116 as a very notorious one; here they made the golden calf and worshipped it, while Moses was on the mount with God, receiving instructions from him for their good. Near to this place a rock had been smitten for them, from whence flowed water for the refreshment of them and their cattle; here the Lord appeared in the glory of his majesty to them, and from hence, for it is the same mount with Sinai, the law was given to them in such an awful and terrible manner; and yet none of these things were sufficient to restrain them from provoking the Lord to wrath by their sins: *so that the Lord was angry with you, to have destroyed you*; so very angry with them, and so justly, that he proposed to Moses to destroy them, and make of him a great nation in their stead, (Exodus 32:10).

**DEUT. 9:9.** *When I was gone up into the mount to receive the tables of stone*, The tables of the law, the same law which forbid idolatry, and which they had lately heard from the mouth of God himself: even *the tables of the covenant which the Lord made with you*; which they had agreed unto, and solemnly promised they would observe and do, (Exodus 24:7), *then I abode in the mount forty days and forty nights*; and this long stay was one reason of their falling into idolatry, not knowing what was become of him, (Exodus 24:18 32:1). *I neither did eat bread nor drink water*; all those forty days and nights, (Exodus 34:28).

**DEUT. 9:10.** *And the Lord delivered unto me two tables of stone, written with the finger of God*, The letters were of his devising and forming, the writing was his, the engraving them on the stones was his own doing; and which was done to show its original, to stamp a divine authority on it, and to denote its duration; (see Exodus 31:18 32:16) *and on*

*them was written according to all the words which the Lord spake with you in the mount*; the ten commands, exactly in the same order, and in the same words, without any variation, as they were delivered to them with an articulate voice in their hearing; but now were written in this manner, that they might be read by them, and remain with them, (see Exodus 34:28) *out the midst of the fire*; in which the Lord was, and whence he spake: 117 *in the day of the assembly*; when all the people of Israel were gathered together at the foot of the mount; (see Exodus 19:17 Deuteronomy 4:10-12).

**DEUT. 9:11.** *And it came to pass at the end of forty days and forty nights*, The time of Moses’s stay in the mount, when it was just up, and not before: that *the Lord gave me the two tables of stone, [even] the tables of the covenant*, as in (Deuteronomy 9:9). Aben Ezra observes, that this shows that the day the tables were given to Moses the calf was made.

**DEUT. 9:12.** *And the Lord said unto me*, The omniscient God, who knew what was doing in the camp of Israel, though Moses did not, of which he informs him: *arise, get thee down quickly from hence*; from the mount where he was; and the word “arise” does not suppose him to be sitting or lying along, neither of which postures would have been suitable, considering in whose presence he was; but is only expressive of urgency and haste of his departure; it is not used in (Exodus 32:7) *for thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt, have corrupted themselves*; their way, as the Targum of Jonathan; that is, by idolatry, than which nothing is more corrupting and defiling; the Lord calls them not his people, but the people of Moses, being highly displeased with them; and ascribes their coming out of Egypt to Moses the instrument, and not to himself, as if he repented of bringing them from thence: *they are quickly turned aside out of the way which I commanded them*: it being but about six weeks ago, that the command forbidding idolatry, the sin they had fallen into, had been given them: *and they have*

*made them a molten image*; the image of a calf made of melted gold.

**DEUT. 9:13.** *Furthermore the Lord spake unto me, saying*, After he had given him the two tables, and before his departure from the mount: *I have seen this people*; took notice of them, their ways, and their works: *and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people*; unwilling to submit to, and bear the yoke of my commandments; (see Exodus 32:9). 118

**DEUT. 9:14.** *Let me alone, that I may destroy them*, Do not say one word to me on their behalf, or entreat me to spare them, and not destroy them: *and blot out their name from under heaven*; that no such nation may be heard of, or known by the name of Israel: *and I will make of thee a nation mightier and greater than they*; of his family, whereby the Lord's promise to Abraham would not have been made void, but equally firm and sure, since this mightier and greater nation would have been of his seed; (see Gill on "Exodus 32:10").

**DEUT. 9:15.** *So I turned and came down from the mount*, As the Lord commanded: *and the mount burned with fire*; as it had for six weeks past, ever since the Lord's descent upon it; and so it continued, for the words may be rendered, "and the mount was burning"; and yet this did not deter the Israelites from idolatry: *and the two tables of the covenant were in my two hands*: one table in one hand, and the other in the other hand.

**DEUT. 9:16.** *And I looked*, When he was come down from the mount, and was nigh the camp: *and, behold, ye had sinned against the Lord your God*; that plainly appeared by what they had done, and at which he was amazed; and therefore a behold is prefixed to it, it being such a gross sin, having so much impiety and ingratitude, and stupidity in it: *and made you a molten calf*; that he saw with his eyes, and them dancing about it; (see Exodus 32:19) *ye had turned aside quickly out of the way which the Lord had commanded you*; (see Deuteronomy 9:7).

**DEUT. 9:17.** *And I took the two tables, and cast them out of my two hands*, In wrath and indignation at the sin they were guilty of: *and brake them before your eyes*; as an emblem of their breach of them by transgressing them.

**DEUT. 9:18.** *And I fell down before the Lord*, In prayer for Israel who had sinned; but this he did not immediately after he had broken the tables, 119 but when he had first ground the calf to powder, strewed it on the water, and made the children of Israel drink it; and when he had chided Aaron, and ordered the sons of Levi to slay every man his brother: *as at the first forty days and forty nights*; which is to be connected, I think, not with what goes before; for we read not that he fell down before the Lord, at the first time he was with him so long in the mount; but with what follows: "I did neither eat bread nor drink water"; as he neither ate nor drank the first forty days, so neither did he these second forty; (see Deuteronomy 9:9) *because of all your sins which ye sinned, in doing wickedly in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger*; for they were guilty of more sins than one; besides idolatry, they were guilty of unbelief, ingratitude, etc. which were notorious and flagrant, were done openly and publicly, in sight of his glory and majesty on the mount; all which must be very provoking to him, and on account of these Moses prayed and fasted.

**DEUT. 9:19.** *For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure wherewith the Lord was wroth against you*, Which was exceeding vehement, as appeared by his words to Moses, forbidding to intercede for them, that he might consume them, and make of him a greater nation; wherefore he dreaded the issue of it, lest it should be *to destroy you*; that that should be his full resolution and determination; however, he made use of means, and betook himself to fasting and prayer; so heartily affected was he to this people when his temptations lay another way: *but the Lord hearkened unto me at that time also*; as he had at other times, when this people had sinned, and he entreated for them; in which he

was a type of Christ, the Mediator and Advocate, whom the Father always hears.

**DEUT. 9:20.** *And the Lord was very angry with Aaron, to have destroyed him,* For complying with the request of the people in making a calf for them, and for that miserable shift he made to excuse himself; which so provoked the Lord, that he threatened to destroy him, and he was in danger of being cut off, had it not been for the intercession of Moses: *and I prayed for Aaron also the same time:* who either was included in the general prayer for the people, (Exodus 32:31) or a particular prayer was made for him, though not recorded, and which also succeeded. 120

**DEUT. 9:21.** *And I took your sin, the calf which ye had made,* Which was the object of their sin, which lay in making and worshipping it; (see Isaiah 31:7) *and burnt it with fire, and stamped it;* with his feet after it was burnt, to bring it into small pieces: *and ground it very small;* or, as the Targum of Jonathan, "ground it in a mortar well;" the burnt and broken pieces: *even until it was as small as dust;* being ground to powder, as in (Exodus 32:20) *and I cast the dust thereof into the brook that descended out of the mount;* and made the children of Israel to drink of it, as in the previously mentioned place; (see Gill on "Exodus 32:2"); all this was done before the prayer for Aaron and the people.

**DEUT. 9:22.** *And at Taberah, and at Massah, and at Kibrothhattaavah, ye provoked the Lord to wrath.*] These places are not mentioned in the strict order in which the provocations were made at them; for they provoked the Lord at Massah by murmuring for water, before they provoked him at Taberah, by complaining as it should seem of their journeying; for Massah was before they came to Sinai, and Taberah after they departed from thence; though some, as Aben Ezra observes, say that Taberah is Massah; but it could not be the Massah in Rephidim, for that was on one side of Mount Sinai, and Taberah on another; though different places might be so called from their tempting the Lord at them; rather Taberah and Kibrothhattaavah seem to be the

same; where the people died with the flesh in their mouths they lusted after, and were buried; since no mention is made of their removal at that time from the one place to the other, nor of Taberah in the account of their journeys, only Kibrothhattaavah; (see Exodus 17:7 Numbers 11:8,34).

**DEUT. 9:23.** *Likewise when the Lord sent you from Kadeshbarnea,* From whence the spies were sent to search the land, though previous to it they had the following order to go up and possess it; (see Numbers 32:8 Deuteronomy 1:19-21) 121 *saying, go up and possess the land which I have given you;* this they were bid to do, before they desired the spies might be sent to search it first; and after they had returned and made their report, they were encouraged to go up and take possession of it: *then ye rebelled against the commandment of the Lord your God; refusing to go up into it: and ye believed him not;* that he would cast out and destroy the inhabitants of it, and put them into the possession of it; which they distrusted by reason of the gigantic stature of some that dwelt in it, and their fortified cities: *nor hearkened to his voice;* whether commanding or encouraging.

**DEUT. 9:24.** *You have been rebellious against the Lord from the day that I knew you.*] Either from the time he first had and took knowledge of them and visited them, before his departure from Egypt to the land of Midian; ((see Exodus 2:11-14) compared with (Acts 7:25)); or from the time that he was sent to them to deliver them out of Egypt; (see Exodus 5:20,21) and especially from the time he brought them into the wilderness.

**DEUT. 9:25.** *Thus I fell down before the Lord forty days and forty nights, as I fell down at the first,* Which Jarchi says are the selfsame said above, (Deuteronomy 9:18), but doubled or repeated, because of the order of his prayer. The words "at the first" are not in the text; and, as before observed, we do not read that Moses fell down at the first forty days he was in the mount, unless it can be thought he did, (Exodus 32:11), wherefore this falling down seems to be as he fell down at the second forty days; and so

this was a third forty days, according to the Jewish writers, and of which opinion were Dr. Lightfoot and others; (see Gill on "Exodus 34:28"), ***because the Lord had said he would destroy you***; threatened them with destruction, and seemed as if it was his intention to destroy them; nay, even after Moses's first prayer, though he bid him go and lead the people on, yet he declared that he would visit their sin upon them, (Exodus 32:34).

**DEUT. 9:26. *And I prayed therefore unto the Lord***, What follows is a different prayer from that in (Exodus 32:31,32) and agrees better with that in (Deuteronomy 9:11,10,13), delivered before he came down from the mount, yet could not be the same, because delivered at another forty days and nights: ***122 and said, O Lord God, destroy not thy people, and thine inheritance***: because they were his inheritance, a people whom he had chosen for his peculiar treasure; this is the first argument used, another follows: ***which thou hast redeemed through thy greatness***; redeemed out of the house of bondage, the land of Egypt, by his great power, as next explained: ***which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand***: inflicting plagues on the Egyptians, particularly destroying their firstborn, which made them the Israelites urge to depart.

**DEUT. 9:27. *Remember thy servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob***, The covenant he had made with them, the promises he had made to them of the multiplication of their seed, and of giving the land of Canaan to them; which is a third argument used with the Lord not to destroy them: ***look not unto the stubbornness of this people, nor to their wickedness, nor to their sin***; nor to the natural temper and disposition of the people, which was to be stubborn, obstinate, stiffnecked, and self-willed; nor to their wickedness, which appears in various instances; nor to that particular sin of idolatry they had now been guilty of; tacitly owning that if God looked to these things, there was sufficient reason to destroy them.

**DEUT. 9:28. *Lest the land whence thou broughtest us out say***, The land of Egypt, the

inhabitants of it; ***because the Lord was not able to bring them into the land which he promised them***; the land of Canaan, the inhabitants of it being so mighty, and their cities so strongly fortified. Here Moses expresses his concern for the glory of God, and the honour of his perfections, and makes that a fourth argument why he should not destroy them: ***and because he hated them, he hath brought them out to slay them in the wilderness***; out of Egypt, a plentiful country, into a wilderness where nothing was to be had; but his choice of them for his inheritance, his redemption of them out of bondage and misery, the care he took of them, and the provision he had made for them in the wilderness, clearly showed that they were not the objects of his hatred, but of his love.

**DEUT. 9:29. *Yet they are thy people***, Though they had sinned against him: ***and thine inheritance***; which he would not forsake and cast off; at least Moses hoped on this account he would not, and makes use thereof as an 123 argument with him why he should not, and which he repeats, adding in effect what he had said before: ***which thou broughtest out by thy mighty power and stretched out arm***; even out of the land of Egypt; the doing of which was plainly the effect of his almighty power, and an evidence of it, considering the weakness of Israel and the strength of Egypt, and the manner in which the Lord brought about this surprising event. 124

## Deuteronomy 10

In this chapter an account is given of an order to Moses to hew two tables of stone, on which the Lord would write the words that were on the first, and to make an ark and put them into it, all which was accordingly done, (Deuteronomy 10:1-5) and of some of the journeys of the children of Israel, (Deuteronomy 10:6,7) and of the separation of the tribe of Levi to the service of the sanctuary, (Deuteronomy 10:8,9) and of Moses's stay in the mount forty days and nights, and his success there, and the direction he had to lead on the people of Israel towards Canaan's land,



(Deuteronomy 10:10,11) and who by various arguments are exhorted to fear the Lord, and serve him, and keep his commands, (Deuteronomy 10:12-22).

**DEUT. 10:1. *At that time the Lord said unto me,*** On the fortieth day, mentioned in the preceding chapter, as Aben Ezra, or at the end of forty days, as Jarchi; not of the first forty, for then were given him the first two tables of stone, with the law written on them, which he broke when he came down; but at the end of the second forty days, as some think, when he had fallen before the Lord, and entreated him for the people, and, as a token of his reconciliation to them, gave the following order: ***hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first,*** etc. Of the same sort of stone, of the same size and form with those God gave him in the mount the first time he was there, and which he broke in his descent from thence; they were the work of God, but these were to be hewed by Moses: the order seems to be given between the request Moses made to see the glory of the Lord, and the proclamation made of it, (see Exodus 34:1), and come up unto me into the mount; Mount Sinai; this was certainly the third time of his going up there, and where he continued forty days and nights; but whether he continued there so long the second time may be a matter of question, though he certainly did the third time; (see Exodus 32:30,31 34:1,4,28) ***125 and make thee an ark of wood;*** Jarchi thinks this was not the ark Bezaleel made, but made after, and is that which went out to battle; and some take it to be a temporary ark, made for the present purpose till that was finished; but Aben Ezra is of opinion it is the same that Bezaleel made: and it may be said to be made by Moses, because he was not only ordered to make it, but it was by his orders and the direction he gave to Bezaleel that it was made; and this seems the more probable, because there the tables remained, (Deuteronomy 10:5). **DEUT. 10:2. *And I will write on the tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest,*** Though they were hewn by Moses, the writing on them was the Lord's; and the very same laws, in the same words, without

any alteration or variation, were written by him on these as on the former; partly to show the authenticity of them, that they were of God and not Moses, of a divine original and not human; and partly to show the invariableness of them, that no change had been made in them, though they had been broken by the people; of which Moses's breaking the tables was a representation; ***and thou shall put them in the ark;*** which being a type of Christ may signify the fulfilment of the law by him, who is the end, the fulfilling end of the law for righteousness to every believer; and that as this was in his heart to fulfil it, so it is in his hand as a rule of faith and conversation to his people.

**DEUT. 10:3. *And I made an ark of shittim wood,*** That is, ordered it to be made, and it was made by Bezaleel, and that of shittim wood: so the ark that was put into the holy of holies was made of this wood; see (see Gill on "Exodus 25:10"), (see Gill on "Exodus 37:1"), ***and hewed two tables of stone like unto the first;*** two marble ones, as the Targum of Jonathan; that is, he ordered them to be hewed, and took care that they should be exactly made as the former were, of which he had perfect knowledge, having received them of the Lord, and brought them with him down the mount: ***and went up into the mount, having the two tables in my hand;*** in order to have the words of the law, the ten commands, written on them, these being only hewn stones, without anything on them: they were very probably marble, of which great quantities were near at hand. 126

**DEUT. 10:4. *And he wrote on the tables according to the first writing,*** The same laws, in the same letters: ***the ten commandments which the Lord spake unto you in the mount;*** in Mount Sinai, on which he descended, and from whence he delivered the decalogue by word of mouth in an audible manner, that all the people could hear it: ***out of the midst of the fire;*** in which he descended, and where he continued, and from whence he spake, so that it was indeed a fiery law; ***in the day of the assembly;*** when all the people of Israel were assembled together at the bottom of the mount to hear it: ***and the Lord gave them unto me;***

the two tables, when he had wrote upon them the ten commands.

**DEUT. 10:5.** *And I turned myself*, From the Lord, out of whose hands he had received the tables: *and came down from the mount*; with the two tables in his hand as before, one in one hand, and the other in the other hand: *and put the tables in the ark which I had made*; or ordered to be made: *and there they be, as the Lord commanded me*; there they were when Moses rehearsed what is contained in this book, on the plains of Moab, about thirty eight years after the putting them, into it; and there they continued to be when the ark was brought into Solomon's temple, (1 Kings 8:9) and there they were as long as the ark was in being; which may denote the continuance of the law in the hands of Christ under the Gospel dispensation as a rule of walk and conversation to his people.

**DEUT. 10:6.** *And the children of Israel took their journey from Beeroth of the children of Jaakan*, Not when or soon after they removed from Sinai; for if this place is the same with Benejaakan, as is generally supposed, they had a great many journeys, mansions, and stations before they came to it; (see Numbers 33:31) and besides, since Aaron, according to this account, died at their next station from hence, that was thirty eight years after their departure from Mount Sinai; and it is hard to say what should be the reason of making mention of these two or three journeys here; and whereas they are here said to journey front the place here mentioned 127 *to Mosera*; on the contrary in (Numbers 33:31) they are said to depart from Mosera, and pitch in Benejaakan; which is accounted for by their going backwards and forwards, and so both may be true. Aben Ezra is of opinion, that Beeroth Benejaakan, or the wells of the children of Jaakan, is not the same with Bene Jaakan, nor Mosera the same with Moseroth; but Beeroth is Kadesh, and Mosera is the name of the desert of Mount Hor; and it is certain that Moseroth was the twenty seventh station, and Mosera, or the desert of Mount Hor, where Aaron died, was the thirty fourth, and therefore must be distant; (see Numbers 33:30-37), which seems to agree with what follows:

*there Aaron died, and there he was buried*; it is certain that Aaron died on Mount Hor, (Numbers 20:23,28 33:38,39), or there died and was buried when in the desert of Mosera: *and Eleazar his son ministered in the priest's office in his stead*; so that though the high priest died, the office continued, and the law of it remained in force, and the tribe of Levi was separated for the service of the sanctuary, as afterwards expressed.

**DEUT. 10:7.** *From thence they journeyed unto Gudgodah*, Which Jarchi takes to be the same with Horhagidgad, and so do most; (see Numbers 33:32,33), but Aben Ezra says it is not, but is a general name, including Zalmonah, Punon, and Oboth, places the Israelites came to after they removed from Mount Hor, where Aaron died; (see Numbers 33:41-43) *and from Gudgodah to Jotbath, a land of rivers of waters*; which the above writer takes to be the same with Beer, the well, (Numbers 21:16) and by this description of it, it was a place where there was much water.

**DEUT. 10:8.** *At that time the Lord separated the tribe of Levi*, Not at the time that Moses came down from the mount with the tables of the law, but some considerable time after, even after the tabernacle was erected; nor at the time that Aaron died, and Eleazar succeeded him, but many years before that; unless there was a fresh separation of them, or a renewal of it when Eleazar became high priest in his father's stead; and so that being mentioned is the reason of its being repeated here; *to bear the ark of the covenant of the Lord*; even that into which the law, sometimes called the covenant, was put, and therefore here called the ark of the covenant: when this was carried from place to place, as it was 128 especially in the wilderness, it was the business of the Levites to bear it, particularly the Kohathites; (Numbers 3:31 10:21 1 Chronicles 6:1), *to stand before the Lord to minister unto him*; that is, to his priests, in the tabernacle, and to keep and guard that: *and to bless in his name unto this day*; not to bless the people, which was the work of the priest, but to sing praise in the

name of the Lord, to give thanks unto him, and bless and praise him.

**DEUT. 10:9. *Wherefore Levi hath no part nor inheritance with his brethren,*** In the division of the land of Canaan, because being separated to the service of the sanctuary, he had no leisure to plough and sow, as Jarchi observes: ***the Lord is his inheritance,*** as the Lord thy God promised him; not in a spiritual sense, for so the Lord was an inheritance and portion of other Israelites; though these being taken off of worldly employments, and devoted to sanctuary service, might have more communion with God than others; but in a temporal sense, provision being made particularly by tithes, which were the Lord's, for their maintenance; and so the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan paraphrase the words; "gifts which the Lord gave him are his inheritance;" (see Numbers 18:20,21).

**DEUT. 10:10. *And I stayed in the mount, according to the first time, forty days and forty nights,*** Which is to be connected with (Deuteronomy 10:6) and relates what passed before he came down from the mount with the two tables; as that he stayed there as long as he did when he received the first tables, and fasted also as long as he did then; (see Exodus 34:28) ***and the Lord hearkened unto me at that time also;*** to his prayer on the behalf of the people: ***and the Lord would not destroy thee;*** though he had threatened it, and their sin had deserved it.

**DEUT. 10:11. *And the Lord said unto me, arise, take thy journey before the people,*** Here Moses goes on with his relation of things at Mount Sinai, how that upon his supplication for the people, on account of the destruction they were threatened with for their idolatry, the Lord was graciously pleased not only to hear him and forgive the people, but ordered him to go before them, and lead them on towards the land of Canaan he had promised them, (Exodus 32:34 33:1), ***that they may go in and possess the land,*** which I swore unto their fathers to give unto them; and which had it not been for their later murmurings and rebellions,

they had been in the possession of it in a little time, especially after their departure from Sinai.

**DEUT. 10:12. *And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee,*** For all these favours bestowed upon them, the forgiveness of their sins, and a fresh intimation of their possession of the land of Canaan, and the renewal of the promise of it made to their fathers: ***but to fear the Lord thy God;*** to fear him with a filial fear, to fear him and his goodness, and him for his goodness sake, and particularly for his pardoning grace and mercy vouchsafed to them; (see Psalm 130:4), ***to walk in all his ways;*** prescribed and directed to by him, every path of duty, whether moral, ceremonial, or judicial: ***and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul;*** for that is the best service which springs from love, and love constrains unto, and which is hearty and sincere, as that is, and is performed in the best manner such are capable of.

**DEUT. 10:13. *To keep the commandments of the Lord, and his statutes,*** Both the ten commands and all others: ***which I command thee this day for thy good;*** promises of temporal good things, introduction into the land of Canaan, possession of it, and continuance in it, being made to obedience to them.

**DEUT. 10:14. *Behold, the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, are the Lord's thy God,*** Made and possessed by him; the airy and starry heaven, the third heaven, which is the heaven of heavens, the seat of the divine Majesty, the habitation of angels and glorified saints: ***the earth [also], with all that therein is;*** that is his property, and at his disposal, being made by him, and all that is upon it, or contained in it, even whatsoever is on or in the whole terraqueous globe; (see Psalm 115:15,16). 130

**DEUT. 10:15. *Only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them,*** Though the heavens and the earth, and all the inhabitants of them are the Lord's by creation, yet he had a special regard unto, and a peculiar complacency in, the fathers of the Israelites, Abraham, Isaac, and

Jacob; from whence arose some particular expressions of love to them, signified by various acts of kindness done them, and promises made unto them: **and he chose their seed after them, even you above all the people, as [it is] this day**; to be a special people to him, to enjoy civil and religious privileges greater than any other; and particularly to have his law given to them, his tabernacle and worship set up among them, which were at this time, and which gave them the preference to all other nations; (see Deuteronomy 4:7,8 7:6,7,8 Psalm 147:19,20 Romans 3:1,2 9:4,5).

**DEUT. 10:16. Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart**, Content not yourselves with, nor put your confidence in outward circumcision of the flesh, but be concerned for the circumcision of the heart; for removing from that whatever is disagreeable to the Lord, even all carnality, sensuality, hypocrisy, and superfluity of naughtiness, and for having that put there which is well pleasing in his sight; and which though it is the work of God, and he only can do it and has promised it, yet such an exhortation is made to bring men to a sense of their need of it, and of the importance of it, and to show how agreeable it is to the Lord, and so to stir them up to seek unto him for it; (see Deuteronomy 30:6) **and be no more stiffnecked**; froward, obstinate, and disobedient, as they had been hitherto; (Deuteronomy 9:6,13).

**DEUT. 10:17. For the Lord your God is God of gods**, Of angels and civil magistrates, who are sometimes so called: these are his creatures, act for him and under him, and are accountable to him: **the Lord of lords**; of the kings and princes of the earth, who have their crowns, sceptres, and kingdoms from him, and hold them of him, by and under whom they reign and decree judgment, and who are subject to his authority and control: **a great God**; as the perfections of his nature, the works of his hands, the blessings of his providence and grace, and the extensiveness of his dominion in heaven, earth, and hell, show him to be: 131 **a mighty and a terrible**; mighty and powerful to help, protect, and defend his people; terrible to his and their

enemies, even to the kings of the earth: **which regardeth not persons**; but bestows his favours, whether in a way of providence or grace, according to his sovereign will and pleasure, without regard to the works and merits of men, their characters or circumstances: **nor taketh reward**; or bribes, to avert threatened and deserved judgments; (see Job 36:18,19).

**DEUT. 10:18. He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow**, Who have none to help them, and whose patron and defender he is, and will do them justice himself, and take care that it is done them by others, or avenge their injuries, for he is a Father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widow, in his holy habitation; (Psalm 68:5) **and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment**; one that is in a foreign country, at a distance from his native land, and destitute of friends; such God in his providence takes care of, and expresses his love and kindness to, by giving them the necessaries of life, food, and raiment.

**DEUT. 10:19. Love ye therefore the stranger**, Because the Lord loves him; and another reason follows, particularly binding on the Israelites: **for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt**; and therefore should sympathize with such, and show them compassion, relieve them in distress, and afford them whatever they want, and is in the power of their hands to communicate to them; remembering their own condition in Egypt, and how welcome such a treatment would have been to them then, as well as the kind and careful providence of God towards them at that time.

**DEUT. 10:20. Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God**, Which includes the whole worship of him, external and internal: **him shalt thou serve**; heartily and sincerely, according to his revealed will, and him only: **and to him shall thou cleave**; and not turn aside to follow other gods, and worship them: **and swear by his name**; and his only, whenever it is necessary to take an oath, which should not be done rashly or on trivial accounts; and never by any creature, but by the living God; (see Deuteronomy 6:13). 132

**DEUT. 10:21. *He is thy praise***, The object and matter of it, who deserves the praises of all his creatures, because of his perfections, works, and blessings of goodness; for all mercies temporal and spiritual come from him, and therefore he is greatly to be praised for them: praise is his due, and it is comely in his people to give it to him; (see Jeremiah 17:14) **and he is thy God which hath done for thee these great and terrible things which thine eyes have seen**; which were done upon the Egyptians for their sakes, both in the land of Egypt and at the Red sea; and also what he had done for them in the wilderness, to Sihon and Og, kings of the Amorites, (Psalm 106:22 136:10-21).

**DEUT. 10:22. *Thy fathers went down into Egypt with seventy persons***, That is, in all; for there were not seventy besides Jacob and the patriarchs his sons, but with them; (see Genesis 46:26,27) and now the Lord thy God hath made thee as the stars of heaven for multitude; as he promised they should be, (Genesis 15:5). 133

### Deuteronomy 11

In this chapter, the exhortation to love the Lord, and keep his commands, is repeated and urged again and again from various considerations; as not only from the chastisement of Pharaoh and the wicked Egyptians, but of such Israelites who offended the Lord, and transgressed his law, (Deuteronomy 12:1-7), from the goodness and excellency of the land they were going to inherit, (Deuteronomy 11:8-11), from the blessing of rain that would come upon it, and be productive of all good things for man and beast, in case of obedience, and a restraint of it in case of disobedience, (Deuteronomy 11:12-17), from the continuance of them and their offspring in the land, should they be careful to observe the commands themselves, and teach them their children, (Deuteronomy 11:18-21), and from the extensiveness of their conquests and dominions, (Deuteronomy 11:22-25) and from the different issue and effects of their conduct and behaviour, a blessing upon them if obedient, but a curse if disobedient, (Deuteronomy 11:26-28) and the chapter is concluded with an exhortation to pronounce

the blessing on Mount Gerizim, and the curse on Mount Ebal; the situation of which places is described when they should come into the land of Canaan, of which they are assured, (Deuteronomy 11:29-32).

**DEUT. 11:1. *Therefore thou shalt love the Lord thy God***, Because he is so great and glorious in himself, and because he had done such great and good things for them, the Israelites, particularly in the multiplication of them, the last thing mentioned: **and keep his charge**; whatsoever the Lord had charged them to observe, even what follow: **and his statutes and his judgments, and his commandments, alway**; all his laws, ceremonial, judicial, and moral; and that constantly and continually, all the days of their lives.

**DEUT. 11:2. *And know you this day***, Take notice of, and diligently attend unto, what is now about to be delivered: 134 **for I speak not unto your children which have not known, and which have not seen, the chastisement of the Lord your God**; who have no knowledge and experience of the chastisement of the Lord on themselves, or on their foes or friends; and with whom the argument drawn from it could not come with that force, and make that impression, as it might be thought it would, being used with them who had perfect knowledge of it. The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan render it doctrine, which, being children, they were not instructed so perfectly in as they were who were adult persons, to whom Moses directs his discourse: **his greatness, his mighty hand, and stretched out arm**: the exceeding greatness of his power, displayed in the following instances.

**DEUT. 11:3. *And his miracles, and his acts, which he did in the midst of Egypt***, The miraculous works done there, the ten plagues inflicted on the Egyptians for refusing to let Israel go: **unto Pharaoh king, of Egypt, and unto all his land**; for those plagues not only affected him and his court, and his metropolis, but all parts of the land, the inhabitants of it everywhere.

**DEUT. 11:4. *And what he did unto the army of Egypt, unto their horses, and to their chariots,***

At the Red sea, when they pursued Israel in order to bring them back or destroy them, after they had let them go, which army was very numerous; (see Exodus 14:7,9) ***how he made the water of the Red sea to overflow them;*** "or to flow over their faces" , ***as they pursued after you;*** so that they could not see their way, nor steer their course after them; and not only so, but were covered with the waters of the sea, drowned in them, and sunk to the bottom of them: and how the Lord hath destroyed them unto this day; either continued to destroy them yet more and more by one means or another; or else the destruction made by the several plagues upon them, and particularly that of their army at the Red sea, which was the strength and glory of the nation, was so general and extensive, that they never recovered it to that day; and so were in no capacity of coming out against them, and attacking them, and doing them any hurt, all the forty years they had been in the wilderness; of which no doubt they had knowledge, and of their condition and circumstances there. 135

**DEUT. 11:5. *And what he did unto you in the wilderness, until ye came unto this place.***]

Meaning not so much the good things he did for them in divers places, as the chastisements and corrections he had exercised them with for their murmurings, rebellions, idolatry, and uncleanness, as at Taberah, Kibrothhattaavah, on the coast of Edom, and plains of Moab; by fire, by sword, by plagues, and fiery serpents; the instances both before and after being of this sort.

**DEUT. 11:6. *And what he did unto Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, the son of Reuben,*** When they with Korah and his company quarrelled with Moses and Aaron about the priesthood, (Numbers 16:1), how the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up; the history of which see in (Numbers 16:30-33) ***and their households and their tents;*** not their houses and their tents, as the Septuagint and some other versions; for though the word signifies houses, and is often used for them, yet

here it must signify families, their wives, and children; since they had no houses, but dwelt in tents, all which were swallowed up with them: ***and all the substance that was in their possession;*** gold, silver, cattle, household goods, and whatever they were possessed of: ***or was at their feet*** ; or which followed them, their living creatures; or was for them, as Aben Ezra interprets it; for, their use, service, and necessity: and this was done ***in the midst of all Israel;*** openly and publicly, they beholding it, as follows; and therefore should be rendered, "before all Israel" ; and, besides, the tents of Dathan and Abiram, Reubenites, were not in the midst of Israel.

**DEUT. 11:7. *But your eyes have seen all the great acts of the Lord which he did;***] Even all before related, with many others; and therefore the instruction they should learn from thence should be as follows.

**DEUT. 11:8. *Therefore shall you keep all the commandments which I command you this day,*** For the reasons before suggested, as well as for what follow: ***that ye may be strong;*** healthful in body, and courageous in mind, for sin tends to weaken both; whereas observance of the commands of God contributes to the health and strength of the body, and the rigour of the 136 mind; both which were necessary to the present expedition they were going upon: ***and go in and possess the land whither ye go to possess it;*** the land of Canaan, they were marching towards in order to possess it; and nothing would more inspire them with courage, and cause them to enter it manfully without fear of their enemies, than obedience to the commands of God; whose presence being promised them on that account, they might expect it, and so had nothing to fear from the inhabitants of the land.

**DEUT. 11:9. *And that ye may prolong your days in the land,*** Not only enter it, and take possession of it, but continue in it long, which depended upon their obedience to the laws of God: ***which the Lord sware unto your fathers to give unto them and to their seed;*** had promised with an oath, so that they might be assured of the enjoyment of it, though they

could not be of their continuance in it, unless they obeyed the divine commands: ***a land that floweth with milk and honey***; abounds with all good things, whose fruits are fat as milk, and sweet as honey; so the Targum of Jonathan.

**DEUT. 11:10. *For the land whither thou goest in to possess it***, The land of Canaan they were about to take possession of: ***[is] not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out***; either the whole land of Egypt, or that part of it, Rameses, in which Israel dwelt, and which was the best of it, as Jarchi observes, and yet Canaan exceeded that; though the design of this passage is not so much to set forth the superior excellency and fertility of the land of Canaan to that of Egypt, which was certainly a very fruitful country; (see Genesis 13:10) but to observe some things in which they differed, whereby they both became fruitful, and in which Canaan had the advantage: ***where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs***; as a gardener when he has sowed his seed, or planted his plants, waters them that they may grow, by carrying his water pot from bed to bed, which requires much labour and toil. In Egypt rain seldom fell, especially in some places it was very rare, though that there was none at all is a vulgar mistake; (see Gill on "Zechariah 14:18"). To supply the want of it the river Nile overflowed once a year, which not only moistened the earth, but left mud or slime upon it, which made it fruitful; but this was not sufficient, for what through the river not overflowing enough sometimes, and so as to reach some places, and through the heat of the sun hardening the earth again, it was found necessary to cut canals from it, and by water from thence to water it, as a gardener waters his seed and plants; and it is to this watering that respect is here had, not to the overflowing of the Nile, for that was before the seed was sown; but to the watering of it out of the canals, which was done after it was sown; the former was without any trouble of theirs, the latter with much labour; the manner in which it is done is expressed by the phrase "with thy foot", which the Targum explains "by thyself", by their own labour and industry. Jarchi is more

particular; "the land of Egypt had need to "have water brought from the Nile with thy foot; he seems to have understood the phrase to signify carrying water on foot from the Nile to the place where it was wanted; but the custom still in use in Egypt, when they water their fields, plantations, or gardens, will give us a clear understanding of this phrase; as a late traveller informs us, the water is drawn out of the river (Nile) by instruments, and lodged in capacious cisterns; when plants require to be refreshed, they strike out the plugs that are fixed in the bottoms of the cisterns, and then the water gushing out, is conducted from one rill to another by the gardener, who is always ready as occasion requires to stop and divert the torrent by turning the earth against it "with his foot", and opening at the same time with his mattock a new trench to receive it: and to the same purpose another learned person has observed, that at other times (than the flowing of the Nile) they are obliged to have recourse to art, and to raise the water out of the river and some deep pits by the help of machines, which water is afterwards directed in its course by channels cut in the ground, which convey the water to those places where it is wanted; and when one part of the ground is sufficiently watered, they then stop that channel, by thrusting some earth into the entrance of it "with their foot", and then also "with their foot" open a passage into the next channel, and so on: and Philo the Jew speaks of a machine with which they used to water fields, and was worked with the feet by going up the several steps within, which gave motion to it.

**DEUT. 11:11. *But the land whither ye go to possess it is a land of hills and valleys***, And so could not be watered by the overflow of a river, and by canals cut out of it, and in the manner Egypt was; which was for the most part a plain and flat country, but not so Canaan, in which were many hills and mountains, as those about Jerusalem, Carmel, Tabor, Lebanon, and others; and plains and valleys, as the valley of Jezreel, etc. and which made it more delightful and pleasant for prospects; (see Deuteronomy 8:7) and drinketh water of the rain of heaven;

by which it was watered, refreshed, and made fruitful; not by means of men, but by the Lord himself, and so with much more ease to men, and without the toil and labour they were obliged to in Egypt, as well as it was both more healthful and pleasant; for the damps that arose from the overflow of the Nile were sometimes prejudicial to health; and during the season of its overflow, which was in the summer, they were obliged to keep in their houses, and could not walk abroad for weeks together; to which inconveniences the land of Canaan was not subject; but then, as its fertility depended on rain from heaven, the Israelites would be under the greater obligation to observe the commands of God, who could give and withhold it at his pleasure, and as they conducted themselves; which seems to be the general drift of this passage.

**DEUT. 11:12. *A land which the Lord thy God careth for,*** In a very particular and special manner; otherwise he has a general care of the whole world, and all the parts of it; for as the earth is his, and the fulness thereof, his providential care reaches everywhere; but as this spot was what he had chosen for his own residence, and the place of his worship, and for an habitation for his peculiar people; he exercised a more peculiar care over it, to make it fruitful, commodious, and pleasant; or which "he seeketh"; that is, the good of it, and to make it convenient, useful, and delightful to his people; yea, which he sought for and desired for his own habitation, (Psalm 132:13,14), ***the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year;*** his eyes of providence, to give the former and the latter rain, and that there be seedtime and harvest in their seasons, and that the fruits of it be produced at their proper time; some at the beginning, others at the end of the year, and others in the intervening months, and all wisely suited to the good of the inhabitants of it.

**DEUT. 11:13. *And it shall come to pass, if you shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day,*** In the name, and by the authority of the

Lord, the only lawgiver: ***to love the Lord your God, and to serve him with all your heart, and with all your soul;*** (see Deuteronomy 10:12). Jarchi interprets this of prayer; 139 but it is not to be restrained to that only, but includes the whole service of God, in all the parts of it, performed from a principle of love to him, and in sincerity and truth.

**DEUT. 11:14. *That I will give you the rain of your land in his due season,*** Such a quantity of it as the land required, a sufficiency of it to make it fruitful, and that in proper time: ***the first rain and the latter rain;*** the former rain in Marchesvan, the latter rain in Nisan, as the Targum of Jonathan; the first fell about our October, which was at or quickly after seedtime, to water the seed that it might take root, and grow and spring up; and the latter fell about March, a little before harvest, to ripen the corn, and swell and plump the ears of it, and make them yield more and better; (see Gill on "Joel 2:23"), ***that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil;*** which were the principal things the land afforded for the sustenance of men; bread corn, the stay and staff of human life, and which strengthens man's heart, and makes him fit for labour; wine, which is his drink, and makes the heart of man glad and cheerful; and oil, which in these countries was used instead of butter, and was fattening, and made the face to shine, (Psalm 104:15). The ingathering of these fruits were at different times; the barley harvest first, the wheat harvest next, and after that the vintage, and the gathering of the olives; and by means of rain in due season they were favoured with each of these.

**DEUT. 11:15. *And I will send grass in thy fields for thy cattle,*** By giving plentiful showers of rain at proper times, to cause it to spring up and grow, that so there might be food for the cattle of every sort, greater or lesser; (see Psalm 104:13,14 Zechariah 10:1), ***that thou mayest eat and be full;*** which refers to the preceding verse as well as to this; and the sense is, that the Israelites might eat of and enjoy the fruits of the earth to satiety; namely,



their corn, wine, and oil; and that their cattle might have grass enough to supply them with.

**DEUT. 11:16.** *Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived,* By observing the influence of the heavens upon the fruitfulness of the earth, and so be drawn to the worship of the host of them, the sun, moon, and stars; or by the examples of nations round about them; and by the plausible arguments they may make use of, taken from the traditions of ancestors, 140 from antiquity, and the consent of nations, and the great numbers of worshippers, and the like: *and ye turn aside;* from the true God, and the worship of him; or from the law, as Jarchi, which directs to the worship of one God, and forbids idolatry, or the worshipping of images: *and serve other gods, and worship them;* other gods than the one only living and true God; gods that made not the heavens and the earth, and which cannot give rain, nor any blessing and mercy of life, nor help and deliver their worshippers when in distress.

**DEUT. 11:17.** *And then the Lord's wrath be kindled against you,* For their idolatry, nothing being more provoking to him than that, it being contrary to his nature and being, as well as to his will, and to his honour and glory: *and he shut up the heaven, that there be no rain;* the treasures and storehouses of it there, or the windows of it, the clouds, which when opened let it down, but when shut withhold it; the key of rain is one of the keys which the Jews say the Lord keeps in his own hand, and with it he opens and no man shuts, and shuts and no man opens; (see Deuteronomy 28:12 Malachi 3:10) *and that the land yield not her fruit;* which is unavoidably the case when rain is withheld: *and lest ye perish quickly from off the good land which the Lord giveth you;* for if the land does not yield its fruits sufficient to support the inhabitants of it, they must in course perish.

**DEUT. 11:18-20.** *Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart, and in your soul,* Treasure up the laws of God delivered to them in their minds, retain them in their memories, and cherish a cordial affection for them; which would be an antidote against

apostasy, idolatry, and other sins, (Psalm 119:11) *and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes;* of this and the two following verses, (See Gill on "Deuteronomy 6:7-9").

**DEUT. 11:21.** *That your days may be multiplied,* Long life being a very desirable blessing, and which is promised to those that obey and keep the law; (see Deuteronomy 30:19,20 Psalm 91:16) 141 *and the days of your children;* which are dear to parents, and the continuance of whose lives, next to their own, is most desirable, yea, as desirable as their own; and especially it is desirable that they might have a posterity descending from them, to enjoy for ever their estates and possessions; as it was to the people of Israel, that they might have a seed always to dwell *in the land which the Lord sware unto your fathers to give them;* the land of Canaan, so often spoken of as the promise, oath, and gift of God: *as the days of heaven upon the earth;* that is, as long as the heavens and the earth shall be, and the one shall be over the other, as they will be to the end of time.

**DEUT. 11:22.** *For if ye shall diligently keep all these commandments which I command you to do them,* Observe and take notice of them, even all of them, and so as not merely to have a theory or notional knowledge of them, but to put them in practice: *to love the Lord your God;* and show it by obeying his commands, and which is the end of the commandment, and the principle from which all obedience should flow: *to walk in all his ways, and to cleave unto him;* (see Deuteronomy 10:12,20).

**DEUT. 11:23.** *Then will the Lord drive out all those nations from before you,* By little and little, even all the seven nations which then inhabited the land of Canaan; and this he would do to make room for them, that they might inherit the land; (see Deuteronomy 7:1) *and ye shall possess greater nations, and mightier than yourselves;* countries whose inhabitants were more in number, and greater in strength, than they; and therefore the conquest of them was not to be ascribed to themselves, but to the

Lord; this is often observed; (see Deuteronomy 7:1 9:1).

**DEUT. 11:24.** *Every place wherein the soles of your feet shall tread*, Meaning in the land of Canaan; though the Jews vainly apply this to every land, and country, and place therein, where any of them come; pleasing themselves with this foolish fancy, that all shall be theirs that the foot of any of them have trod upon, or they have dwelt in; but that it respects only 142 the land of Canaan appears by the following description of it and its boundaries: *from the wilderness*; the wilderness of Paran, which lay to the south of it, where Kadesh was, from whence the spies were sent, and was the southern border of it: *and Lebanon*; which was a range of mountains to the north of it; and was the northern border of the land: *from the river, the river Euphrates*; which was the eastern border of it, when it was carried to its utmost extent, as in the days of Solomon, (1 Kings 4:21) *even unto the uttermost sea shall your coast be*: the Mediterranean sea, which was the western border of the land of Canaan, or “the hinder sea”, and so it is called (Zechariah 14:8), it lay at the back of them; for if a man stands with his face to the east, the south will be on his right hand, and the north on his left, and the west will be behind him, or at the back of him.

**DEUT. 11:25.** *There shall be no man able to stand before you*, Meaning not a single man, such an one as Og, or any of the sons of Anak, the giants; because it could never be thought, imagined, or feared, that one man only should be able to stand against 600,000 fighting men, but any people or nation, though greater and mightier than they: *for the Lord your God shall lay the fear of you, and the dread of you, upon all the land that ye shall tread upon*: that is, upon all the land of Canaan, and the inhabitants of it; who should hear what wonderful things had been done for them in Egypt, and at the Red sea, and in the wilderness; and what they had done to Sihon and Og, and to their countries, and which accordingly was fulfilled, (Joshua 2:9-11) *as he hath said unto you*; had promised them, (Deuteronomy 2:25) and which

was prophesied of in the prophetic song at the Red sea; (see Exodus 15:14-16).

**DEUT. 11:26.** *Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse*, Meaning the law of God, and the statutes, judgments, and commandments of it; which, if obeyed, blessings would be bestowed upon them; but if disobeyed, they would be liable to the curses of it, as the following words explain it; (see Deuteronomy 30:15-19) everyone of the Israelites were 143 called upon to see and consider this matter, it being an interesting one to them all.

**DEUT. 11:27.** *A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the Lord your God*, That is, a blessing should come upon them, even all temporal blessings they stood in need of; they should be blessed in body and estate, in their families, and in their flocks, in town and country; (see Deuteronomy 28:1-6), *which I command you this day*; afresh repeated to them, and enjoined them the observation of it in the name of the Lord.

**DEUT. 11:28.** *And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the Lord your God*, Accursed in body and estate, in basket and store; in their families, flocks, and herds; within doors and without; in city, and country; going out, or coming in; in this world, and that to come, if divine goodness prevent not; (see Deuteronomy 28:15-20 29:20) *but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day*; which the law he gave them, and repeated to them, directed them to walk in: *to go after other gods, which ye have not known*; to serve and worship the gods of other nations, strange gods, which neither they nor their fathers knew anything of, or ever received any good thing from; and which indeed are no gods, and nothing in the world, as an idol is.

**DEUT. 11:29.** *And it shall come to pass, when the Lord thy God hath bought thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it*, Which is often observed, as being near at hand; and when and where many things were to be done, which could not be done in the place and circumstances they now were, particularly

what follows: ***that thou shall put the blessing on Mount Gerizim, and the curse upon Mount Ebal***; that is, pronounce the one on one mountain, and the other on the other mountain, or at least towards them, or over against them. The Targum of Jonathan is “ye shall set six tribes on Mount Gerizim, and six tribes on Mount Ebal; ((Deuteronomy 27:12,13)) blessing they shall turn their faces against Mount Gerizim, and cursing they shall turn their faces against Mount Ebal;” with which agrees the account given in the Misnah; 144 “six tribes went to the top of Mount Gerizim, and six to the top of Mount Ebal; and the priests and the Levites, and the ark, stood below in the middle; the priests surrounded the ark, and the Levites the priests, and all Israel were on this and on that side of the ark, as in (Joshua 8:33) then they turned their faces against Gerizim, they opened with the blessing, blessed is he that maketh not any graven or molten image, and both answered “Amen”; then they turned their faces against Mount Ebal, and opened with the curse, (Deuteronomy 27:15) and both answered Amen ;” see the performance of this command in (Joshua 8:33,34).

**DEUT. 11:30. *Are they not on the other side Jordan***, Opposite to that where Moses now was in the plains of Moab, even in Samaria; so in the Misnah it is said, “as soon as Israel passed over Jordan, they came to Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal, which are in Samaria;” but those mountains were not near Jordan nor Jericho, to which the people of Israel came first, but sixty miles from thence; though they were, as Moses says, on the other side from the place they now were: ***by the way wherewith the sun goeth down***; or, as the Targum of Jonathan, “after the way of the sun setting;” following that, or taking their direction from thence, signifying that they lay to the west of Jordan: ***in the land of the Canaanites***; of that particular tribe or nation which were eminently called Canaanites, for these dwelt by the sea by the coast of Jordan, (Numbers 13:29) or as further described, ***that dwell in the champaign over against Gilgal***; in the plain open champaign country opposite to Gilgal; not that Gilgal Joshua encamped at

before he came to Jericho, which in Moses’s time was not known by that name, but another, as Dr. Lightfoot observes, and he thinks Galilee is meant: ***beside the plains of Moreh***; near to Shechem, (Genesis 12:6) and that Gerizim, one of these mountains, was not far from Shechem, is evident from (Judges 9:6,7) and so in the Misnah it is said, that these 145 mountains were on the side of Shechem, which is in the plains of Moreh, as in (Deuteronomy 11:30 Genesis 12:6) as the plains of Moreh here denote Shechem, so there: Benjamin of Tudela says there is a valley between them, in which lies Shechem; and in his time there were on Mount Gerizim fountains and orchards, but Mount Ebal was dry like stones and rocks. The Targum of Jonathan here, instead of Moreh, reads Mamre; (see Genesis 13:18).

**DEUT. 11:31. *For ye shall pass over Jordan, to go in to possess the land Which the Lord your God giveth you***, They were now near it, and by this they are assured they should pass over it, in order to take possession of the land God had given them, and which gift of his was a sufficient title to it: ***and ye shall possess it, and dwell therein***: should not only take possession of it, but make their abode in it; they are assured hereby of continuance in it, on condition they obeyed the laws of God, as follows.

**DEUT. 11:32. *And ye shall observe to do all the statutes and judgments***, Take notice of them, and heed unto them, so as to practise them: ***which I set before you this day***; repeated in order to them, on the observance of which depended their continuance in the land of Canaan; and therefore this is so often repeated and urged. 146

## Deuteronomy 12

In this chapter orders are given to destroy all altars, pillars, groves, and images, made for the worship of idols in the land of Canaan, (Deuteronomy 12:1-3) and to bring all sacrifices and holy things unto the place which the Lord should choose for his habitation, and not do as they then did, not being come to their

rest, (Deuteronomy 12:4-14), flesh for their common food might be killed and eaten in their own houses, provided they did not eat the blood, but poured it out upon the earth, (Deuteronomy 12:15-25), tithes, vows, and freewill offerings, were to be eaten in the holy place, (Deuteronomy 12:17-19) and burnt offerings to be offered on the altar of the Lord and the blood of them to be poured out upon the altar, (Deuteronomy 12:26-28), all which they were carefully to observe, (Deuteronomy 12:29), and they are cautioned against idolatry, and inquiring after the manner of it, as practised by the old inhabitants of the land, and introducing their customs into the service of God, (Deuteronomy 12:30-32).

**DEUT. 12:1. *These are the statutes and judgments which ye shall observe to do,*** Which are recorded in this and the following chapters; here a new discourse begins, and which perhaps was delivered at another time, and respects things that were to be observed: ***in the land which the Lord God of thy fathers giveth thee to possess it;*** the land of Canaan, often described by this circumlocution, to put them in mind that it was promised to their fathers by their covenant God, was his gift to them, and which they would quickly be in the possession of; and therefore when in it should be careful to observe the statutes and judgments of God constantly: ***[even] all the days that ye live upon the earth;*** or land, the land of Canaan; for though there were some laws binding upon them, live where they would, there were others peculiar to the land of Canaan, which they were to observe as long as they and their posterity lived there; (see 1 Kings 8:40). 147

**DEUT. 12:2. *Ye shall utterly destroy all the places wherein the nations which ye shall possess served their gods,*** The temples erected for the worship of them by the Canaanites, of which there were many, as appears by the various names of places given them from the temples in them, as Bethshemesh, Bethbaalmeon, Bethpeor, and others: ***upon the high mountains and upon the hills:*** which they chose to worship on, being

nearer the heavens, and which they thought most acceptable to their gods; and some of them had their names from hence, as Baalpeor, in like manner as Jupiter Olympius was called by the Greeks; (see Jeremiah 2:20 3:6), ***and under every green tree;*** which being shady and solitary, and pleasant to the sight, they fancied their gods delighted in, and this notion prevailed among other nations; and there is scarcely any deity but what had some tree or another devoted to it; as the oak to Jupiter, the laurel to Apollo, the ivy to Bacchus, the olive to Minerva, the myrtle to Venus, etc. (see Jeremiah 2:20 3:6).

**DEUT. 12:3. *And you shall overthrow their altars,*** Which were of stone, as Jarchi observes; whereas the altar ordered to be made by the Lord, before the altar of burnt offering in the tabernacle was made, was of earth, (Exodus 20:24) these were to be demolished, lest the Israelites should be tempted to make use of them; and besides, the Lord would not have any remains of idolatry in the land where his tabernacle and worship were, as being abominable to him: ***and break down their pillars;*** or statues erected to the honour of their idols; according to Jarchi it was a single stone hewed out at first for the basis of a statue; perhaps such as were called Baetulia, in imitation of the stone Jacob set up for a pillar at Bethel, (Genesis 28:18,19) ***and burn their groves with fire;*** which were planted about their temples, and under which also their idols were placed, and where they privately committed the most abominable lewdness under the notion of religion. The Targum of Jonathan renders the word "abominations", meaning idols; and so Jarchi interprets it by a tree that is worshipped; (See Gill on "Deuteronomy 7:5") ***and you shall hew down the graven images of their gods;*** which were made of wood: 148 ***and destroy the names of them out of the place;*** by never making any mention of them in common discourse, and by changing the names of places called from them; and especially by destroying all the relics of them, and whatever appertained to them,

which might lead to the mention of them; (see Hosea 2:17).

**DEUT. 12:4.** *Ye shall not do so unto the Lord your God.*] Not sacrifice to him on hills and mountains, and under green trees; though the Jews commonly refer this to the destruction of the names of God, and of any thing appertaining to the temple; that though the temples and the altars of the Heathens were to be overthrown, yet not a stone was to be taken from the house of God, or that belonged to it, nor any of his names to be blotted out; so the Targum of Jonathan and Maimonides, who also observes, that whoever removes a stone by way of destruction from the altar, or from the temple, or from the court, is to be beaten; so he that burns the holy wood.

**DEUT. 12:5.** *But unto the place which the Lord your God,* The Targum of Jonathan is, that the Word of the Lord your God: *shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there;* to place his tabernacle, set up his worship, take up his residence, and cause the Shechinah, or his divine Majesty, to dwell there, as the next clause explains it; out of what tribe it should be chosen, and where it should be, is not said. Maimonides gives three reasons for it; he says there are three great mysteries why the place is not clearly, but obscurely mentioned; 1) lest the Gentiles should seize upon it, and make war for the sake of it, supposing this place to be the end of the law; 2) lest they in whose hands the place then was should by all means waste and destroy it; 3) which is the chief, lest every tribe should desire to have it in its own lot and jurisdiction; and so strifes might arise among them on account of it, as happened to the priesthood: *[even] unto his habitation shall ye seek;* the temple at Jerusalem is meant, where the Lord took up his dwelling, and whither men were to come and seek unto him by prayer and supplication for whatsoever they needed, and to inquire of him in matters doubtful, and they wanted counsel in: *and thither thou shall come:* with sacrifices of every sort, where they were to be slain and offered to the Lord, and become acceptable to him, as is more largely

declared in the following part of this chapter. 149

**DEUT. 12:6.** *And thither ye shall bring your burnt offerings,* For the daily sacrifice, and upon any other account whatsoever; this was before ordered to be brought to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and now to the place where that should be fixed, (Leviticus 17:8,9) *and your sacrifices:* all other distinct from burnt offerings, as sin offerings, trespass offerings, and peace offerings, especially the latter. Jarchi interprets them of peace offerings of debt, such as a man was obliged to bring; but as the distance of some persons from Jerusalem was very great, and it was troublesome and expensive, they might, according to the Jewish writers, bring them the next grand festival, when all the males were obliged to appear there; so says Maimonides, all offerings of a man, whether by obligation (such as he was bound to bring) or freewill offerings, he must bring at the first feast that comes; and another of their writers observes, that if only one feast has passed, and he has not brought his vow, he transgresses an affirmative precept, (Deuteronomy 12:6) the first feast on which thou comest thither, thou must needs bring it; and if three have passed, he transgresses a negative precept, (Deuteronomy 23:21) *and your tithes;* tithes of beasts, and the second tithes, according to Jarchi: *and heave offerings of your hand;* these according to the same writer were the firstfruits, and so it is rendered in the Septuagint version; and thus Maimonides says, the firstfruits are called Trumot, or heave offerings; (see Exodus 22:29) *and your vows and your freewill offerings;* which were a type of peace offerings, (Leviticus 7:16) *and the firstlings of your herds and of your flocks;* which were sanctified and devoted to the Lord, (Exodus 13:2).

**DEUT. 12:7.** *And there ye shall eat before the Lord your God,* The priests and the Levites, what was their portion, so Aben Ezra; but the people also are included, and by what follows seem chiefly designed, who were to eat their part of the sacrifices, particularly of the tithes and peace offerings, in the holy place that

should be chosen and appointed; (see Deuteronomy 14:22,23,27) **and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto**; in all the labours of their hands, and what they got thereby, which they were cheerfully to enjoy, and express their thankfulness for it in this way; (see Ecclesiastes 5:18,19) **ye and your households**; their wives, sons, daughters, men and maid servants; yea, with them Levites, strangers, fatherless, and widows, were to partake of some of their freewill offerings, (Deuteronomy 16:10,11) **wherein the Lord thy God hath blessed thee**; and these offerings were eucharistical, and by way of thanksgiving for the blessing of God upon their labours, for it is that which maketh rich, (Proverbs 10:22).

**DEUT. 12:8. Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here**, In the wilderness, where they had no abiding, but were continually removing from place to place, and could not always observe punctually and precisely the exact order and time of their sacrifices and other things, nor offer them at any certain place, and many were doubtless neglected by them; (see Amos 5:25) **every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes**; that did he, brought the above things when and where he pleased; not that there was no regard had to the laws and rules given, as if there was no priest in Israel; but they were not so exactly in all circumstances conformed to as they would be obliged to when they came into the land of Canaan, and had a certain place to bring their offerings to; so some in Aben Ezra observe, that one would give the firstling, another not, because it depended on the land, or was what they were obliged to only when they came into the land of Canaan; (see Exodus 13:11) but he thinks the sense is, that they did not all fear God, and so did not do their duty.

**DEUT. 12:9. For ye are not yet come to the rest**, The land of Canaan, which was typical of the rest which remains for the people of God in heaven; for though they now enter into a spiritual rest in Christ, they are not yet come to their eternal rest; they are in a world of trouble, through sin, Satan, and wicked men; but they shall come to it, as Israel did to Canaan; for God

has promised and prepared it, and it remains for them; Christ prayed for it, is also gone to prepare it, and the Spirit is the seal and earnest of it, and works up the saints, and makes them meet for it: **and to the inheritance which the Lord your God giveth you**; and the land of Canaan being an inheritance, and the gift of God, was also a type of the heavenly inheritance; which saints are now born unto, and have both a right unto, and meetness for, through the righteousness of Christ, and grace of God; but as yet are not entered on it, but that is reserved for them in heaven, and they are preserved and kept for that; and ere long shall inherit it, as the free gift of God their Father to them, and which is peculiar to them as children. Jarchi and Ben Melech by the "rest" understand Shiloh, and by the inheritance Jerusalem; so in the Misnah ; (see 1 Chronicles 23:25) the Targum of Jonathan is, "ye are not come to the house of the sanctuary, which is the house of rest, and to the inheritance of the land."

**DEUT. 12:10. But when ye go over Jordan**, Which lay between the place where they now were, and the land of Canaan, and which they would quickly go over: **and dwell in the land which the Lord your God giveth you to inherit**; the land of Canaan, and which shows that that is meant by the inheritance: and when **he giveth you rest from all your enemies round about**: which was done when the land was subdued, and divided among the tribes of Israel, (Joshua 22:4) and which confirms the sense of Canaan being the rest; though this was more completely fulfilled in the days of David, when he and Israel had rest from all their enemies round about, (2 Samuel 7:1) and who brought the ark of the Lord to Jerusalem; and into whose heart the Lord put it to prepare to build a temple at Jerusalem for him, and which was erected and finished in the days of his son Solomon: **so that ye dwell in safety**; from their enemies, as they more especially did in the reigns of David and Solomon; which seems plainly to describe the time when the place not named should appear to be chosen by the Lord to put his name in, as follows.

**DEUT. 12:11.** *Then there shall be a place,* Fixed and settled, and will be known to be the place: *which the Lord your God shall choose, to cause his name to dwell there:* where he himself would dwell, and where his name would be called, and he would be worshipped: *thither shall ye bring all that I command you, your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave offerings of your hands;* of which (See Gill on "Deuteronomy 12:6") 152 *and all your choice vows which ye vow unto the Lord;* or, "the choice of your vows" ; which, as Jarchi observes, was brought of their choicest things, as they ought to be; (see Malachi 1:14).

**DEUT. 12:12.** *And ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God,* In the place chosen and fixed, where a temple would be built for him, and he would take up his residence; eating with joy and gladness that part of the offerings which belonged to them, keeping as it were a feast before the Lord, in token of gratitude for what they had received from him: *ye and your sons, and your daughters, and your menservants, and your maidservants;* which explains what is meant by their household, (Deuteronomy 12:7) wives are not mentioned, because it could not be thought they would eat and rejoice, or keep such a feast, without them, and therefore needless to name them: *and the Levite that is within your gates;* such also were to partake of this entertainment, who were useful in instructing their families in the knowledge of divine things, and serviceable to them on many accounts in the worship of God: *forasmuch as he hath no part nor inheritance with you;* in the division of the land, and so having nothing to manure and cultivate, was destitute of the fruits of the earth, and could make no improvement and increase of his substance, as they could.

**DEUT. 12:13.** *Take heed to thyself, that thou offer not thy burnt offerings,* And so any other, this is put for all the rest: *in every place that thou seest;* which might take with their fancy, seem pleasant, and so a proper and suitable place to sacrifice in, as on high places, and under green trees; but they were not to

indulge their own fancies and imaginations, or follow the customs of others, but keep to the rules prescribed them by the Lord, and to the place fixed by him for his worship.

**DEUT. 12:14.** *But in the place which the Lord shall choose in one of thy tribes,* Which tribe is not named, nor what place in that tribe; (See Gill on "Deuteronomy 12:5"), *there thou shalt offer thy burnt offerings;* on the altar of burnt offering there placed: 153 *and there shalt thou do all that I command thee;* respecting sanctuary service, and particularly those things observed in (Deuteronomy 12:6).

**DEUT. 12:15.** *Notwithstanding, thou mayest kill and eat flesh in all thy gates,* They might kill such cattle that were allowed for food, and eat the flesh of them in their own cities and houses in which they dwelt; they were not obliged to bring these to the place God should choose, and kill them there, as they had been wont to bring them to the tabernacle while in the wilderness: *whatsoever thy soul lusteth after;* whatever they had a mind to, or their appetite craved, and were desirous of, provided it was not any thing forbidden, but was allowed to be eaten: *according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which he hath given thee;* which it was in the power of their hands to procure for themselves; they might live according to their abilities, and keep a table answerable to what God had blessed them with; from which they were so far from being restrained, that it was rather commendable in them so to do, provided they did not indulge to luxury and intemperance: *the clean and the unclean may eat thereof;* that is, such in their families who laboured under any ceremonial uncleanness by the touch of a dead body, or by reason of issues and menstrues; these, as well as those who were free from anything of this kind, might eat of common food in their houses, though they might not eat of the holy things; (see Leviticus 7:20,21) *as of the roebuck, and as of the hart;* that is, as those were clean creatures, and allowed for food, (Deuteronomy 14:5) so they might eat of oxen or sheep, or lambs or rams, and goats, though they were creatures used in sacrifice.

**DEUT. 12:16. *Only ye shall not eat the blood,*** All manner of blood being forbidden, of fowl or of beasts, whether slain for sacrifice or for common food: ***ye shall pour it out upon the earth as water;*** which cannot be gathered up again for use, but is swallowed up in the earth.

**DEUT. 12:17. *Thou mayest not eat within thy gates the tithe of thy corn, or of thy wine, or of thy oil,*** This cannot be understood of the tithe given to 154 the Levites, or of that which the Levites out of theirs gave to the priests, for that was only eaten by them; but of the tithe which every three years they were to lay up within their gates, and which they were to eat with their families and others; but the other two years they were to carry it to the place the Lord chose, or turn it into money, and when they came thither purchase with it what they pleased, and eat it, they and their household, and others with them, before the Lord; (see Deuteronomy 14:22-29), ***the firstlings of thy herds or of thy flocks;*** these also the firstborn males belonged to the Lord, and so to the priests, and could not be eaten by the people any where; and must be understood either of the next firstlings, which were the people's, or of the female firstlings, which they might devote to the Lord, and so not allowed to eat at home, but in the chosen place: ***nor any of thy vows which thou vowest, nor thy freewill offerings;*** which were species of peace offerings, and so to be eaten not in their own cities, but in the place appointed: ***or heave offerings of thine hand;*** the firstfruits; (see Deuteronomy 26:1-11) these were such they were not bound to bring, but brought them freely.

**DEUT. 12:18. *But thou must eat them before the Lord thy God, in the place which the Lord thy God shall choose,*** Which may be said to be eaten before him, being eaten in the place where his sanctuary stood, in which he dwelt: ***thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite that is within thy gates;*** who were all to come with him to this place; (See Gill on "Deuteronomy 12:12") ***and thou shalt rejoice before the Lord thy God in all that thou***

***puttest thine hand unto;*** cheerfully make and keep this feast in the manner directed to, rejoicing with his family and his friends, with the Levites and with the poor, expressing his thankfulness to God for his blessing on his labour.

**DEUT. 12:19. *Take heed to thyself that thou forsake not the Levite,*** By withholding from him the tithes appointed for his maintenance; or rather by neglecting to take him with him in order to partake of the feast or entertainment before spoken of: ***155 as long as thou livest upon the earth;*** so that it was not one time only, but always; whenever he ate these holy things before the Lord, as long as he lived, he was to be careful he had the Levite with him, for a reason given, (Deuteronomy 12:12).

**DEUT. 12:20. *When the Lord thy God shall enlarge thy border, as he hath promised thee,*** Brought them into the land of Canaan, where they should have large and good pastures for the feeding of their cattle, which they had not in the wilderness, and so a greater increase of them: ***and thou shalt say, I will eat flesh;*** which they were shorts of, or ate but little of in the wilderness, lest their herds and their flocks should be consumed; but now having room to feed them, and an increase of them, they would give themselves a greater liberty of eating flesh: ***because thy soul longeth to eat flesh;*** would have a craving appetite unto it, having so long ate none, or very little: ***thou mayest eat flesh, whatsoever thy soul lusteth after;*** of any sort that is clean, and allowed to be eaten, and as much of it as is craved, only intemperance must be guarded against.

**DEUT. 12:21. *If the place which the Lord thy God hath chosen to put his name be too far from thee,*** Or rather "for", or "seeing" the place will be too far from thee; for it is allowed before that they might kill and eat flesh for common food in their gates, (Deuteronomy 12:15) ***then thou shalt kill of thy herd and of thy flock;*** of thy oxen and of thy sheep, creatures used in sacrifice; but this was no bar to the use of them for common food also: ***which the Lord hath given thee, as I have commanded thee;*** (Deuteronomy 12:15) ***and***



*thou shalt eat in thy gates whatsoever thy soul lusteth after*; flesh of any sort, lawful to be eaten.

**DEUT. 12:22.** *Even as the roebuck and the hart is eaten*, Which were not only clean creatures, as before observed, but were commonly and frequently eaten, there being plenty of them in those parts: *so thou shalt eat them*; their oxen and calves, their sheep and lambs, their goats and their kids: 156 *the unclean and the clean shall eat of them alike*; no difference being to be made on that account, with respect to common food; (See Gill on "Deuteronomy 12:15") which all alike might partake of, notwithstanding any ceremonial uncleanness that any might be attended with.

**DEUT. 12:23.** *Only be sure that thou eat not the blood*, This is repeated again, that they might be careful to observe the law concerning that: *for the blood is the life*: which is the reason given for the prohibition of it, (see Gill on "Leviticus 17:11"), *and thou mayest not eat the life with the flesh*: by which it seems that the meaning of the law was, that the blood might not be eaten in or with the flesh, but to be let out of it, or the fish not to be eaten raw, but dressed; for there were various laws about eating of blood, which are differently expressed.

**DEUT. 12:24.** *Thou shalt not eat it*, Neither with the flesh, nor separately: *thou shalt pour it upon the earth as water*; as the blood of sacrifices was poured upon the altar, the blood of common flesh was to be poured upon the earth, signifying it was not to be used, and no account to be made of it; (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 12:16")

**DEUT. 12:25.** *Thou shalt not eat it, that it may be well with thee, and with thy children after thee*, That they and their posterity might be spared, and continue long, and enjoy much prosperity; for those that eat blood, contrary to this command of God, it is threatened that he would set his face against them, and they should be cut off, (Leviticus 7:27 17:10), *when thou shalt do that which is right in the sight*

*of the Lord*; not only observe this command, but all others.

**DEUT. 12:26.** *Only thy holy things which thou hast*, Which the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan interpret of the tithe of their holy things, and Aben Ezra of their burnt offerings and peace offerings; they seem to include all in (Deuteronomy 12:17) *and thy vows thou shalt take, and go unto the place which the Lord shall choose*; so often referred to, but not named; (see Deuteronomy 12:5). 157

**DEUT. 12:27.** *And thou shalt offer thy burnt offerings, the flesh and the blood, upon the altar of the Lord thy God*, And on that only, even the altar of burnt offering: *and the blood of thy sacrifices*; one as well as another, not only of the burnt offerings, but of the sin offerings, trespass offerings, and peace offerings: *shall be poured out upon the altar of the Lord thy God*: either sprinkled on it, or poured out at the bottom of it; see (Leviticus 1:1-1:17 3:1-4:35), *and thou shalt eat the flesh*; that is, of the peace offerings, for of them only might the people eat, and that only before the Lord.

**DEUT. 12:28.** *Observe and hear all these words which I command thee*, Respecting the demolition of all monuments of idolatry, and bringing all holy things to the place the Lord should choose to dwell in; and eating common flesh in their own houses, only to be careful not to eat blood: *that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee for ever*; for, as has been often observed, their continuance in the land of Canaan, and enjoyment of all good things in it, depended upon their obedience to the commands of God; (see Isaiah 1:19) *when thou doest that which is good and right in the sight of the Lord thy God*; which is to do all his commandments; for these are what are good and right in his sight, and it is for the good of men to do them.

**DEUT. 12:29.** *When the Lord thy God shall cut off the nations from before thee*, The seven nations of the land of Canaan, (Deuteronomy 7:1), *whither thou goest to possess them, and thou succeedest them, and dwellest in their*

*land*; or to inherit them, and thou dost inherit them, by dwelling in their land.

**DEUT. 12:30.** *Take heed to thyself, that thou be not snared by following them,* Their examples and customs, and so be drawn into the same idolatrous practices; (see Psalm 106:35,36), after that they be destroyed from before thee; for their idolatries and other sins: *and that thou inquire not after their gods;* what they were, their names, forms, and figures: 158 *saying, how did these nations serve their gods?* what was the manner of worship they gave them? what rites, customs, and ceremonies did they use in their adoration of them? *even so will I do likewise;* or however, if this was not determined on when the inquiries were made, there was danger that this would be the result of them, and therefore the caution is given.

**DEUT. 12:31.** *Thou shalt not do so unto the Lord thy God,* Not serve and worship him after the manner of the Gentiles, nor introduce their rites and customs into his service, used by them in the worship of their gods: *for every abomination which he hateth have they done unto their gods;* as murder, adultery, etc. which God has expressed his aversion to, and indignation at; one instance of the former sort is given here: *for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods;* not only men have they sacrificed to them, but such near relations; and not only caused them to pass through the fire, but burnt them in it; so the Carthaginians are said to do, who learned this inhuman practice from the Phoenicians; they were a colony of the inhabitants of this land of Canaan. Of the Phoenicians Porphyry says, that in great calamities, as war or pestilence, they sacrificed to Saturn some one of those that were dearest to them, appointed by suffrage. The Phoenician history, adds he, is full of such sacrifices, which Sanchoniatho wrote in the Phoenician language; and Curtius says, this custom of sacrificing a fine boy to Saturn was received by the Carthaginians from their founders (the Tyrians and Phoenicians), and which they continued even to the destruction of their city.

**DEUT. 12:32.** *What thing soever I command you, observe to do it,* In the manner it is commanded and directed to; the laws of God, both as to matter and manner, were to be obeyed just as they were delivered: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it; neither add any customs and rites of the Heathens to them, nor neglect anything enjoined on them, (see Proverbs 30:6 Revelation 22:18,19). 159

### Deuteronomy 13

In this chapter the Israelites are taught how to discern a false prophet, shun and punish him, (Deuteronomy 13:1-5), what to do with enticers to idolatry, not only not to consent to them, but, without favour and affection to them, endeavour to bring them to just punishment, and be the first that should inflict it on them, (Deuteronomy 13:6-11) and how to behave towards a city drawn into idolatry, as to inquire the truth of it; then make war against it; destroy all in it, men, women, children, and cattle; and burn the spoil of it, and suffer not anything at all belonging to it to cleave unto them, (Deuteronomy 13:12-18).

**DEUT. 13:1.** *If there arise among you a prophet,* A false prophet, a lying prophet, as the Targum of Jonathan; one that pretends to be a true prophet, and to be sent of God, and to come from him with a message from him, a new revelation or doctrine, or in his name, to foretell things to come; the former is chiefly meant. Such prophets did arise in Israel before the time of Christ, and have since arose under the Christian name; (see 2 Peter 2:1), *or a dreamer of dreams;* the same with the prophet, only to be distinguished by the different manner of their having the mind and will of God revealed to them, pretended to; either by vision or by dream, which were the two usual ways in which the Lord spake to the true prophets, (Numbers 12:6) so that the prophet is one who pretended he had a vision from the Lord, and the dreamer one that had a dream from him, or something revealed to him in a dream; and dreams are sometimes used for false doctrines, vain, deceitful, and illusory; (see Jeremiah 23:25-28). The Targum of Jonathan

calls him “a dreamer of a dream of pride:” such persons are generally prompted by the pride of their own hearts to take such a method to make themselves famous and respected among men; and usually bring such doctrines with them which are agreeable to the pride and vanity of human nature: 160 **and giving thee a sign or a wonder**; for the confirmation of his mission and doctrine; such as Moses wrought before the children of Israel and before Pharaoh. Signs are expressions or representations of things to come to pass; wonders, such as either do, or seem to exceed the common course of nature, or be contrary to it.

**DEUT. 13:2. And the sign and wonder come to pass whereof he spake unto thee**, The sign he promised to give, or the miracle he proposed to do, to show the reality of his mission, and the truth of his doctrine, which is performed, or seemingly performed, by legerdemain, by magic art, or by the help of the devil; which the Lord sometimes suffered for the trial of the faith and obedience of his people, and for the hardening of others in their unbelief, and which issues in their destruction; (see 2 Thessalonians 2:9- 12), **saying, let us go after other gods (which thou hast not known), and let us serve them**; other gods besides the one living and true God, the Creator of all things; strange gods, the idols of the people, as the Targum of Jonathan; such as they had never heard of, nor had any knowledge of, nor any benefit from, as they had of the Lord their God. Now the doctrines of these, and of their worship, are what the false prophet or dreamer is supposed to come with, and inculcate into the minds of the people; and for the confirmation of which, and in order to draw them into the reception of them, and act according to them, he proposed to give a sign or wonder.

**DEUT. 13:3. Thou shall not hearken to the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams**, Even though he does give the sign, and work the wonder; for it might be reasonably concluded there must be fallacy in him, and that neither he nor his miraculous sign could come from God, who would never send a person to enable him to do signs and wonders,

to persuade men to believe and act contrary to a former declaration of his mind and will; to break a plain law of his, as in (Deuteronomy 5:7-9), this would be to contradict and deny himself; whatever therefore is contrary to a known law or established doctrine, either of law or Gospel, let it come from whom it will, or pretend to be confirmed by miracles, is not to be received; (see Galatians 1:8,9), **for the Lord your God proveth you, whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul**; for should they be prevailed upon by such a prophet to hearken to his doctrine, and embrace it, and act according to it, it would be a plain case that they did not cordially love the 161 Lord, since they could so easily, and by such pretences, be drawn aside from the true worship of him, and serve other gods; on the other hand, it would be a proof of their sincere affection for God, and of their close and strict attachment to him, that notwithstanding such specious pretences made, and such miracles wrought, yet abode by him and his worship, and could not be wrought upon to forsake him and follow other gods and serve them; (see 1 Corinthians 11:19).

**DEUT. 13:4. Ye shall walk after the Lord your God**, As he has directed, according to the laws and rules which he has given, both with respect to their moral and civil conduct, and their religious worship of him; and so the Targum of Jonathan, “ye shall walk after the worship of the Lord your God:” **and fear him, and keep his commandments**; fear to offend him, and so keep his commandments; or keep his commandments from or through fear; not a servile but a filial one, a reverential affection for him; this is the whole duty of man, (Ecclesiastes 12:13), **and obey his voice**; in his word, or by his prophets and ministers: it may very well be understood of the voice of Christ, the Angel that went before them, whose voice they were continually to hearken to and obey, (Exodus 23:21,22) **and you shall serve him, and cleave unto him**; it may respect all religious worship, both private and public; the Targum of Jonathan restrains it to prayer, but it not only includes that, but all other acts of piety and

devotion, and which are to be constantly performed and not departed from; for so to do is to cleave to the Lord as a man to his wife, or a woman to her husband, in which conjugal relation God and his people Israel were, he was an husband unto them, and to do otherwise is to go a whoring from him after other gods.

**DEUT. 13:5.** *And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death,* Which death, according to the Targum of Jonathan, was to be killed with the sword: *because he hath spoken to turn you away from the Lord your God;* or “spoken revolt against the Lord”, high treason against him, delivering out doctrine that tends to cause his subjects to rebel against him, and revolt from him; and therefore he is justly deserving of death, to draw off a 162 people from him he had been so good and kind unto; so that to apostasy would be added the sin of ingratitude: *which brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage;* and so was not only their Lord by creation whom they ought to serve, but by redemption, which laid them under double obligation to serve him: *to thrust thee out of the way which the Lord thy God commanded thee to walk in;* not by external force, but by the power of persuasion, by enticing words and arguments: *so shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee;* the evil man, by putting him to death, and the evil of idolatry, by not listening to the words of the false prophet.

**DEUT. 13:6.** *If thy brother, the son of thy mother,* A brother by mother’s side, which is generally supposed to be the nearest relation, at least most out of question, so more liable to be regarded as being beloved: *or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom;* most dearly beloved by him, as indeed each of these relations are by a man, there being none nearer or dearer to him: *or thy friend, which [is] as thine own soul;* as dear to him as himself, and so strictly united in friendship, as if one soul dwelt in two bodies; such close friends were Jonathan and David, (1 Samuel 18:1). Some Jewish writers think the father is not mentioned, because of the reverence of him,

with which all later dealings with him obliged to would seem inconsistent; but the reverence of God is to be preferred to the reverence of parents; and besides, if such near relations that are here mentioned, than which there are none nearer, are not to be spared if guilty of the sin after warned against, then not a father, who is in the same transgression: *entice thee secretly;* when alone with him, which might be judged the most proper time to work upon him, there being none to oppose the enticer, or to assist the enticed; so Satan took the opportunity of Eve being alone when he attacked her with his temptation, and the same method is taken by his children: *saying, let me go and serve other gods which thou hast not known, thou nor thy fathers;* not even their immediate ancestors, and so the calf was not 163 of these gods; nor their more remote ancestors, as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who were no idolaters; nor even Terah, though he was one, yet the gods of the Canaanites and of the neighbouring nations, which seem to be here meant, at least principally, were such that he knew not. This circumstance may seem to carry in it an argument rather why they should not than why they should serve such gods; wherefore the words of the enticer seem to be only these, *let us go and serve other gods,* and what follows are the words of the Lord, descriptive of those gods, and so a dissuasive from serving them.

**DEUT. 13:7.** *Namely, of the gods of the people which are round about you,* As of the Edomites, Moabites, Ammonites, and Phoenicians: *nigh unto thee;* as the above were, being on the borders of their land: the Targum of Jonathan interprets this of the idols of the seven nations, that is, of the land of Canaan: or *far off from thee;* as the Babylonians, Persians, and others: *from the one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth;* which includes all the idols in the world, worshipped by whatsoever nation, and which were forbidden; and which shows the universality of idolatry in those times, and that that is an insufficient argument in its favour. Jarchi interprets this of the sun and moon, and the host of heaven, who go from one end of the

world to the other; and this seems to have been the first and most common idolatry of the Gentile world, and which were worshipped in the several deities they set up.

**DEUT. 13:8. *Thou shalt not consent unto him,*** To commit the idolatry enticed unto, or join with him in it: ***nor hearken to him;*** not so much as patiently to hear him, but at once express an abhorrence of and indignation at what he recommends: ***neither shall thine eye pity him;*** pitied he might be for his ignorance, stupidity, and wickedness, and on account of the miserable estate and condition he was in, and of those dreadful consequences which would follow upon it, if not converted from it; but no mercy was to be shown him on account of nearness of relation: ***neither shall thou spare;*** to reprove him sharply and to expose him to public vengeance: ***164 neither shall thou conceal him;*** neither him nor his sin, but make both public, acquaint others with it, and endeavour to bring him before the civil magistrate to be examined, tried, and judged; so far should they be from hiding his offence from others, or excusing and extenuating it, or from harbouring his person privately when sought for upon information.

**DEUT. 13:9. *But thou shalt surely kill him,*** Not privately and secretly, when and where he entices, nor the enticed himself by his own authority, but after being examined, judged, and condemned by the civil magistrate; and none might judge a false prophet but the sanhedrim at Jerusalem, the sanhedrim of seventy one ; (see Luke 13:33), but the difficulty is how such an one could be convicted, since the affair was transacted secretly, (Deuteronomy 13:6) and there were none present to be witnesses, none but the enticer and the enticed; so that either the enticer must be brought to a confession of his guilt, or the testimony of the enticed alone must be taken. The Jewish doctors say , that they laid in wait for the enticer, which they never did for any other person, and the method they took was this; the enticed brought two persons, and put them behind a hedge, so that they might see the enticer, and hear his words, and he not see them; and he said to the enticer,

say what thou hast said to me privately; which said, the enticed answered to him, how shall we leave our God which is in heaven, and go and serve wood and stone? if he returned (from his evil) hereby, or was silent, he was free; but if he said unto him, so we are obliged, and thus it is comely for us; they that stood afar off, behind the hedge (or in a dark room), brought him to the sanhedrim, and stoned him, that is, after examination, trial, judgment, and condemnation: ***thine hand shall be first upon him, to put him to death;*** he was to throw the first stone at him, partly to show his indignation against the sin he had enticed him to, and that it had not at all affected him so as to incline him unto it; and partly to show that he had bore a true testimony, of which a suspicion might have been created in the minds of some, had he been backward to the execution of him: ***and afterwards the hand of all the people;*** who then could proceed with more certainty and satisfaction: this shows that the person enticed had not a right to kill the enticer, without a judicial process, and the order of the civil magistrate. 165

**DEUT. 13:10. *And thou shalt stone him with stones, that he die,*** It was not sufficient to answer the end of the law to cast a few stones at him, but he was to be stoned to death: ***because he hath sought to thrust thee away from the Lord thy God;*** to compel by force of argument, or the dint of persuasion, to relinquish the profession of the true God, faith in him, and the worship of him: ***which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage;*** which aggravated the sin of the enticer, and would have made the sin of the enticed the more heinous had he fallen into it.

**DEUT. 13:11. *And all Israel shall hear, and fear,*** Shall hear of the death the enticer was put unto, and shall fear to act such a part he did, and be upon their guard against any such person, and be cautious that they are not drawn into sin by him: ***and shall do no more any such wickedness as this is among you;*** either to entice unto idolatry or commit it; which is a piece of wickedness against the first table of the law, and a very heinous one, and exceeding

offensive and provoking to God, being so directly against his being, perfections, and glory.

**DEUT. 13:12.** *If thou shalt hear say in one of thy cities*, A report concerning them, anyone of them: *which the Lord thy God had given thee to dwell there*; which he had not only given them, but had put them into the possession of, and it was become their dwelling place, or was inhabited by Israelites; otherwise they were already given unto them, but did not inherit and inhabit them, and it might be possible that there might be some city or cities, at least for a time, which, though given them, were not inhabited by them, but by the Canaanites, and such cities this law did not concern: saying; as follows.

**DEUT. 13:13.** *Certain men, the children of Belial*, Which signify either persons without a yoke, who have thrown off the yoke of God's law, and will not submit to it, or unprofitable ones, as wicked men be, both to God, themselves, and others: *are gone out from among you*; not locally, but with respect to their religious sentiments and practices, having separated themselves from the 166 people of God, and from the service of the sanctuary, the true worship of God, and a profession of it, and given into the worship of idols: *and have withdrawn the inhabitants of their city*; withdrawn them by the force of persuasion from the worship of the true God, and drawn them into idolatry: *saying, let us go and serve other gods*; unite as one man in the worship of the gods of the Gentiles: *which ye have not known*; this was not said by the children of Belial, but is added by the Lord by way of explanation, showing what gods they were that these men advised them to serve, and confirms the observation made on (Deuteronomy 13:6).

**DEUT. 13:14.** *Then shalt thou inquire, make search, and ask diligently*, That is, of the witnesses, as the Targum of Jonathan; and this is a case that is only taken into consideration and judged of by the great sanhedrim, or that of seventy one, at Jerusalem; and the method they took was this, when it fell under their cognizance: the great sanhedrim send and

inquire and search till they know clearly that the whole city, or the greater part of it, are thrust away, and are turned to idolatry; after that they send two disciples of the wise men to admonish them and bring them back; if they return and repent, it is well, but if they continue in their folly, the sanhedrim order all Israel to go up against them to war, and they besiege them, and set themselves in battle array against them, until the city be broken up; and when it is broken up, immediately they set up many courts of judicature, and they judge them; and against whomsoever two witnesses come that he served idols, after they have admonished him they separate him; if all the worshippers be the fewest, they stone them, and the rest of the city are delivered; if they are found the greater number, they bring them to the great sanhedrim, and finish their judgment there, and they slay all those that have served with the sword: *and, behold, if it be truth, and the thing certain*; that such wicked men have risen and have prevailed upon the inhabitants of the city where they live, to leave the worship of the true God, and go into idolatry, when there is full proof of this, and it is past all question that *such abomination is wrought among you*; as idolatry is, which is an abomination to God, and ought to be so to all mankind, and especially to a people that profess his name. 167

**DEUT. 13:15.** *Thou shalt surely smite the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword*, This could not be the work of a single person, nor of the whole sanhedrim, but was what the whole nation was to join in, according to the above note: *destroying it utterly*; pulling down the houses, and demolishing its walls and fortifications, or burning it, as afterwards explained: *and all that is therein*; men, women, and children: *and the cattle thereof, with the edge of the sword*; this severity was used to show the Lord's indignation against the sin of idolatry, and to deter persons from it, both individuals and bodies of men.

**DEUT. 13:16.** *And thou shall gather all the spoil of it into the midst of the street thereof*, All the wealth and substance of the inhabitants, their household goods, shop goods,

merchandise, utensils in trade and business, and everything that can be named. The Jews say, if there is no street, they make one (or a marketplace); if that is without it, they bring them into the midst of it: **and shall burn with fire the city, and all the spoil thereof every whit**; be it what it may, or let it be whose property it will; and all this shall be done for the Lord thy God; as by his appointment and command, and in obedience to him, so for his honour and glory, and the vindication of his righteous law; **and it shall be an heap for ever, it shall not be built again**; but lie a waste as Jericho, though not an entire waste; for according to the Jewish writers, though it might not be built as it was before, it might be made into gardens and orchards.

**DEUT. 13:17. And there shall cleave nought of the cursed thing to thine hand**, That is, they might not take anything whatever to their own use; for all being devoted to destruction, was cursed, and brought a curse upon the man that should make it his own property, as Achan did, when Jericho was destroyed: **that the Lord may turn from the fierceness of his anger**; stirred up by the idolatry of the city: 168 **and show thee mercy, and have compassion upon thee**; who, seeing wrath gone forth, might dread the consequences, lest it should spread itself further: **and multiply thee, as he hath sworn to thy fathers**; Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; this is observed to encourage them to execute his orders punctually in the destruction of the idolatrous city; since God could and would multiply them, as he had promised their fathers, with an oath, so that they should not be the fewer by such an instance of his severity.

**DEUT. 13:18. When thou shalt hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God**, Not only in this case, but in all others: **to keep all his commandments which I command thee this day**: the repetition of which he made unto them, and enjoined the observance of them in the name of the Lord: **to do that which is right in the eyes of the Lord thy God**; which they would do, if they kept the commandments of the Lord, which are holy, just, and good, and

must be right in his sight because commanded by him. 169

### Deuteronomy 14

In this chapter some cautions are given against the use of some rites and ceremonies in mourning for the dead, with the reason thereof, (Deuteronomy 14:1,2) and instructions about what are lawful to be eaten, and what not, whether of beasts, fishes, or fowl, (Deuteronomy 14:3-21), and concerning eating one sort of tithes both at the place God should choose, and within their own gates, (Deuteronomy 14:22-29).

**DEUT. 14:1. Ye are the children of the Lord your God**, Some of them were so by the special grace of adoption, and all of them by national adoption; which was the peculiar privilege of the people of Israel, and laid them under great obligation to honour and obey the Lord their God, who stood in the relation of a father to them, and they of children to him, (Malachi 1:6). The Targum of Jonathan paraphrases it "beloved children"; so the apostle calls the saints; the "dear children of God", who therefore ought to be followers of him, (Ephesians 5:1) and for a like reason this relation is observed here, namely, to quicken a regard to the exhortations of the Lord, his cautions, commands, laws, and ordinances, particularly to what follows: **ye shall not cut yourselves**; for the dead, as appears from the next clause, as the Heathens did, who not only tore their garments, but their flesh in several parts of their bodies, in their mouths, cheeks, breasts, etc.; and used other extravagant signs of mourning, which the apostle cautions against, (1 Thessalonians 4:13) and were condemned by the Heathens themselves. Though some think this refers to incisions the Heathens made in their flesh to the honour of their gods, cutting the names of them therein to whom they devoted themselves; or lashing their bodies at the worship of them, as the worshippers of Baal did when they called upon him, (1 Kings 18:28) and so the Jerusalem Targum, "make not marks, marks," that is, here and there, in many places, or bruises black and

blue by striping and beating themselves, for strange worship, or at it, in honour of their 170 gods; but the former sense seems best to agree with what follows; (see Leviticus 19:28), **nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead**; by shaving the forepart of their head or their eyebrows, or both, which used to be done in lamentations for the dead; (see Jeremiah 16:6,7) if this could be thought to have any respect to rites and ceremonies used in the worship of dead and lifeless idols, the customs of the Egyptians might be referred to, who are said to shave their heads and their eyebrows in their sacred rites to Isis .

**DEUT. 14:2. For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God**, Set apart by him from all other people, and devoted to his worship and service, and many of them were sanctified and made holy in a special and spiritual sense; and therefore should not conform to the customs of Gentiles, whether in their extravagant mourning for the dead, or in their religious services; (see Deuteronomy 7:6), **and the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people, above all the nations that [are] upon the earth**; to be his peculiar treasure, to be his peculiar servants and worshippers, to enjoy peculiar blessings and privileges, and behave in a peculiar manner different from all other people; and have no connection with them, especially in things sacred; and, in order to keep them a distinct peculiar people from all others, a peculiar diet was appointed them, that so being prohibited to eat such things as others did, they might be kept out of their company and conversation, and so from being drawn into their idolatrous practices; the rules concerning which follow; (see Deuteronomy 7:6).

**DEUT. 14:3. Thou shall not eat any abominable thing.**] That is so either in its own nature, or because forbidden by the Lord; what are such are declared in the following verses.

**DEUT. 14:4. These are the beasts which they shall eat**, That is, which they might lawfully eat of, which were allowed for their food; for they were not obliged to eat of them if they did not choose it: **the ox, the sheep, and the goat**; which were creatures used in sacrifice, and the

only ones, yet nevertheless they might be used for food if chosen.

**DEUT. 14:5. The hart, the roebuck, and the fallow deer**, All of the deer kind, and very agreeable food; harts were very common in the land of 171 Canaan and parts adjacent; Aelianus says harts are bred in the great mountains in Syria, Amanus, Lebanon, and Carmel: the roebuck, or "dorcass", from whence a good woman had her name, (Acts 9:36) is spoken of by Martial as very delicious food, and so are fallow deer; the word "jachmur", here used, having the signification of redness in it, may be used for that sort which are called red deer: it is observed that in the Arabic language it is used for an animal with two horns, living in the woods, not unlike an hart, but swifter than that; and it is asked, is it not the "aloe" or "elch" ? **and the wild goat, and the pygarg, and the wild ox, and the chamois**; the wild goat is reckoned by Pliny among the half wild creatures in Africa; according to the philosopher there are none but in Syria, on which Canaan bordered, and were very remarkable ones, having ears a span and nine inches long, and some reached to the ground. The Hebrew name for this creature is "akko"; and there is a fourfooted wild beast, by the Tartarians called "akkyk", and by the Turks "akoim", and which with the Scythians and Sarmatians are to be met with in flocks; it is between a hart and a ram, its body whitish, and the flesh exceeding sweet ; it seems to be the same with the "tragelaphus", of which there were in Arabia, as Diodorus Siculus says; the next is the "pygarg", which we so render from the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions, or white buttocks, so called from the hinder part of it being white; a species of the eagle with a white tail is called a "pygarg", but here a four footed animal is meant; and which is mentioned as such, along with hinds, does, and goats, by Herodotus , Aelian , and Pliny : it has its name "dishon", in Hebrew, from its ash colour, and the "tragelaphus", or goat deer, has part of its back ash coloured, and has ash coloured spots or streaks on its sides : some take it to be the "strepisiceros", a kind of buck or goat with



writhed horns, which the Africans, as Pliny says, call "addaca", which is thought by some to be a corruption of "al-dashen", so Junius; the Targum of Jonathan takes it for the "unicorn" or "rhinoceros"; and the Talmudists say that the unicorn, though it has but one horn, is free, i.e. lawful to be eaten: the "wild ox" was common in Arabia; Strabo speaks of multitudes of wild oxen in some parts of Arabia, on the flesh of which and other animals the Arabians live; in the Septuagint version it is called the "oryx", which is a creature that has but one horn, and divides the hoof, and so might be eaten; (see Gill on "Isaiah 51:20"), the last, the "chamois", has a French name, and is a creature of the goat kind, from 172 whose skin the chamois leather is made; in the figure of its body it seems to approach very much to the stag kind; perhaps it is the same with the "cemas" of Aelian, mentioned by him along with roebucks. Some take it to be the "tarandus", of which Pliny says it is of the size of an ox, has a head bigger than a hart, and not unlike it; its horns are branched, hoofs cloven, and is hairy like a bear. In the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan this is the "pygarg"; these several sorts of beasts were allowed to be eaten; the three first there is no difficulty about them, but the other seven it is hard to determine what they are, at least some of them. Dr. Shaw thinks that the deer, the antelope, the wild bear, the goat deer, the white buttocks, the buffalo, and jeraffa, may lay in the best claim to the "ailee", "tzebi", "yachmur", "akkub", "dishon", "thau", and "zomer", here.

**DEUT. 14:6-8. *And every beast that parted the hoof.*** In this and the two following verses two general rules are given, by which it might be known what beasts were fit for food and what not; one is if they parted the hoof, and the other if they chewed the cud, such might be eaten; but such that only chewed the cud, but did not divide the hoof, as the camel, hare, and coney, might not be eaten; and so if they divided the hoof, and did not chew the cud, as the swine, they were alike unlawful; (See Gill on "Leviticus 11:3-8"),

**DEUT. 14:9, 10. *These ye shall eat of, all that are in the waters,*** The fishes there, even such

as have fins and scales, but they that have not were not to be eaten: (See Gill on "Leviticus 11:9-12").

**DEUT. 14:11. *Of all clean birds ye shall eat.***]

Which the Targum of Jonathan describes, everyone that has a claw, and whose crop is naked, and has a superfluous talon, and is not rapacious; but such as are unclean are expressed by name in the following verses, so that all except them might be reckoned clean and fit for food. Maimonides observes, that only the number of the unclean are reckoned, so that all the rest are free.

**DEUT. 14:12-18. *But these are they of which they shall not eat,*** Jarchi observes, that the unclean birds are particularly mentioned, to teach that the clean sort are more than the unclean, and therefore the particulars of the fewest are given: these are all the same names as in (Leviticus 11:13-19), excepting one, "the glede", (Deuteronomy 14:13) which is a kind of kite or puttock; the Jerusalem Targum renders it the vulture, and the Targum of Jonathan the white "dayetha" or vulture; and Aristotle says there are two sorts of vultures, the one small and whiter, the other 173 larger and of many forms or colours; in Hebrew its name here is "raah", and is thought to be the same with "daah" in (Leviticus 11:14) there translated the "vulture", which has its name there from flying, and here from seeing, for which it is remarkable; (see Job 28:7) and the letters **d** and **r** are pretty much alike, and are sometimes changed, but there is another here, in (Deuteronomy 14:13) mentioned, the "dayah", which is not mentioned in (Leviticus 11:1-47), though some think it the same with the "ayah", rendered both here and there the "kite"; perhaps it means another sort of vulture, the black vulture, as the Targum of Jonathan.

**DEUT. 14:19. *And every creeping thing that flieth is unclean,*** Which the Targum of Jonathan thus paraphrases; "all flies and wasps (or hornets), and worms of lentiles and of beans, which are separated from food, and fly as birds, they are unclean;" (See Gill on "Leviticus 11:20-21").

**DEUT. 14:20.** *But of all clean fowls ye may eat.*] Even of all fowls, but those before excepted; Aben Ezra instances in the locust, as being a clean fowl, that might be eaten; and so the Targum of Jonathan is “every clean locust ye may eat;” (see Leviticus 11:22).

**DEUT. 14:21.** *Ye shall not eat of anything that dieth of itself,* This law is repeated from (Leviticus 17:15), *thou shalt give it unto the stranger that is in thy gates, that he may eat it;* not to the proselyte of righteousness, for he might not eat of it any more than an Israelite, and if he did, he was obliged to wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and was unclean until the evening, as in (Leviticus 17:15) but to a proselyte of the gate, who took upon him, as Jarchi observes, not to serve idols, one that has renounced idolatry, but has not embraced the Jewish religion; such an one might eat of things that died of themselves, or were not killed in a proper manner. The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan call him an uncircumcised stranger or proselyte, who had not submitted to circumcision, as the proselyte of righteousness did: 174 *or thou mayest sell it unto an alien;* an idolater, one that was neither a proselyte of righteousness nor of the gate, an entire alien from the commonwealth of Israel; one that was occasionally in the land of Canaan, or was travelling in it or through it, to such an one it might be sold: *for thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God;* separated from all others, and devoted to his service, and therefore must live on clean, food and good meat, and not eat what others might: *thou shalt not seethe a kid in its mother's milk;* this is the third time this law is mentioned; refer to the notes, (see Gill on “Exodus 23:19”), (see Gill on “Exodus 34:26”); the reason of which repetition, the Jewish writers say, is, that it is once said to forbid the eating it, a second time to forbid any use of it or profit by it, and a third time to forbid the boiling of it.

**DEUT. 14:22.** *Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed,* This was a different tithe from that which was made and given to the Levites, and out of which a tithe was taken and given to the priests, and which they only ate of;

but this, as appears by the following verse, was what the owners themselves ate of, and so the tithing was left to be made by them themselves, and which they were to be sure to make, and to make it truly and faithfully: *that the field bringeth forth year by year;* being ploughed and sowed yearly, the produce of it was to be tithed yearly; the Jewish writers observe on this, that it must be what the earth produces, and is fit for food: and it must be thy seed, which is especially thine, and is not common, but has an owner, and this excludes mushrooms, etc. which thou sowest not, and therefore cannot be called thy seed.

**DEUT. 14:23.** *And thou shalt eat before the Lord thy God, in the place which he shall choose to place his name there,* (see Deuteronomy 12:5) there the tithe of all the fruits of the earth was to be eaten; this is the second tithe, as the Targum of Jonathan, and so Jarchi, and which is more particularly described as follows: *the tithe of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil:* (see Deuteronomy 12:7 (See Gill on “Deuteronomy 12:7”)): *and the firstlings of thine herds, and of thy flocks;* of which see the note on the above place: 175 *that thou mayest learn to fear the Lord thy God always;* which such a constant practice would inure unto; (see Deuteronomy 10:12).

**DEUT. 14:24.** *And if the way be too long for thee,* The way from the place where any Israelite might live: *to carry it;* the tithe and the firstlings, it would be too expensive or too troublesome in any way that could be devised: *or if the place shall be too far from thee, which the Lord thy God shall choose to set his name there;* which by the event appeared to be the city of Jerusalem, and this from some parts of the land of Canaan was very distant: *when the Lord thy God hath blessed thee;* with a large increase of the fruits of the earth, and of flocks and herds.

**DEUT. 14:25.** *Thou shalt then turn it into money,* The tithe, which would be lighter and easier carriage: *and bind up the money in thine hand;* put it into a bag or purse, and tie it up and carry it in the hand; which some think was ordered, that it might not be mixed with

other money; but it seems only to have respect to journeying, and making it fit for that. The Jewish writers, some of them, give a different sense of the word we render "bind up", and interpret it of marking the silver, or impressing a form, figure, or image on it with the hand; they mean that it must be coined money; so Maimonides, they may not profane the sacred tithe with money not coined, nor with money not current, nor with money which is not in a man's power; for it is said, **in thine hand**; which the man is possessed of and is his own property: **and shalt go unto the place which the Lord that God shall choose**; carrying the money along with him, for which he sold the tithe.

**DEUT. 14:26. And thou shall bestow that money for whatsoever thy soul lusteth after**, He might buy what provision he would with it, what he best liked, and was most agreeable to his appetite: **for oxen, or for sheep**; he might purchase beef or mutton, or any other sort of meat that could be got, and was lawful to be eaten, as before directed: **or for wine, or for strong drink**; to drink with his food, whether wine or any other liquor; the Targum of Jonathan is, wine new or old, which he chose; but the latter, strong drink, Aben Ezra says, was a liquor made of honey and of dates, of wheat and of barley: **or for whatsoever thy soul desireth**; whether eatable or drinkable: **and thou shalt eat there before the Lord thy God**; he having put his name in that place; and dwelling there, as the Lord did in the temple of Jerusalem: **and thou shalt rejoice, thou and thy household**; eat their food with cheerfulness and gladness, making a feast of it and keeping it as such, he and his whole family, his wife and children, or as many as were with him; and all males were obliged to appear at the three grand yearly festivals, and it was at one of these this was to be done.

**DEUT. 14:27. And the Levite that is within thy gates, thou shalt not forsake him**, As not from giving him the first tithe, as Jarchi remarks, so he was not to forget him in this; he was not to leave him behind, but take him with him to partake of this entertainment: **for he hath no**

**part nor inheritance with thee in the land**: (see Deuteronomy 12:12).

**DEUT. 14:28. At the end of three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase the same year**, This, according to Aben Ezra, was a third tithe, and did not excuse the second tithe; so says: "I gave the third tithe to the repair of the temple," (Tobit 1:7) as in one copy, but, according to another, to the stranger, fatherless, and widow, which better agrees with what follows; but the Jewish writers generally understand this as the same with the second tithe, which on the two first years from the sabbatical year was carried to Jerusalem, or money in lieu of it, with which provisions were bought and eaten there, but on the third year were eaten in their own cities with the poor, and in the stead of the other; so says Maimonides, on the third and sixth years from the sabbatical year, after they have separated the first tithe they separate from what remains another tithe, and give it to the poor, and it is called the poor's tithe, and not on those two years is the second tithe, but the poor's tithe, as it is said, "at the end of three years", etc. and still more expressly elsewhere; after they have separated the first tithe every year, they separate the second tithe, (Deuteronomy 14:22) and on the third and sixth years they separate the poor's tithe instead of the second; and this was done, not at the latter end of the third year, but, as Aben Ezra interprets it, at the beginning; for the word used signifies an extremity, and the beginning of the year is one extremity of it as well as the latter end of it: **and lay it up within thy gates**; not to be hoarded up, or to be sold at a proper time, but to be disposed and made use of as follows.

**DEUT. 14:29. And the Levite, because he hath no part nor inheritance with thee**, Shall come and take the first tithe, according to Jarchi; but though this he was to do, yet is not what is intended here, but he was to partake of the second tithe, or what was in the room of it, the poor's tithe, with whom he is here joined: **and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, which are within thy gates, shall**

*come*; and take the second tithe, as the above writer rightly interprets it, and which he says is the poor's of this year; (see Deuteronomy 12:12,18), **and shall eat and be satisfied**; make a plentiful meal, eat freely as at a feast; and, as the same writer observes, they were not obliged to eat it at Jerusalem, according to the way they were bound to eat the second tithe of the two years, that is, the two preceding this: **that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest**; as might be expected, when his commands, and particularly those respecting the tithes and firstlings, were obeyed. 178

### Deuteronomy 15

This chapter treats of a release of debts every seventh year, to which a blessing is promised if attended to, (Deuteronomy 15:1-6), which seventh year of release should not hinder lending to a poor man in distress, even though it was nigh at hand, (Deuteronomy 15:7-11) and of letting servants go free, whether manservant or maidservant, at the end of six years' servitude, (Deuteronomy 15:12-15) but if unwilling to go, and desirous of staying, must have his ear bored through with an awl, and serve to the year of jubilee, (Deuteronomy 15:16-18) and of sanctifying and eating the firstlings of the herd and flock where the Lord directs, (Deuteronomy 15:19-23).

**DEUT. 15:1. At the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release.**] Not of servants, for they were not to be dismissed from their service until they had served six years, as is directed to in a following law; for if they were to be set free whenever a sabbatical year came, they might be discharged when they had not served more than a year, or than half a year, or than a month or two. Indeed when the year of jubilee intervened, they were released be it at what time it would; but not in a sabbatical year, which was a year of release of debts, as the following verses show, as well as there was, then a rest of the land from tillage, (Leviticus 25:2-4). Now this was done at the end or extremity of every seventh year; not at the latter end or extremity of it, for if the debt of a

poor man might be exacted of him in the year, and until the end of it, it would not in this respect have been a sabbatical year, or a year of rest and quiet; but this was done at the first extremity of it, at the beginning of it, as Aben Ezra and Ben Melech observe; though Maimonides asserts it to be after the seven years were ended; for he says, "the seventh year releaseth not monies but at the end of it," according to (Deuteronomy 15:1) that as in (Deuteronomy 31:10) after seven years is meant, so the release of monies is after seven years. 179

**DEUT. 15:2. And this is the manner of the release,** Or the rules to be observed in making it: **every creditor that lendeth ought unto his neighbour shall release it**; that is, forgive the debt, or free the debtor from any obligation to payment. Some think this was only a release of debts for this year, in which there was no ploughing nor sowing, and so a poor man could not be in any circumstances to pay his debts, but might be exacted afterwards; but it rather seems to be a full release, so as the payment of them might not be demanded, neither this year nor afterwards; indeed, if a person afterwards should be in a capacity to pay his debts, he would be obliged, in conscience, duty, and honour, to pay them, though no reserve was made in this law, which nowhere appears: **he shall not exact it of his neighbour, or of his brother**: he might receive it, if payment was offered, but he might not demand it, or sue for it; or give his neighbour or brother, whether in a natural or religious sense, any trouble about it: the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases it, "his brother, an Israelite;" one of the same nation and religion with him, though he might not be related in the bonds of consanguinity: **because it is called the Lord's release**; appointed and commanded by him, and was for his honour and glory, as a God gracious and merciful to the poor, and beneficent to those creditors; and which was proclaimed in his name, by the civil magistrate, according to his order; so the Targum of Jonathan, "because the house of judgment, or the sanhedrim, proclaimed it a release before the Lord." Now this was typical

of a release of debts, or of forgiveness of sins, which is an act of God's grace through Christ, and for his sake. Sins are called debts, not what men owe to God, for then it would be right to commit them, and they might be committed with impunity, yea, with praise, since it would be doing what is fit and right, and well pleasing to God; but men are debtors to fulfil the law, and in case of failure, or a breach of it, are bound to the debt of punishment; and these debts are very numerous, and men are incapable of paying them: and by a release of these is meant not a liberty of sinning, nor a freedom from the being or bondage of sin, but from the guilt of it, and from obligation to punishment for it; and is properly the forgiveness of sin, which is expressed by various phrases, as a nonimputation, a non-remembrance, a covering, blotting out, and removing of sin, and here typically a release of debts; (see Matthew 6:12), and God only can make it; he is the creditor, sin is committed against him, and he only can forgive it, which he does freely, fully, and at once, (see Luke 7:41,42).

**DEUT. 15:3.** *Of a foreigner thou mayest exact it again*, Either on the seventh year, or after it: *but that which is thine with thy brother, thine hand shall release*; a debt that lies between them, where the one is the creditor, and the other debtor, the creditor shall freely and fully forgive the debtor. So those only are released or forgiven by the Lord who are his own, whom he has reserved for himself, or chosen to everlasting life; who are interested in the covenant of his grace, one article in which is the forgiveness of sins; and who are redeemed by the blood of Christ, a branch of which redemption is remission of sin; and who are called by grace, and believe in Christ, to whom pardon of sins is promised; but those who are foreigners and strangers, and are not the Lord's chosen, redeemed, and called people, have no share in this blessing of grace; nor such who are rich in their own esteem, and need nothing; but those who are poor and unable to pay their debts, and are sensible of their spiritual

poverty, and apply to the Lord for the forgiveness of their sins.

**DEUT. 15:4.** *Save when there shall be no poor among you*, Then such a law could not take place, there would be no debts to be released; for this was never designed to screen rich persons from the payment of their just debts, or whoever were in a capacity of so doing, only such as were really poor, and unable to pay; and it supposes that this might sometimes be the case, that there were none poor in Israel, or needed the benefit of such a law; and, according to the Targum of Jonathan, it is suggested there would be none, if they were observant of the commands of God: and some take it for a promise, rendering the words "nevertheless", notwithstanding such a law, *there shall be no poor among you*; but then it must be understood conditionally: others interpret this as the end to be answered by this law, "to the end there may be no poor among you"; by observing this law, all debts being released once in seven years, it would prevent persons falling into distress and poverty, to such a degree as to be in want, and become beggars; and Julian the emperor observes, that none of the Jews begged, which he attributes to the care that was taken of their poor: *for the Lord shall greatly bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it*; which is either a reason why there would be no poor, should they observe the commandments of the Lord; or a reason why they should release the debts of the poor because they were so greatly blessed with a fruitful land, which brought them such an increase, as enabled them to free their poor debtors, when in circumstances unable to pay them.

**DEUT. 15:5** *Only if thou carefully hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God*, In his word, and by his prophets; this being the case, there would be no more poor among them, or however they would be so blessed of God, that they would be capable of releasing the debts of the poor, without hurting themselves and their families: *to observe to do all these commandments which I command thee this*

*day*; a phrase often used to put them in mind of the commands of God, and the necessity of keeping them, their temporal happiness depending thereon.

**DEUT. 15:6.** *For the Lord thy God blesseth thee, as he promised thee*, He is faithful that has promised, and he always gives the blessing he promises according to the nature of the promise; if absolute, and without conditions, he gives it without respect to any; but if conditional, as the promises of temporal good things to Israel were, he gives according as the condition is performed: *and thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow*; signifying they should be so rich and increased in goods, and worldly substance, that they should be able to lend to their neighbouring nations round about, but should stand in no need of borrowing of any of them. This is sometimes said of the language of these people, the Hebrew language, that it lends to all, but borrows of none, being an original primitive language; (see Deuteronomy 28:12) *and thou shalt reign over many nations*: which was fulfilled in the times of David and Solomon: 182 *but they shall not reign over thee*; that is, as long as they observed the commands of God; otherwise, when they did not, they were carried captive into other countries, and other people reigned over them, as at this day.

**DEUT. 15:7.** *If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren*, As there would be, according to the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem, if they did not keep the commandments of the law, and continue therein: *within any of thy gates, in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee*; a native of the land was to be preferred to a foreigner, and a brother, whether in relation or religion, to a proselyte of the gate; and the poor of a city to which a man belonged, to the poor of another city, as Jarchi observes; which he gathers from this phrase, *within any of thy gates: thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy brother*; so as not to pity his distressed case, and have no bowels of compassion for him, and feel for his want, and

so as not to distribute to his necessities, and relieve him.

**DEUT. 15:8.** *But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him*, And give him bountifully and liberally; in order to which the heart must be first opened, the affections moved, and a willing mind disposed to give generously: *and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need in that which he wanteth*: enough to answer his present exigencies, but not to cause him to abound, or to supply him with things needless and superfluous.

**DEUT. 15:9.** *Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart*, "Or, thy heart of Belial" ; thy worthless heart, and which is without a yoke not subjected to the law of God, as every carnal heart is; and in which Belial, Satan, the prince of this world, works effectually, and inclines to evil thoughts, afflictions, and desires, which are to be guarded against: *saying, the seventh year, the year of release, is at hand*: perhaps next year, or within a few months: *and thine eye be evil against thy brother, and thou give him nought*; being of an uncompassionate and covetous disposition, shall refuse to give or lend him anything on this consideration, because the year of release will quickly come, when, if poor and unable to pay him, he would be obliged to release his debt: 183 *and he cry unto the Lord against thee*; go to the throne of grace, and in prayer bring a charge, and lodge a complaint of unkindness and uncharitableness: and it be a sin unto thee; the Lord shall reckon it as a sin, a very heinous one, and call to an account for it.

**DEUT. 15:10.** *Thou shalt surely give him*, Or lend to him; though lending in such a case and circumstances, that person being extremely poor, and the year of release at hand, is the same as giving. Jarchi remarks that money must be given him, even a hundred times if he asks it; but the limitation is to what he wants, and what is sufficient for his present wants, (Deuteronomy 15:8) *and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him*; grieved at parting with his money he has little or no hope of seeing again, grudging it to him to

whom it is given; when, on the other hand, it should he given freely and cheerfully, for God loves a cheerful giver: ***because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all thou putteth thine hand unto***; that is, for lending or giving largely, liberally, and cheerfully, to persons in distress; (see Proverbs 11:24,25 Isaiah 32:8 2 Corinthians 9:6-9).

**DEUT. 15:11. *For the poor shall never cease out of the land***, There would be always such objects to exercise their charity and beneficence towards, (John 12:8), which is no contradiction to (Deuteronomy 15:4) for had they been obedient to the laws of God, they would have been so blessed that there would have been none; so the Targums; but he foresaw that they would not keep his commands, and so this would be the case, and which he foretells that they might expect it, and do their duty to them, as here directed:

***therefore I command thee, saying, thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother***; not give sparingly, but largely, in proportion to the necessities of the poor, and according to the abilities of the lender or giver; and this must be done to a brother, one that is near in the bonds of consanguinity, and to him a man must give or lend first, as Aben Ezra observes, and then “to thy poor”; the poor of thy family, as the same writer: ***and to thy needy in the land***; that are in very distressed circumstances, though not related, and particularly such as are in the same place where a man dwells; for, as the same writer remarks, the poor of thy land are to be preferred to the poor of another place, 184

**DEUT. 15:12. *And if thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee***, By others, as by the sanhedrim for theft, for which a man might be sold, but not a woman, as Jarchi observes; but then a father might sell his daughter for an handmaid, if little and under age; and to such cases this law is supposed to refer; (see Exodus 21:2,7 22:3) though a man on account of poverty might sell himself: ***and serve thee six years***; as he was bound to do, if his master lived so long; if he died before the six years were out, he was obliged to serve his

son, but not his daughter, nor his brother, nor his heirs, as the Jewish writers affirm : then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee; that is, at the end of the sixth, and beginning of the seventh year; (see Exodus 21:2).

**DEUT. 15:13. *And when thou sendest him out free from thee***, When he discharged him from his servitude, and made him a free man: ***thou shall not let him go away empty***; without anything to support himself, or to put himself in a way of business; he having in the time of his servitude worked entirely for his master, and so could not have got and saved anything for himself.

**DEUT. 15:14. *Thou shalt furnish him liberally***, Not only to supply his present wants, but for his future use, and to set him up in the world: “loading thou shall load him” , so some render the words; give him as much as he can carry, and well stand up under; the word used has the signification of chains wore about the neck for honour or ornament, and so may signify he should be very honourably dismissed, with plain marks of honour and respect; and the order is, to supply him ***out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy winepress***; with sheep or lambs out of the flock, with corn out of the floor, wheat, or barley, or both, and wine out of the winepress; which take in all the necessaries and comforts of life: of that ***wherewith the Lord thy God hath blessed thee thou shall give unto him***; be it what it will, and in proportion to it, as of money as well as goods; it is asked, how much shall be given to him? not less than the value of thirty shekels, whether of one kind or whether of many kinds, according to the thirty shekels for the price of a servant, (Exodus 21:32) . All this may be an emblem both of the servitude the people of God are in to sin, Satan, and the law, while in a state of nature; and of their freedom from it by 185 Christ, and of their sufficiency and fulness of food and raiment, and large measures of divine grace; even all things richly to enjoy, all things pertaining to life and godliness, which are given to them when brought out of that state; who otherwise come

out of it destitute of all good things, having neither food nor clothes, nor money to buy either, but have all from Christ freely and fully.

**DEUT. 15:15.** *And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt,* Where they were used hardly, and their lives were made bitter in hard bondage; and therefore should show the greater compassion to servants, whose case they could not but sympathize with, and have a fellow feeling of *and the Lord thy God redeemed thee;* from the house of bondage and state of slavery, after they had been in it many years: *therefore I command thee this thing today,* to release their servants at the end of six years, and not send them away empty, but generously contribute to them at their release; since when he redeemed them he gave them the spoil of Egypt, and of the sea, as Jarchi remarks; they came out of their bondage state with jewels, and gold, and silver, and raiment, even with great substance; and at the Red sea their spoil was increased which they took from Pharaoh and his host when drowned there; now as they came out of their servitude not empty but full, being sufficiently paid for their hard service, so they should remember to give to their servants liberally, when they made them free.

**DEUT. 15:16.** *And it shall be, if he say unto thee, I will not go away from thee,* Out of his house, nor quit his service: *because he loveth thee and thine house;* his master and his family, and so loath to leave them, but chooses rather to stay with them than have his liberty; hence the Jews say, if his master has not a wife and children, his ear is not to be bored: *because he is well with thee; lives well with him,* is well used by him, wants for nothing, and enjoys peace and quietness, and has everything to make him happy as such a state will admit of, and with the which he is well contented, and highly pleased. This is an emblem of the cheerful and constant obedience of the people of Christ to him their master, flowing from love to him; whom they love above all persons and things, with all their heart and soul, and his house also, the place of his worship, his 186 ordinances, truths, ministers and children; and

therefore choose to be where they are, finding that they are there well used, fare well, having bread enough and to spare, spiritual provisions in plenty; are well clothed with the righteousness of Christ, have the good company of the saints and excellent in the earth, in whom is all their delight; and, above all, the presence of their Lord and master, and the smiles of his countenance.

**DEUT. 15:17.** *Then thou shall take an awl, and thrust it through his ear unto the door,* Not of his master's house, but of the sanhedrim, or court of judicature, according to the Targum of Jonathan, before whom he was to be brought, and declare his desire to continue with his master; (see Gill on "Exodus 21:6"), *and he shall be thy servant for ever;* that is, unto the jubilee, as the same Targum; for then all servants were released, and so Jarchi calls it the ever of jubilee: *and also unto thy maidservant thou shall do likewise;* not bore her ear, for, as both Jarchi and Aben Ezra, and others say, she was not to be bored; though some are of opinion that a maidservant who was willing to continue with her master was to be bored as a manservant; but this respects the manner of dismissing her, or letting her go free, when she was not to go empty, but to be liberally furnished and supplied, as a manservant was.

**DEUT. 15:18.** *It shall not seem hard to thee when thou sendest him away free from thee,* He should not grudge him his liberty, nor what he gives to him when he dismisses him: *for he hath been worth a double hired servant to thee in serving thee six years;* since a hired servant a man is obliged to pay him wages for his work, besides his food, whereas a bondservant received no wages. Aben Ezra remarks, that this proves that a man might not hire himself for more than three years; or however, whereas a hired servant was sometimes hired for so many years, and this is the longest time of any we read of, a servant serving his master six years, his service must be worth double the service of an hired servant, which at most was but three years: *and the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thou doest;*



thus well using thy servants, whether menservants or maidservants. 187

**DEUT. 15:19.** *All the firstling males that come of thy herd, or of thy flock, thou shalt sanctify unto the Lord thy God,* According to the law in (Exodus 13:2,12,13). *thou shalt do no work with the firstling of thy bullock:* as to plough or tread out the corn with it, which were done with other heifers: *nor shear the firstling of thy sheep;* nor was the wool shorn of it to be made use of; one of the Jewish canons runs thus, "if any man weave an hand's breadth of the wool of a firstling into cloth, the cloth is to be burnt."

**DEUT. 15:20.** *Thou shalt eat it before the Lord thy God, year by year,* Which, if understood of male firstlings, as in connection with the preceding verse, only priests might eat of them, being devoted to the Lord; so Jarchi says, to the priest he speaks; but if this respects the Israelites in common, then they must be understood either of female firstlings or second firstlings, which the people voluntarily separated, and which they were not to eat in their own houses, *but in the place which the Lord shall choose,* which was the city of Jerusalem; (see Deuteronomy 12:5), *thou and thy household;* the household of the priest, as Aben Ezra interprets it; but if it designs the same as in (Deuteronomy 12:17,18), then the Israelites and their families are meant.

**DEUT. 15:21.** *And if there be any blemish therein,* In the firstling, as if it be "lame or blind", or have *any ill blemish: thou shall not sacrifice it unto the Lord thy God;* blemishes in any beast made it unfit for sacrifices which were required; and so all peace offerings, vows, and freewill offerings, were to be free from any, (Leviticus 22:19-24 Malachi 1:14), such were not fit for an holy sacrifice or an holy feast.

**DEUT. 15:22.** *Thou shalt eat it within thy gates,* Though it might not be sacrificed, nor eaten as an eucharistic feast at Jerusalem, it might be eaten as common food in their own houses: 188 *the unclean and the clean person shall eat it alike;* such as were ceremonially unclean, by the touch of a dead body or the like,

might partake of it with those that were clean, no difference was to be made: *as the roebuck and as the hart;* which were clean creatures, and used for food, though not for sacrifice; (see Deuteronomy 12:15,22).

**DEUT. 15:23.** *Only thou shalt not eat the blood thereof,* Of the firstling: *thou shalt pour it upon the ground as water;* (See Gill on "Deuteronomy 12:16, 23, 24"). 189

### Deuteronomy 16

This chapter treats of the three grand yearly festivals, of the feast of passover, when, where, and what was to be sacrificed, how to be dressed, and in what manner to be eaten, (Deuteronomy 16:1-8), of the feast of pentecost, when to begin it, where and how it was to be observed, (Deuteronomy 16:9-12), and of the feast of tabernacles, when, where, and how long it was to be kept, (Deuteronomy 16:13-15), which three times in the year all the males were to appear before the Lord, and not empty, (Deuteronomy 16:16,17), an order is given for the appointment of judges in the land, to execute judgment, (Deuteronomy 16:18-20), and the chapter is closed with a caution against planting groves, and setting up images, (Deuteronomy 16:21,22).

**DEUT. 16:1.** *Observe the month of Abib,* Sometimes called Nisan; it answered to part, of our March, and part of April; it was an observable month, to be taken notice of; it was called Abib, from the corn then appearing in ear, and beginning to ripen, and all things being in their verdure; the Septuagint calls it the month of new fruit; it was appointed the first of the months for ecclesiastic things, and was the month in which the Israelites went out of Egypt, and the first passover was kept in it, and therefore deserving of regard; (see Exodus 12:2 13:4) *for in the month of Abib the Lord thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night;* for though they did not set out until morning, when it was day light, and are said to come out in the day, yet it was in the night the Lord did wonders for them, as Onkelos paraphrases this clause; that he smote all the firstborn in Egypt,

and passed over the houses of the Israelites, the door posts being sprinkled with the blood of the passover lamb slain that night, and therefore was a night much to be observed; and it was in the night Pharaoh arose and gave them leave to go; and from that time they were no more under his power, and from thence may be reckoned their coming out of bondage; (see Exodus 12:12,29-31,42). 190

**DEUT. 16:2. *Thou shalt therefore sacrifice the passover unto the Lord thy God,*** In the month Abib, and in the night of that month they came out of Egypt, even on the fourteenth day of it at night, between the two evenings, as the Targum of Jonathan; which was a lamb, and typical of Christ, the passover sacrificed for us, (1 Corinthians 5:7) ***of the flock and the herd;*** that is, you shall sacrifice also the offerings which were offered throughout the seven days of unleavened bread, and these were both sheep and oxen, (Numbers 28:19,24) and are expressly called passover offerings and peace offerings, (2 Chronicles 30:21-24 35:7,8,9), for what was strictly and properly the passover was only of the flock, a lamb, and not of the herd, or a bullock; though Aben Ezra says there were some that thought that in Egypt it was only a lamb or a kid, but now it might be a bullock; which he observes is not right. It may be indeed that the word "passover" here is a general term, comprehending the whole passover solemnity, and all the sacrifices of the seven days: the Jews commonly understand this clause of the Chagigah, or feast of the fifteenth day, the first day of unleavened bread, and so the Targum of Jonathan, "and the sheep and the oxen on the morrow;" some distinguish them thus, the flock for the duty of the passover, the herd for the peace offerings, so Aben Ezra; or as Jarchi interprets it, the flock of the lambs and kids, and the herd for the Chagigah or festival; in the Talmud ; the flock, this is the passover; the herd, this is the Chagigah, so Abendana: there was a Chagigah of the fourteenth day, which was brought with the lamb and eaten first, when the company was too large for the lamb, that their might eat with satiety ; but this was not reckoned obligatory upon them , but

they were bound to bring their Chagigah on the fifteenth day: ***in the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place his name there;*** that is, at Jerusalem, as the event has shown; hence we read of the parents of our Lord going up to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover, (Luke 2:41).

**DEUT. 16:3. *Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it,*** With the passover, as the Targum of Jonathan expresses it; that is, with the passover lamb, nor indeed with any of the passover, or peace offerings, as follows; (see Exodus 12:8) 191 ***seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread therewith;*** with the passover; this plainly shows, that by the passover in the preceding verse is not meant strictly the passover lamb, for that was eaten at once on the night of the fourteenth of the month, and not seven days running, and therefore must be put for the whole solemnity of the feast, and all the sacrifices of it, both the lamb of the fourteenth, and the Chagigah of the fifteenth, and every of the peace offerings of the rest of the days were to be eaten with unleavened bread: ***[even] the bread of affliction;*** so called either from the nature of its being heavy and lumpish, not grateful to the taste nor easy of digestion, and was mortifying and afflicting to be obliged to eat of it seven days together; or rather from the use of it, which was, as Jarchi observes, to bring to remembrance the affliction they were afflicted with in Egypt: ***for thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste;*** and had not time to leaven their dough; so that at first they were obliged through necessity to eat unleavened bread, and afterwards by the command of God in remembrance of it; (see Exodus 12:33,34,39), ***that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life;*** how it was with them then, how they were hurried out with their unleavened dough; and that this might be imprinted on their minds, the master of the family used , at the time of the passover, to break a cake of unleavened bread, and say, this is the bread of affliction, etc. or bread of poverty; as it is the way of poor men to have broken bread, so here is broken bread.

**DEUT. 16:4.** *And there shall be no leavened bread seen with thee in all thy coasts seven days*, For before the passover they were to search diligently every room in the house, and every hole and crevice, that none might remain any where; (see Exodus 12:15,19 13:7), *neither shall there be anything of the flesh, which thou sacrificedst the first day at even, remain all night until the morning*; which may be understood both of the flesh of the passover lamb, as Aben Ezra, according to (Exodus 12:10) and of the flesh of flocks and herds, or of the Chagigah; according to Jarchi this Scripture speaks of the Chagigah of the fourteenth, which was not to remain on the first day of the feast (the fifteenth) until the morning of the second day (the sixteenth). 192

**DEUT. 16:5.** *Thou mayest not sacrifice the passover within any of thy gates*, Or cities, as the Targum of Jonathan, so called because they usually had gates to them, in which public affairs were transacted; but in none of these, only in the city of Jerusalem, the place the Lord chose, might they kill the passover and eat it, and other passover offerings: *which the Lord thy God giveth thee*; in the land of Canaan, and which land was given them of God.

**DEUT. 16:6.** *But at the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place his name in*, To place the ark and the mercy seat with the cherubim over them, where he caused his Shechinah, or divine Majesty, to dwell; and this was at Jerusalem, where the temple was built by Solomon: *there thou shalt sacrifice the passover*; kill and eat the paschal lamb: *at even, at the going down of the sun*; between the two evenings it was killed, before the sun was set, and afterwards at night it was eaten; the Targum of Jonathan is, "and at evening, at the setting of the sun, ye shall eat it until the middle of the night:" *at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt*; or as the same Targum, "the time of the beginning of your redemption out of Egypt;" which was when Pharaoh rose at midnight, and gave them leave to go; from thence their redemption commenced, though they did not actually set out until the morning.

**DEUT. 16:7.** *And thou shalt roast and eat it in the place which the Lord thy God shall choose*, The word for "roast" signifies to "boil", and is justly so used, and so Onkelos here renders it, and the Septuagint version both roast and boil; but it is certain that the passover lamb was not to be boiled, it is expressly forbidden, (Exodus 12:8,9) wherefore some think the Chagigah is here meant, and the other offerings that were offered at this feast; and so in the times of Josiah they roasted the passover with fire, according to the ordinance of God; but the other holy offerings sod or boiled they in pots, cauldrons and pans, and divided them speedily among the people, (2 Chronicles 35:13), but the passover lamb seems plainly to be meant here by the connection of this verse with the preceding verses; 193 wherefore Jarchi observes, that this is to be understood of roasting with fire, though expressed by this word: *and thou shalt turn in the morning, and go unto thy tents*; not in the morning of the fifteenth, after the passover had been killed and eaten on the fourteenth, but in the morning, after the feast of unleavened bread, which lasted seven days, was over; though some think that they might if they would depart home after the passover had been observed, and were not obliged to stay and keep the feast of unleavened bread at Jerusalem, but march to their own cities; and so Aben Ezra observes, that some say a man may go on a feast day to his house and country, but, says he, we do not agree to it; and it appears from the observation of other feasts, which lasted as long as these, that the people did not depart to their tents till the whole was over; (see 1 Kings 8:66 2 Chronicles 7:10) and with this agrees the Targum of Jonathan, "and thou shalt turn in the morning of the going out of the feast, and go to thy cities." Jarchi indeed interprets it afterwards of the second day.

**DEUT. 16:8.** *Six days shalt thou eat unleavened bread*, In other places it is ordered to be eaten seven days, (Exodus 12:15,19 13:6,7) and here it is not said six only; it was to be eaten on the seventh as on the other, though that is here distinguished from

the six, because of special and peculiar service assigned to it, but not because of an exemption from eating unleavened bread on it. The Jews seem to understand this of different corn of which the bread was made, and not of different sort of bread; the Targum of Jonathan is, on the first day ye shall offer the sheaf (the firstfruits of the barley harvest), and on the six days which remain ye shall begin to eat the unleavened bread of the new fruits, and so Jarchi: **and on the seventh day shall be a solemn assembly to the Lord thy God**; a holy convocation, devoted to religious exercises, and the people were restrained, according to the sense of the word, from all servile work, as follows: **thou shalt do no work therein**; that is, the business of their callings, their trades and manufactories; they were obliged to abstain from all kind of work excepting what was necessary for the dressing of food, and in this it differed from a sabbath; (see Exodus 12:16 Leviticus 23:8). 194

**DEUT. 16:9. Seven weeks then shalt thou number unto thee**, And then another feast was to take place, called from hence the feast of weeks, and sometimes Pentecost, from its being the fiftieth day: **begin to number the seven weeks from such time as thou beginnest to put the sickle to the corn**; for the sheaf of the wave offering, as the first fruits of barley harvest, which was done on the morrow after the sabbath in the passover week, and from thence seven weeks or fifty days were reckoned, and the fiftieth day was the feast here ordered to be kept; so the Targum of Jonathan, "after the reaping of the sheaf ye shall begin to number seven weeks;" (see Leviticus 23:15).

**DEUT. 16:10. And thou shall keep the feast of weeks unto the Lord thy God**, The feast of Pentecost, at which time the Spirit was poured down upon the apostles, (Acts 2:1) **with a tribute of a freewill offering of thine hand**; there were two wave loaves which were ordered to be brought and seven lambs, one young bullock and two rams for a burnt offering, together with the meat and drink offerings belonging thereunto, and a kid of the goats for a sin offering, and two lambs for a

peace offering, (Leviticus 23:17-19), and besides all this, there was to be a voluntary contribution brought in their hands; for this was one of those feasts at which all the males were to appear before the Lord, and none of them empty: **which thou shalt give** unto the Lord thy God, **according as the Lord thy God hath blessed thee**; no certain rate was fixed, it was to be a free gift, and in proportion to a man's abilities, or what the Lord had blessed him with.

**DEUT. 16:11. And thou shalt rejoice before the Lord thy God**, Make a liberal feast, and keep it cheerfully, in the presence of God, in the place where he resides, thankfully acknowledging all his mercies and favours: **thou, and thy son, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite that is within thy gates**; that dwelt in the same city, who were all to come with him to Jerusalem at this feast, and to partake of it with him: 195 **and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are among you, in the place which the Lord thy God hath chosen to place his name there**; who should be at Jerusalem at this time.

**DEUT. 16:12. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt**, And now delivered from that bondage; the consideration of which should make them liberal in their freewill offering, and generous in the feast they provided, and compassionate to the stranger, widow, and fatherless: **and thou shalt observe and do these statutes**; concerning the passover, the feast of unleavened bread, and of Pentecost, and the peace offerings and the freewill offerings belonging to them: and nothing could more strongly oblige them to observe them than their redemption from their bondage in Egypt; as nothing more engages to the performance of good works than the consideration of our spiritual and eternal redemption by Christ, (1 Corinthians 6:19,20 Titus 1:14 1 Peter 1:17-19).

**DEUT. 16:13. Thou shalt observe the feast of tabernacles seven days**, Which began on the fifteenth day of Tisri, or September; (see Leviticus 23:34), etc. **after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine**; and

therefore sometimes called the feast of ingathering, (Exodus 23:16), barley harvest began at the passover, and wheat harvest at Pentecost; and before the feast of tabernacles began, the vintage and the gathering of the olives were over, as well as all other summer fruits were got in.

**DEUT. 16:14. *And thou shalt rejoice in thy feast,*** At this feast of tabernacles and ingathering of the fruits of the earth, in token of gratitude and thankfulness for the goodness of God bestowed on them; the Targum of Jonathan adds, with the flute and the pipe, making use of instrumental music to increase the joy on this occasion: *thou and thy son*, etc. (See Gill on "Deuteronomy 16:11")

**DEUT. 16:15. *Seven days shalt thou keep a solemn feast unto the Lord thy God,*** The feast of tabernacles still spoken of: *in the place which the Lord thy God shall choose*: the city of Jerusalem: *because the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy increase, and in all the works of thine hands*; both in the increase of their fields, vineyards, and oliveyards, and also in their several handicraft trades and occupations they were employed in; so Aben Ezra interprets all the works of their hands of merchandise and manufactories: *therefore thou shalt surely rejoice*; extremely, heartily, and sincerely, and not fail to express joy on this occasion, and manifest it by a generous freewill offering to the Lord, and a bountiful entertainment for himself, his family, friends, and others.

**DEUT. 16:16. *Three times a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God,*** This has been observed before, (Exodus 23:17 34:23), and is repeated here for the sake of mentioning the place where they were to appear, which before now was not observed, and indeed it is chiefly for that the other festivals are here recited: *in the place which he shall choose*; which though not expressed is now easily understood; and the three times at which they were to appear there were, in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles; or passover, Pentecost, and tabernacles; and of

numbers of people going up from the country to each of these feasts, we have instances in the New Testament; to the passover, (Luke 2:42,44 John 11:55), to Pentecost, (Acts 2:5-11), to tabernacles, (John 7:2,10), *and they shall not appear before the Lord empty*; Aben Ezra observes, the meaning is, not empty of the tribute of the freewill offering of their hand, and which Jarchi more fully explains of the burnt offerings of appearance, and of the peace offerings of the Chagigah, or money answerable to them; which, according to the Misnah was a meah of silver for a burnt offering, and two pieces of silver for the Chagigah, which weighed thirty two barley corns

**DEUT. 16:17. *Every man shall give as he is able,*** The quantity to be given is not fixed in the law, but the wise men appointed it, as observed on (Deuteronomy 16:16) but it is left by the Lord to the generosity of the people, only giving this general rule, that they should do according to their ability, and as the Lord had prospered them; (see 1 Corinthians 16:2) so Jarchi, "every man that hath many eatables and much goods shall bring many burnt offerings and many peace offerings." 197

**DEUT. 16:18. *Judges and officers shall thou make thee,*** Judges were fixed in the sanhedrim, or court of judicature, and those that have lawsuits come before them; officers are masters of the staff and whip, and they stand before the judges, and go into markets, streets, and shops, to order the weights and measures, and to smite all that do wrong; and all they do is by order of the judges; so Maimonides : the qualifications of judges to be chosen and constituted by the people are thus described by him. In the sanhedrim, greater or lesser, they place only men wise and understanding, expert in the wisdom of the law, and masters of great knowledge, and that know some of the other sciences, as medicine, arithmetic, astronomy, and astrology, the ways of soothsayers, diviners, and wizards, and the vanities of idolatry, that they may know how to judge them; and they set in the sanhedrim only priests, Levites, and Israelites, who are genealogized; nor do they set an old man there,

nor an eunuch, nor a king, but an high priest, if he is qualified with wisdom; and they must be free from blemishes, and of a good stature and appearance, and understand many languages, and not hear by an interpreter; and though all this was not precisely required of the sanhedrim of three judges, yet these same things ought to be in everyone of them, wisdom, and meekness, and fear, and hatred of money, and love of truth, and love of men, and to be of a good report and these were to be placed in ***all thy gates which the Lord thy God giveth thee throughout thy tribes***; that is, in every city, as Onkelos, and so Jarchi; and usually the courts of judicature were held in the gates of cities, and it was only in the land of Israel, not without it, that they were obliged to set up courts of judicature, as Maimonides observes; who also asks, how many courts were fixed in Israel, and what the number they consisted of? to which he answers, they fixed at first the great court in the sanctuary, and it was called the great sanhedrim, and its number were seventy one; and again, they set up two courts of twenty three, one at the door of the court, and the other at the door of the mountain of the house (and so in the Misnah) ; and they set up in every city in Israel, in which were one hundred and twenty (men or families) or more, a lesser sanhedrim, which sat in the gate, and their number were twenty three judges; in a city in which there were not one hundred and twenty, they placed three judges, for there is no court less than three : 198 ***and they shall judge the people with just judgment***; give a right and just sentence in all cases that come before them, according to the laws of God, and the rules of justice and equity.

**DEUT. 16:19. *Thou shall not wrest judgment***, Or pervert it, pass a wrong sentence, or act contrary to justice; this is said to the judges as a direction to them, and so what follows: ***thou shalt not respect persons***; so as to give the cause on account of outward circumstances and relations; as in favour of a rich man against a poor man merely for that reason, or of a near relation or intimate friend and acquaintance against a stranger, but justice should be

administered without favour or affection to any; as Jarchi puts it, he was to make no difference in his address and behaviour to contending parties before him; he was not to be tender and soft to one and hard to the other, or let one stand and another sit: ***neither take a gift***: as a bribe to give the cause wrong: at Thebes, in Egypt, as Diodorus Siculus relates, in a court on a wall, were images of judges to the number of thirty; in the midst of them was the chief judge; having Truth hanging down from his neck (which seems to be in imitation of the Urim of the high priest of the Jews), his eyes shut, and many books by him; by which image was shown, that judges should receive nothing, and that the chief judge should look to truth only: ***for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous***; (see Exodus 23:8) the Jews have a saying, that a judge that takes a bribe, and perverts judgment, does not die of old age, or till his eyes become dim .

**DEUT. 16:20. *That which is altogether just shalt thou follow***, Or “justice”, “justice” , strict justice, and nothing else: ***that thou mayest live and inherit the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee***; that is, continue in the possession of it.

**DEUT. 16:21. *Thou shall not plant thee a grove of any trees***, Of any sort of trees, as oaks or any other; not but that it was lawful to plant trees and groves of them, but not for a religious or idolatrous use: particularly ***near unto the altar of the Lord thy God, which thou shalt make thee***; as the Heathens did near their altars, lest it should be thought to be done for a like 199 superstitious and idolatrous use; which evil the Jews sometimes fell into in the times of wicked reigns, and which their good and pious kings removed and destroyed; (see 2 Kings 18:4 21:3 23:4,7,14,15) and Hecataeus , an Heathen historian, relates of the city of Jerusalem, that there were there no image, nor plantation, nor grove, nor any such thing.

**DEUT. 16:22. *Neither shalt thou set up any image***, Graven or molten, of man, beast, fish, or fowl; the word signifies a “statue or pillar” which was set up for idolatry; for, as Aben Ezra

observes, what was not set up for idolatry was not forbidden, as when erected in memory of any action or remarkable event; (see Joshua 22:10), etc. **which the Lord thy God hateth**; as he does every species, of idolatry, or that has any tendency to it; it being so opposite to his being, perfections, and glory; and therefore nothing should be done like it, because it is so hateful to him. 200

### Deuteronomy 17

This chapter begins with a caution not to sacrifice anything to the Lord that is blemished or ill favoured, (Deuteronomy 17:1), an order is given to put to death men or women guilty of idolatry, where it is clearly proved upon them, (Deuteronomy 17:2-7) and it is directed that when cases are too hard for inferior judges to determine, they should be brought to Jerusalem to the priests, Levites, and judges, which formed the great consistory there, whose sentence was to be adhered unto on pain of death, (Deuteronomy 17:8-13), and rules are given about the choice of a king, and he is informed what he must not do, and what he should do, (Deuteronomy 17:14-20).

**DEUT. 17:1. *Thou shalt not sacrifice unto the Lord thy God any bullock or sheep wherein is blemish***, No sacrifice of any sort, whether burnt offering, sin offering, or peace offering, was to have any blemish in it; typical of the unblemished and immaculate Lamb of God, who, being without sin, offered himself without spot to God, and so could take away the sins of others by the sacrifice of himself; (see Leviticus 22:18-25), **[or] any evilfavouredness**; any sickness or disease upon it of any sort, which made it ill favoured to the sight, or disagreeable to the smell, or however unacceptable for sacrifice: **for that is an abomination to the Lord thy God**; every such blemished and ill favoured sacrifice; (see Malachi 1:8,14).

**DEUT. 17:2. *If there be found among you, within any of thy gates which the Lord thy God giveth thee***, In any of their cities in the land of Canaan: **man or woman that hath wrought wickedness in the sight of the Lord**

**thy God**: as all that is wrought is in the sight of the omniscient God; here it means not any kind of wickedness, for there is none lives without committing sin of one sort or another, all which is known to God the searcher of hearts, but such wickedness as is after described: 201 **in transgressing his covenant**; that is, his law, and particularly the first table of it, which respects divine worship, and which is in the nature of a marriage contract or covenant; which, as that is transgressed by adultery committed by either party, so the covenant between God and Israel was transgressed by idolatry, which is spiritual adultery, and going a whoring after other gods, as it follows:

**DEUT. 17:3. *And hath gone***, The Targum of Jonathan adds, after the evil imagination or concupiscence, lusting after other lovers, and forsaking the true God, and departing from his worship: **and served other gods**; strange gods, the idols of the people, other gods besides the true God; the creature besides the Creator: **and worshipped them**; by bowing down before them, praying to them, or ascribing their mercies and blessings to them, and giving them the glory of them: **either the sun, or moon, or any of the host of heaven**: the two great luminaries, and the planets, constellations, and stars, any of them; which kind of idolatry very early obtained, and was in use at this time among the Heathens, and was an iniquity to be punished by the judge, (Job 31:26- 28), which sin, though so strictly forbidden, the people of Israel sometimes fell into, (2 Kings 21:3 23:4) **which I have not commanded**: and which is a sufficient reason, in matters of worship, to avoid and abstain from anything, that God has not commanded it; for in things of that nature nothing should be done but what he has ordered, who is a jealous God, and will not suffer any to take upon them to direct what should be done as a religious service and duty; and if any are so presumptuous, they must expect it will be resented; (see Isaiah 1:12) and especially with respect to the object of worship, as here, and which relate to things if not forbid expressly, yet tacitly, to do which was an abomination to the Lord.

**DEUT. 17:4. *And it be told thee, and thou hast heard of it, and inquired diligently,*** A report of this kind was not to be neglected; though it was not to be concluded upon as certain by hearsay, it was to be looked into, and the persons that brought it thoroughly examined; so the Targum of Jonathan, “and inquired the witnesses well,” 202 what proof and evidence they could give of the fact, who the persons were, when and where, and in what manner the sin was committed: ***and, behold, [it be] true, [and] the thing certain;*** upon examining the witnesses the case is plain and out of all question: ***that such abomination is wrought in Israel;*** to do it in any country was abominable, but much more so in the land of Israel, among the professing people of God, who had the knowledge of the true God, and had had so many proofs of his deity, his power and providence, as well as received so many favours and blessings from him, and had such laws and statutes given them as no other people had.

**DEUT. 17:5. *Thou shall bring forth that man or that woman which have committed the wicked thing,*** Idolatry in any of the above instances: this must be supposed to be done after he or she have been had before a court of judicature, and have been tried and found guilty, and sentence passed on them, then they were to be brought forth to execution: ***unto thy gates;*** the Targum of Jonathan says, unto the gates of your sanhedrim, or court of judicature; but Jarchi observes, that this is a mistake of the paraphrase, for he says, we are taught by tradition that “thy gate” is the gate in which he has served or committed idolatry; and so says Maimonides, they do not stone a man but at the gate where he served or worshipped; but if the greatest part of the city are Heathens, they stone him at the door of the sanhedrim; and this is received from tradition, that “to thy gates” is the gate at which he served, and not where his judgment is finished: ***[even] that man or that woman;*** this is repeated, and the woman as well as the man is expressed, to show that no compassion is to be had on her as is usual, nor to be spared on account of the weakness and tenderness of her sex, but she as

well as the man must be brought forth and executed according to her sentence, without any mercy shown; and this is observed to show the resentment of the divine Majesty, and his indignation at this sin: ***and shalt stone them with stones until they die;*** of the manner of stoning men and women, (See Gill on “Acts 7:58”).

**DEUT. 17:6. *At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death,*** The idolater found guilty was to be 203 stoned; two witnesses were sufficient to prove a fact, if three the better, but, on the testimony of one, sentence might not be pronounced. Aben Ezra observes, that some say, if two witnesses contradict two other, a third turns the scale and determines the matter; and others say, that two who are wise men will do, and three of others; and because it is said “at the mouth” of these witnesses, it is concluded, that a testimony should be verbal and not written; should not be recorded, neither in pecuniary cases nor in capital ones, but from the mouth of the witnesses, as it is said “at the mouth”, etc. at their mouth, and not from their handwriting: ***[but] at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death;*** so careful is the Lord of the lives of men, that none should be taken away but upon full and sufficient evidence, even in cases in which his own glory and honour is so much concerned.

**DEUT. 17:7. *The hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death,*** Of everyone of them, as Aben Ezra; they were to cast the first stone at him, which would be a further trial and confirmation of their testimony; for if they readily and without reluctance first began the stoning of the idolater, it would not only show their zeal for the honour of the divine Being, but an unconsciousness of guilt in their testimony, and be an encouragement to others to proceed with safety: ***and afterwards the hands of all the people;*** should be employed in taking up stones, and casting at him until he was dead: ***so thou shall put the evil away from among you;*** both the evil man and the evil committed by him, which by this means would be prevented



from spreading, seeing by his death others would be deterred from following his example; as well as the evil of punishment, which otherwise would have come upon the nation, had they connived at so gross an iniquity.

**DEUT. 17:8. *If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment,*** This is spoken to inferior judges in cities in the country, who sometimes might have cases too wonderful and mysterious, as the word signifies, or secret and hidden, such as were out of their reach and beyond their capacity, and so be very difficult for them to determine what should be done: ***between blood and blood;*** that is, whether a man is guilty of shedding innocent blood or not; when such a case is depending between a person charged with it and the relatives of the deceased, or between a man slayer and the avenger of blood, and the question is, whether he may have the 204 benefit of a city of refuge or not, and there are some circumstances attending it which make it difficult how to determine: ***between plea and plea;*** of the plaintiff on one side and of the defendant on the other, and both have so much to say in their own cause, that it is hard to decide which is in the right and which is in the wrong, whether in capital or pecuniary cases; it chiefly if not solely respects civil things in controversy: ***and between stroke and stroke;*** blow or wound which one man received from another, and for which he commences a suit of law upon it, (Exodus 21:18,19) or for assault and battery; and so Aben Ezra interprets it of blows and bruises; but the Jewish writers generally interpret it of the plague, or stroke of leprosy; so the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem; but the examination of such a case did not belong to the civil magistrate, but to a priest; nor was such a person had up to Jerusalem to be searched, but was shut up in a house until further evidence could be got; and, besides, the signs of the leprosy are so distinctly given, that at waiting a proper time, there was seldom or ever any difficulty about determining it: ***[being] matter of controversy within thy gates;*** or what are matters of controversy about anything else; for the phrase is general, as Aben Ezra

observes, and takes in everything in which anything difficult might occur; so Jarchi interprets it of things which the wise men of a city are divided about; one pronounces a person or thing unclean, another clean, one condemning and another justifying, and so far rightly; for this respects not controversies between men, that may be brought into courts of judicature, but controversies or divisions arising in these courts upon them, between the judges themselves, they not agreeing in their opinions: ***then shalt thou arise and get thee up into the place which the Lord thy God shall choose;*** to Jerusalem, to the great sanhedrim or court of judicature, to which the inferior judges were to apply themselves, in matters of moment and difficulty, for instruction, information, and direction; it being supposed that in such a court such like cases may have been brought before them, and they were expert and understanding in them.

**DEUT. 17:9. *Thou shalt come unto the priests, the Levites,*** The priests that are of the tribe of Levi, as the Targum of Jonathan, and so Jarchi; for Aben Ezra says there are priests that are not of the genealogy of Levi; such there 205 were indeed in Jeroboam's time, (1 Kings 12:31 13:33). Maimonides observes, that it is ordered that there should be in the great sanhedrim priests and Levites, as it is said: "and thou shalt come unto the priests, and the judge that shall be in those days, and inquire"; judge is here put for judges, of which the great court consisted, being priests, Levites, and Israelites; (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 16:18"), though others think that only a single person is meant, such as Othniel, Ehud, Gideon, Samson, etc. but then as there was not always such an one in being, I should rather think that the judge here, if a single person, is the president or prince of the great sanhedrim, who succeeded Moses, and sat in his place; and of him and his court, the priests, and Levites and Israelites that composed it, inquiry was to be made: ***and they shall show thee the sentence of judgment;*** give their judgment in the difficult case proposed, and declare what is right to be done, and what sentence is to be pronounced.

**DEUT. 17:10.** *And thou shalt do according to the sentence which they of that place which the Lord shall choose shall show thee*, The judges of the inferior courts were to return and proceed on the difficult case according to the judgment of the great court at Jerusalem, and follow the directions and instructions they should give them: *and thou shalt observe to do according to all that they inform thee*; not only observe and take notice of what they say, but put it in practice, and not in some things and some circumstances only, but in all and everything they should give them information about relating to the case in question.

**DEUT. 17:11.** *According to the sentence of the law which they shall teach thee*, For they were not to make any new law, but to teach the law of God, and so far as their sense and opinion of things agreed with that law they were to be regarded: *and according to the judgment which they shall tell thee, thou shalt do*; what were law and justice, what were fit and right to be done, according to the will of God, which they should declare unto them, that was carefully to be done by them: *thou shalt not decline from the sentence they shall show thee, to the right hand nor to the left*; by setting up after, all their own judgments against theirs to whom they had applied for information and direction, which to have done would have been very insolent and affronting; they were not to depart from the determination they made of the case, on pretence of knowing better, nor even in any minute circumstance to deviate from it, but strictly and closely to keep unto it; though not to follow them so implicitly as to receive from them and embrace things the most absurd and unreasonable, as Jarchi suggests; who says, that their sense was to be abided by, even if they should say that the right hand is the left, and the left hand the right.

**DEUT. 17:12** *And the man that will do presumptuously*, The judge of the country court that makes his application to that at Jerusalem for information and direction; if, after all, he is conceited in his own opinion, and rejects theirs, and is obstinate, and will not be

guided and directed, but will take his own way, and pursue his own sense of things, and act according to that: *and will not hearken to the priest that standeth to minister there before the Lord thy God*; the priests of the tribe of Levi, of whom the court generally consisted, (Deuteronomy 17:9), priest for priests; though some think the high priest is meant, to whom the character very well agrees; but he was not always at the head of the sanhedrim, nor indeed a member of it, unless he had the proper qualifications; (see Deuteronomy 18:18) *or unto the judge*; or judges; (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 17:9"). L'Empereur thinks, that the supreme senate, or grand sanhedrim, was twofold, according to the diversity of ecclesiastic and political matters; since where it treats of the supreme senators, or chief persons in the court, the priest is manifestly distinguished from the judge (i.e. priests or judges); now the man that has asked advice of them, and will not be directed by it, but takes his own way, this being so great a contempt of, and insult upon, the great senate of the nation: *even that man shall die*; and this was by strangling, for so the rebellious older, as such an one is called, was to die according to the Misnah ; and it is said , that the death spoken of in the law absolutely (without specifying what kind of death) is strangling: *and thou shalt put away the evil from Israel*; the evil man that is rebellious against the supreme legislature of the nation, and the evil of contumacy he is guilty of, deterring others from it by his death.

**DEUT. 17:13.** *And all the people shall hear, and fear*, All the people of Israel in their own cities, and particularly the judges in those cities; they shall hear of what is done to the obstinate and disobedient elder, and shall be afraid to commit the like offence, lest they should come into the same punishment: *and do no more presumptuously*; after his example; hence, Jarchi says, they wait till the feast comes, and then put him to death; and so it is said , they bring him up to the great sanhedrim which is at Jerusalem, and there keep him until the feast (the next feast), and put him to death at

the feast, as it is said, *all the people shall hear, and fear.*

**DEUT. 17:14.** *When thou art come unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee,* The land of Canaan: *and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein;* be entirely in the possession of it, and settled in it; it seems to denote some time of continuance in it, as it was, before they thought of setting a king over them, about which are the following instructions: *and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are round about me;* which was what would and did lead them to such a thought and resolution; observing that the neighbouring nations had kings over them, they were desirous of being like them as to the form of their civil government, and have a king as they had.

**DEUT. 17:15.** *Thou shalt in any wise set [him] king over thee whom the Lord thy God shall choose,* The Jews take this to be a command to set a king over them: whereas it is only a permission in case they should desire and determine on having one, as God foresaw they would; and this with a limitation and restriction to appoint none but whom God should choose, and which was their duty and interest to attend unto; for none could choose better for them, and was what he had a right unto, and it became them to submit to it, since he was their King in a civil and special sense, and another was only his viceregent; accordingly we find, when they expressed their desire to have a king in the time of Samuel, and it was granted, though not without some resentment, the Lord chose their first king for them, Saul, and, after him, David, and even Solomon, David's son; and though, in later times, they appointed kings without consulting him, it is complained of, (Hosea 8:4) hence this clause is prefaced in the Targum of Jonathan, 208 "ye shall seek instruction from the Lord, and after set him king, etc." which was to be done by the mouth of a prophet, or by Urim, as Aben Ezra observes: *one from among thy brethren shall thou set king over thee:* that is, one of their own nation, an Israelite, a brother both by nation and religion: *thou mayest not set a*

*stranger over thee that is not thy brother;* one of another nation, that is not of the family of Israel, as Aben Ezra notes, even not an Edomite, though called sometimes their brother; and Herod, who was an Idumean, was set up, not by them, but by the Romans; now in this their king was a type of the King Messiah, of whom it is said, "their nobles shall be of themselves", (Jeremiah 30:21).

**DEUT. 17:16.** *But he shall not multiply horses to himself,* That he might not put his trust and confidence in outward things, as some are apt to trust in horses and chariots; and that he might not tyrannise over and distress his subjects by keeping a number of horses and chariots as a standing army, and chiefly for a reason that follows; he was to have no more than for his own chariot, so Jarchi, and so the Misnah and Maimonides; the Targum of Jonathan restrains it to two: *nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses;* which was a country that abounded with them, and therefore he was not to encourage, and much less oblige his subjects to travel thither or trade with that people for the sake of increasing his stock of horses, (Isaiah 31:1,3) *forasmuch as the Lord hath said unto you, ye shall henceforth return no more that way;* not that going into Egypt on any account whatsoever was forbidden, as for trade and merchandise in other things, or for shelter and safety, for which some good men fled thither; but for outward help and assistance against enemies, and for horses on that account, and particularly in order to dwell there, from which the Jews in the times of Jeremiah were dissuaded by him, and threatened by the Lord with destruction, in case they should, (Jeremiah 42:15-22). When the Lord said this is not certain; it may be when they proposed to make a captain, and return unto Egypt; or he said this in his providence, this was the language of it ever since they came out of it, or however this he now said; (see Deuteronomy 28:68). 209

**DEUT. 17:17.** *Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away,* From attending to the duty of his office, the care

and government of his people, and from serious religion; and particularly from the worship of the true God, as the heart of Solomon was turned away from it by his numerous idolatrous wives, (1 Kings 11:3,4), it is a common notion of the Jews that a king might have eighteen wives, and no more : neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold; he might increase his wealth, but not greatly, lest his heart should be lifted up with pride by it, and lest his subjects should be oppressed and burdened with taxes for that purpose; or he, being possessed of so much, should make use of it to enslave them, and especially should be so elated with it as to deny God, and despise his providence, and disobey his laws; (see Proverbs 30:9). The Jews generally say , that he ought not to multiply more than what will pay the stipends or wages of his servants, and only for the treasury of the house of the Lord, and for the necessity of the congregation (or commonwealth), and for their wars; but not for himself, and his own treasury.

**DEUT. 17:18. *And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom,*** When he is settled on it, and is even amidst all the pomp and glory of it: that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book; which copy the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions interpret of this book of Deuteronomy, which is a summary abstract and repetition of the various laws of God to the people of Israel; though the Jewish writers commonly understand it of the whole Pentateuch, the five books of Moses; which perhaps may be enlarging it too much, as it would be reducing it to too little to restrain it to this law concerning kings, as the Targum of Jonathan. The word "Mishneh", rendered "copy", signifies "double"; hence some take it to mean a double exemplar or copy of the law he was obliged to write out, whereby it would be the more imprinted on his mind, and he would be furnished with it for his use at home and abroad, as the Jewish writers observe; so Jarchi by the copy understands two books of the law, one to be left in his treasury, the other to go out and in with him. The same is said in the Talmud , and with which Maimonides agrees, whose words are, "at the time a king sits on the throne

of his kingdom, he writes for himself a book of the law, besides what his fathers left him; and he copies it out of the book of the court by the order of the sanhedrim of seventy one; if his fathers have left him none, or it is lost, he 210 writes two books of the law, one he leaves in the house of his treasures, which he is commanded, as everyone of Israel is, and the second never departs from him;" but one may seem sufficient on all occasions, and for all purposes; and this was to be wrote out of that which is before the priests and Levites; the original copy of it, which was deposited in the side of the ark; (see Deuteronomy 31:26 2 Kings 22:8).

**DEUT. 17:19. *And it shall be with him,*** Always, when at home or abroad, sitting on his throne or lying down, or wherever he went, unless in such places where it was not proper to read it, as the Jews observe : and he shall read therein all the days of his life; every day of his life; meditate on it night and day, as a good man does, that he might be well versed in it, and know how to govern his people according to it: ***that he may learn to, fear the Lord his God; to serve and worship him*** both internally and externally, he having the fear of God always before his eyes, and on his heart, which the holy law of God directs to and instructs in: ***to keep all the words of this law, and these statutes, to do them;*** not only such as concerned him as a king, but all others that concerned him as a man, a creature subject to the Lord, and as an Israelite belonging to the church and commonwealth of Israel, and so includes all laws, moral, ceremonial, and judicial.

**DEUT. 17:20. *That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren,*** On account of his office, the dignity of it, considering that he was subject to the law of God, and accountable to the Lord for all his actions: ***and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand or to the left;*** not in the least deviate from the law of God in the whole of his conduct, and particularly in the exercise of his kingly office: ***to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom;*** ruling well according to the laws of God being the way to rule long: ***he and his***

*children in the midst of Israel*; this shows, as Jarchi observes, that if his son was fit for the kingdom, he was to be preferred to any other man; for though it was elective, yet to be continued in the same family, provided they walked in the ways of the Lord, and observed his laws. 211

### Deuteronomy 18

This chapter gives an account of the provision made for the priests and Levites, with the reason of it, (Deuteronomy 18:1-5), of allowance of a country Levite to minister at Jerusalem, and take his portion with the rest, (Deuteronomy 18:6-8), and of several persons of bad practices not to be suffered among the people of Israel, (Deuteronomy 18:9-14), and of an extraordinary prophet that should be raised up among them, to whom they should hearken, or it would be the worse for them, (Deuteronomy 18:15-19), but a false prophet was to be put to death, of whom a sign is given by which he might be known, (Deuteronomy 18:20-22).

**DEUT. 18:1. *The priests, the Levites, and all the tribe of Levi, shall have no part nor inheritance with Israel, That is, in the land of Canaan, in the division of it among the tribes: they shall eat the offerings of the Lord made by fire, and his inheritance;*** the meat offerings, (see Leviticus 2:2,3 6:17,18), and whatsoever of the sin offerings and peace offerings which were the Lord's; so Ben Melech says, the flesh of the offerings which belonged to the priests was called fire offerings, after part of it was consumed by fire. All these, with other things, (Numbers 18:8,9), were given, as the Targum of Jonathan expresses it, for their inheritance, in lieu of their having none in the land of Canaan.

**DEUT. 18:2. *Therefore shall they have none inheritance among their brethren,*** Neither of the field, nor of the vineyard, as the above Targum, because provision was made for them otherwise, and especially because ***the Lord is their inheritance, as he hath said unto them,*** (see Gill on "Numbers 18:20"), which as it may be understood in a spiritual sense of their

interest in God, as their covenant God, and of their enjoyment of him, and communion with him; so chiefly in a temporal sense of all those things in the sacrifices which the Lord claimed to himself, and these he gave unto them; so the same Targum interprets this of the twenty four gifts of the priesthood, enumerated (Numbers 18:1-32). 212

**DEUT. 18:3. *And this shall be the priest's due from the people, from them that offer sacrifice,*** Not from the priests, as Jarchi observes, but from those that bring the sacrifices to the priests, particularly the peace offerings: ***whether it be ox or sheep;*** the one of the herd, the other of the flock, creatures used in sacrifice, and takes in goats and the kids of them, rams and lambs: ***and they shall give unto the priest the shoulder, and the two cheeks, and the maw;*** the first of these designs the upper part of the arm that joins to the neck and back, and the next the two cheeks with the tongue, as both Jarchi and Aben Ezra observe, and indeed the whole head is meant; the maw, which the Septuagint interpreters call **enustron**, and other writers **hnustron**, is, according to the philosopher, the fourth and last ventricle or stomach, and which he thus describes; "after the echinus or rough tripe is that which is called **hnustron**, the maw, which is in size larger than the echinus, and in form longer, and has many large and smooth folds;" and **hnustron boov**, the maw of an ox, and the belly of a swine, are reckoned by the poet as delicious food.

**DEUT. 18:4. *The firstfruit also of thy corn, and of thy wine, and of thy oil,*** This is the "terumah", or heave offering, the offering of the firstfruits; what the measure or quantity was is not declared, but is fixed by the Jews; (see Gill on "Exodus 22:29"), ***and the first of the fleece of thy sheep shall thou give him:*** concerning which in the Misnah it is said, the first of the fleece is used in the land and without the land, of which they give the weight of five shekels in Judea, which are ten shekels in Galilee; and they give white wool, and not defiled, enough to make of it a little garment. He that buys a fleece

of the sheep of a Gentile, he is free from the first of the fleece; but if he buys it of his neighbour, if he leaves any of it, the seller is bound, if none the buyer is bound; if there are two sorts, russet and white, and he sells the russet but not the white, the males but not the females, everyone gives for himself. It may be observed in this account, that as much wool was to be given as would make a small garment; enough, says one of the commentators, to 213 make a little garment to minister in; and the least garment fit for a priest to minister in is a girdle. Jarchi's paraphrase of it is, "when thou shearest thy flock every year, give the first of it to the priest; it does not determine the quantity, but our Rabbins fix it to the sixtieth part;" with which agrees the observation of another writer, that there is no quantity fixed for the first of the fleece from the law, but from the words of the Scribes it must not be less than the sixtieth part. There is no obligation to the first of the fleece until five sheep are shorn, and the fleece of everyone of the five must not be less than twelve shekels' weight; but if there is one fleece of them less than twelve shekels, though the five fleeces are more than sixty shekels, lo, this is free; so that, as Maimonides says, the first of the fleece is not less than the weight of a shekel.

**DEUT. 18:5. For the Lord thy God hath chosen him out of all thy tribes,** That is, has chosen the tribe of Levi out of all the other tribes of Israel: **to stand to minister in the name of the Lord;** the priests to minister to the Lord by offering sacrifices, and the Levites to minister to the priests in assisting them in their service; and both their ministry were in the name of the Lord, and for his glory, and done standing; for there was no sitting in the sanctuary; the priestly ministry was only performed standing, whatever was done sitting was rejected; (see Hebrews 10:11), **him and his sons for ever;** Levi and his posterity, or the posterity of the tribe of Levi, were chosen by the Lord to this service, to be employed in it as long as the ceremonial law continued, on which stood the Levitical priesthood; but both are now abolished by Christ, having their accomplishment in him, (Hebrews 7:11 12:18).

**DEUT. 18:6. And if a Levite come from any of thy gates out of Israel, where he sojourned,**

In any of the cities through the land, for they were dispersed all over the country, and employed in instructing and teaching the people; and, excepting the cities which were given them to dwell in out of the various tribes, they were but sojourners: **and come with all the desire of his mind unto the place which the Lord shall choose;** the city of Jerusalem, where the temple would be built, and sacrifices offered, at which the Levites were assisting to the priests, and in various parts of the service of the sanctuary; and to which they are 214 supposed to come with an hearty good will, with great eagerness of soul, and a vehement desire of being employed in the work of the Lord. Though Jarchi interprets it of a priest, that comes and offers his freewill offerings, or what he is obliged to, and even in a ward not his own; or, as otherwise expressed, of the priests that come to the feast, who offer in the ward, and serve in the offerings that come by virtue of the feast, as the additions of the feast, though it is not in their own ward; and indeed every priest was a Levite, though every Levite was not a priest; and the description of him after given, as standing ministering in the name of the Lord, best agrees with a priest.

**DEUT. 18:7. And he shall minister in the name of the Lord his God,** The Targum of Jonathan is, "he shall minister in the name of the Word of the Lord his God;" in the name of Christ, as a type of him, as every priest and every sacrifice were: he was to be allowed to officiate, though it was not his course or turn: **as all his brethren the Levites do, which stand there before the Lord;** daily offering the same sacrifices, and whatsoever are brought unto them; who might be said to stand before the Lord, because they stood at the altar of the Lord, and offered the sacrifices of the people to him; and a country Levite or priest was to be admitted to do the same thing at Jerusalem, and in the temple there, as they did; and this shows that a priest is meant by the Levite.

**DEUT. 18:8. They shall have like portions to eat,** Equal parts of the sacrifices with the

priests that usually ministered there; hence we learn, says Jarchi, that they divided the skins and flesh of the sin offerings; perhaps even such as did not come by virtue of the feast, as the daily sacrifices, and the additions of the sabbath, and the vows, and the freewill offerings: **beside that which cometh by the sale of his patrimony**: for though the priests and Levites had no inheritance divided to them in the land, yet they might buy houses and fields, and leave them to their children, and this may be called their patrimony; now it was not reasonable that they should wholly live upon this, or spend what their fathers left them; but, besides the income of that, were to have their part and portion with their brethren in the sacrifices of the sanctuary. But some interpret these words in a 215 different way, as if they had respect to the gifts and oblations in the several wards in which the priests ministered, as they were ordered by their fathers, Eleazar, Ithamar, Samuel, David, and Solomon; so the Targums of Onkelos, Jonathan, and Jarchi. In the times of Eleazar and Ithamar, there were only eight wards or courses, which ministered in their turns, but in the days of David they were divided into twenty four; (see Gill on "Luke 1:8"); now the ordering and fixing these in their turns is called a vendition or sale; and these country priests might partake of all sacrifices at the feast, excepting those which belonged to him whose course it was that week.

**DEUT. 18:9. When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee**, The land of Canaan, often thus described, to express the goodness of God in bestowing it on them, as a mere favour of his, without any desert of theirs; and so typical of the heavenly Canaan, or eternal life, which is the free gift of God through Christ: **thou shall not learn to do after the abominations of these nations**; the seven nations which before inhabited it; they might learn, as Jarchi observes, to know how corrupt their works were, and to show to their children, that they might not do so; but they were not to learn them so as to practise them, but to have them in the utmost abhorrence, as being

abominable to God, and which should be so to them; some of which are as follow.

**DEUT. 18:10. There shall not be found among you anyone that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire**, To Moloch, which was a sort of lustration by fire, two fires being made, and the child led by a priest between them, and which was an initiation of him into the religion of that deity, and devoting him to it; so Jarchi says, this is the service of Moloch, making piles of fire here and there (on this side and on that), and causing (the children) to pass between them both. Besides this they used to burn them with fire to this deity, perhaps after the performance of this ceremony; (see Deuteronomy 12:31): or that useth divination: according to Aben Ezra this is a general name, and so Ben Melech, the particulars of which are what follow, **an observer of times**, etc. Cicero says, there are two sorts of divination, one is of art, the other of nature. What nation or what city is not moved by prediction, either by the entrails of beasts, or of those that interpret strange things and lightnings, or of soothsayers, or astrologers, or of lots (for these are mostly of art); or of dreams or prophecies, for these two are thought to be natural? Again he says, the Phrygians, Pisidians, and Cilicians, pay a great respect to the signs of birds--from the beginning of the world it was that certain signs were forerunners of certain things; some in the entrails of beasts, some in birds, others in lightnings, others in marvellous things, others in the stars; some in visions and dreams, and others in the words of frantic persons. So the comedian remarks, that if a strange black dog comes into a house, or a snake falls from the tiles through rain, or a hen crows, these, are observed as ominous, by the diviner or soothsayer. Porphyry says, that soothsayers divine by the noise of crows and ravens; and it is said the Arabians, from birds as from oracles, divine what shall come to pass; and that they attain to, as they say, by eating the heart and liver of dragons. Jarchi on this place asks, who is the diviner? one that lays hold on his staff, and says, shall I go? or shall I not go? that is, to

such a place; and according as it fell, so judgment was made; (see Hosea 4:12). Now such sort of diviners and divinations are cautioned against, as not to be admitted among the people of Israel, and regarded by them: **or an observer of times**: and such things the Egyptians were very inquisitive about, what month or day belonged to the gods, what day any one was born on, what shall befall him, how he will die, and what he shall be, as Herodotus relates; and such are they who are here meant, according to R. Akiba that count times and hours, and say such a time is beautiful (or reasonable) to go out in and trade; but the wise men say, as Jarchi observes, these are they that hold the eyes, cast a mist over people's eyes, that they cannot perceive their juggling tricks. Some think the word has the signification of clouds, and so designs such that observed them and their motions, and made their conclusions according to them; (see Leviticus 19:26), **or an enchanter**; according to Jarchi, one that remarks things as ominous; as when a morsel falls out of a man's mouth, a roe stops him in the way, or his staff falls out of his hands: the word has the signification of a serpent in it, and so may signify one that enchants them; (see Psalm 58:4,5) or makes observations by them, as portending this and that, and the other, as before observed of the snake falling from the tiles; and Horace speaks of a serpent lying in the way, and frightening horses, as taken notice of by soothsayers: **or a witch**; of whom (see Exodus 22:18). 217

**DEUT. 18:11. Or a charmer**, That pretends to cure diseases by charms, or a charmer of serpents; according to Jarchi, one that gathers together serpents and scorpions, and other animals, into one place; with which agree the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem, "which bind serpents and scorpions, and all kind of creeping things;" but, according to Aben Ezra, one that says certain words to gather demons together: **or a consulter with familiar spirits**; or the inquirer of "Ob", or the bottle, which the Jews interpret of Python, or one that has the spirit of Python; (see Acts 16:16), a ventriloquist, one that spoke or seemed to

speak out of his belly, or from under his armpits; so it is said in the Misnah of Ob, this is Python, one that speaks out of his arm holes; agreeably to which, Jarchi says, this is that sort of witchcraft which is called Python, and he speaks from his arm holes, and brings up the dead thither: of Baal Ob, or the master of the bottle, say some Jewish writers, one way he uses is, he takes the skull of a dead man, the flesh of which is consumed from it, and he hides it and burns incense to it, and mutters words by it, and hears from it, as if from a dead man: or a wizard: a knowing one, as the word signifies, such an one as we call a cunning man; (See Gill on "Leviticus 19:31") **or a necromancer that inquiries of the dead**, or seeks instruction from them, as the Targum of Jerusalem. Aben Ezra describes him as one that goes to burying grounds, and takes the bone of a dead man, and because of his wild imagination there appears to him the likeness of forms; or as Maimonides, better still, he is one that fasts and sleeps in graveyards, and utters words; and, according to his imagination, sees future things in dreams.

**DEUT. 18:12. For all that do these things are an abomination to the Lord**, Not that do all these things, but whoever does any of them, as Jarchi notes; all such persons that use such unlawful methods, or any of them, to gain knowledge; and likewise all those that consult them, and make use of them; and especially it must be very abominable in the people of Israel to encourage such persons and practices, who had the knowledge of the true God, and him to consult on all occasions; had his law and testimony to attend unto as the rule of their conduct, and his prophets to advise with in matters of difficulty; (see Isaiah 8:20) **and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee**; as well as other sins mentioned in (Leviticus 18:24- 28) and, as before observed from Cicero, all nations have been addicted to the arts of divination here condemned.

**DEUT. 18:13. Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God.**] Sincerely serve and worship him, faithfully adhere to his word, laws,



statutes, and ordinances, and walk uprightly before him.

**DEUT. 18:14.** *For those nations which thou shalt possess hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners,* Such as are before mentioned, and did as they directed them: *but as for thee, the Lord thy God hath not suffered thee so to do;* or, “but thou not so” thou shouldest not do so, not hearken to such persons, but to the Lord thy God, and to his law and testimony; nor art thou left to the deception of such persons: *the Lord thy God hath given thee:* his word and statutes, as a rule to go by, which he has not given to other nations: the Targum of Jonathan adds, “the priests shall ask by Urim and Thummim, and a true prophet shall the Lord your God give unto you;” so that they had no need to hearken to such impostors and deceivers: or, “*as for thee, not so are they whom the Lord thy God giveth thee*”; that is, the prophets whom the Lord would give unto them would not be like the diviners of the Heathens, who imposed on the people and deceived them; but would be men sent and inspired by God, and true and faithful in the discharge of their office; and to hearken to these they are encouraged by the promise of a very eminent one, like to Moses, in the next verse.

**DEUT. 18:15.** *The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet,* Not Joshua, as Aben Ezra, not Jeremiah, as Baal Haturim, nor David, as others; nor a succession of prophets, as Jarchi; for a single person is only spoken of; and there is a dissimilitude between Moses and anyone of the prophets, and all of them in succession, (Deuteronomy 34:10-12), but the Messiah, with whom the whole agrees; and upon this the expectation of a prophet among the Jews was raised, (John 6:14) and is applied to him, 219 and referred to as belonging to him in (Acts 3:22 7:37), who was a prophet mighty in word and deed, and not only foretold future events, as his own sufferings and death, and resurrection from the dead, the destruction of Jerusalem, and other things; but taught and instructed men in the knowledge of divine things, spake as never man did, preached the

Gospel fully and faithfully, so that as the law came by Moses, the doctrine of grace and truth came by him; and he was raised up of God, called, sent, commissioned and qualified by him for the office of a prophet, as well as was raised from the dead as a confirmation of his being that extraordinary person: *from the midst of thee;* he was of Israel, according to the flesh, of the tribe of Judah, and of the house of David, born of a virgin in Bethlehem, preached only in Judea, and was raised from the dead in the midst of them, and of which they were witnesses: *of thy brethren;* the Israelites, of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, and to whom he was sent as a prophet, and among whom he only preached: *like unto me;* the Targum of Jonathan adds, “in the Holy Spirit;” which he received without measure, and in respect of which was superior to Moses, or any of the prophets: he was like to Moses in the faithful discharge of his office, in his familiar converse with God, in the miracles which he wrought; as well as in his being a Mediator, and the Redeemer of his people, as Moses was a mediator between God and the people of Israel, and the deliverer of them out of Egypt; and it is a saying of the Jews themselves, “as was the first redeemer, so is the second.” *unto him ye shall hearken;* externally attend on his ministry, internally receive his doctrine, embrace and profess it; do what is heard from him, hear him, and not another, always and in all things; (see Matthew 17:5).

**DEUT. 18:16.** *According to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God at Horeb,* This was promised them, in answer to their request at Horeb or Mount Sinai, when the law was delivered to them in the terrible manner it was: in the day of the assembly; in which the tribes were gathered 220 together to receive the law, when they were assembled at the foot of the mount for that purpose: *saying, let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God;* which was such a voice of words, attended with so much terror, that they that heard entreated the word might not be spoken to them any more, as the apostle says in (Hebrews 12:19), *neither let me see this great fire any more,*

*that I die not*; out of which the Lord spoke; the congregation of Israel is here represented speaking as if a single person.

**DEUT. 18:17.** *And the Lord said unto me*, Unto Moses, who carried the above request to the Lord: *they have well spoken that which they have spoken*; (see Deuteronomy 5:28).

**DEUT. 18:18.** *I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren like unto thee*, So that it seems this promise or prophecy was first made at Mount Sinai, but now renewed and repeated, and which is nowhere else recorded; (see Deuteronomy 18:15) when they were not only made easy for the present by appointing Moses to receive from the Lord all further notices of his mind and will, but were assured that when it was his pleasure to make a new revelation, or a further discovery of his mind and will, in future times, he would not do it in that terrible way he had delivered the law to them; but would raise up a person of their own flesh and blood, by whom it should be delivered, which was sufficient to prevent their fears for the future: *and will put my word in his mouth*; the doctrines of the Gospel, which come from God, and are the words of truth, faith, righteousness, peace, pardon, life, and salvation; and which Christ says were not his own, as man and Mediator, but his Father's, which he gave unto him, and put into his mouth, as what he should say, teach, and deliver to others; (see John 7:16 8:28 17:6,8) *and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him*; nor did he keep back, but faithfully declared the whole counsel of God; and as he gave him a commandment what he should say, and what he should speak, he was entirely obedient to it; (see John 12:49,50 15:15). 221

**DEUT. 18:19.** *And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words*, To the doctrines of the Gospel, but slight and despise them: *which he shall speak in my name*; in whose name he came, and whose words or doctrines he declared them to be; not as his own, but his Father's, (John 5:43 7:16). *I will require it of him*; or, as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan, "my Word shall require

it of him, or take vengeance on him;" as Christ the Word of God did in the destruction of the Jewish nation, city, and temple; (see Luke 19:27,44).

**DEUT. 18:20.** *But the prophet which shall presume to speak in my name*, Pretending a mission and commission from God, and yet was never sent by him, like the prophets in (Jeremiah 23:21), *which I have not commanded him to speak*; which though true was not to be spoken in a public manner, by assuming a public office, without a divine authority or a commission from God, and much less what was false, and never commanded to be spoken at all by any: *or, that shall speak in the name of other gods*; the idols of the people, as the Targum; as if any should affirm they were sent by Jove, or inspired by Apollo, as some are said to prophesy by Baal, as if they had received their orders and instructions from him, and were inspired by him, (Jeremiah 2:8) *even that prophet shall die*; the Targum of Jonathan is, be killed by the sword, but the Jews generally interpret it of strangling.

**DEUT. 18:21.** *And if thou say in thine heart*, etc] Such a thought arises in the mind, and it appears to be a difficulty, and a query is made upon it, *how shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken?* What marks, signs, and criterions are those by which it may be known that it is not a word that comes from the Lord?

**DEUT. 18:22.** *When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord*, Says he comes from God, is sent by him, and has a commission from him to say so: *if the thing follow not, nor come to pass*; as the prophecy of Hananiah, (Jeremiah 28:3) that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken; or 222 otherwise it would have come to pass, unless when a condition is either expressed or implied, as the repentance or disobedience of a people; (see Jeremiah 18:7-10) *but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously*; in a bold and daring manner, with great impiety and impudence, out of his own head and heart, being a mere device and imagination of his own, which, not having the fear of God, he delivered as coming from the

Lord: ***thou shall not be afraid of him***; not only to reprove him for his wickedness, but also to punish him for it; showing no regard to the high character he assumes, nor to the great pretensions he makes to sanctity, knowledge, and familiarity with God. 223

### Deuteronomy 19

This chapter contains an order to separate three cities of refuge in the land of Canaan, for such that killed a man unawares to flee to, of which those who were guilty of murder purposely were to have no benefit, (Deuteronomy 19:1-13), a law is given against removing landmarks, (Deuteronomy 19:14), and others concerning witnesses, that they should be more than one; be two, or three, (Deuteronomy 19:15), and that a false witness, on conviction, should be punished, (Deuteronomy 19:16-21).

**DEUT. 19:1. *When the Lord thy God hath cut off the nations whose land the Lord thy God giveth thee***, The seven nations of the land of Canaan, whose destruction was of the Lord for their sins, and whose land was a gift of him that had a right to dispose of it to the children of Israel; (see Deuteronomy 12:29) ***and thou succeedest them, and dwellest in their cities, and in their houses***; should possess their land in their stead, by virtue of the gift of it to them by the Lord, and inhabit their cities and houses built by them.

**DEUT. 19:2. *Thou shalt separate three cities for thee in the midst of thy land***, From the cities they took possession of and dwelt in; and indeed from the cities of the Levites, which were given to them to inhabit; three were before ordered to be separated from those inhabited by the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, (Deuteronomy 4:41-43) but these were to be in the midst of the land of Canaan; (see Joshua 20:7,8), ***which the Lord thy God giveth thee to possess it***: which as it is often mentioned when this land is spoken of, so it carries in it a reason here why this order of the Lord's should be readily complied with, the

whole land and all the cities of it being the gift of his to them.

**DEUT. 19:3. *Thou shalt prepare thee a way***, A road, an highway to those cities: on the first of Adar, or February, the magistrates used to meet, and 224 proclaimed, or ordered to be proclaimed, that the ways be repaired, particularly those leading to the cities of refuge; which was done by making them smooth and plain, so that there was not an hill or dale to be seen; and by building bridges over rivers and brooks, that he might escape who had killed anyone through mistake, and not be hindered, lest the avenger of blood should overtake him and kill him; and therefore every obstruction was removed out of the way, that there might be a clear course for him; and at the parting of ways, or where two or more ways met, that he might not be at a loss one moment which way to take, "refuge" was written, as Jarchi and other writers observe, upon posts or pillars erected for that purpose: (See Gill on "Numbers 35:6"), ***and divide the coasts of thy land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee to inherit, in three parts***; in each of which was to be a city of refuge, and those at an equal distance: so Jarchi observes, that this was done that there might be from the beginning of the border (of the land) unto the first city of the cities of refuge, according to the measure of a journey, that there is from that to the second, and so from the second to the third, and so from the third to the other border of the land of Israel: of the situation of these cities, so as to answer to those on the other side Jordan, (See Gill on "Numbers 35:14"), ***that every slayer may flee thither***; to that which is nearest and most convenient for him, that is, who had slain a man unawares, as follows.

**DEUT. 19:4. *And this is the case of the slayer, which shall flee thither, that he may live***, It was not any slayer that might have protection in these cities, but such who were thus and thus circumstanced, or whose case was as follows: ***whoso killeth his neighbour ignorantly***; without intention, as the Targum of Jonathan, did not design it, but was done by him unawares: ***whom he hated not in time past***;

had never shown by words or deeds that he had any hatred of him or enmity to him three days ago; so that if there were no marks of hatred, or proofs of it three days before this happened, it was reckoned an accidental thing, and not done on purpose, as this phrase is usually interpreted; (see Exodus 21:29).

**DEUT. 19:5. *As when a man goeth into the wood with his neighbour to hew wood,*** A wood is a place common to men, and cutting down wood a business which any man might do; whereas a private place, where a man had no right to be, and doing what he had no business with, rendered a case suspicious, and such a man was liable to be taken up when any affair happened of the kind here spoken of; so the Jewish writers observe, "a wood is a public place for him that hurts and him that is hurt to enter there;" both had a right to go thither, the one as well as the other, he to whom the accident came, and he by whom it came; but they say, a court that belongs to a master of a house (a private court) is excepted, where there is no power or liberty for him that hurts or for him that is hurt to enter. Abba Saul says, What is hewing wood? It is what a man has a right to do, or is in his power; it is what is public and common, and not peculiar to any: ***and his hand fetcheth a stroke with the axe to cut down the tree;*** lifts up the axe and is about to strike with it, in order to cut down the tree pitched upon by him or by his neighbour, or both: ***and the head slippeth from the halve;*** the head of the axe from the handle of it, ***or the iron from the wood;*** the iron part of the axe, which is properly the head, from the wooden part, which is laid hold on by the hand; and this not being well fastened, slips and falls off as the blow is fetching, or the stroke just ready to be given: ***and lighteth upon his neighbour, that he die;*** hits him in some part as he stands by him, which proves fatal: ***he shall flee unto one of these cities, and live;*** be safe and secure from the avenger of blood; such an one might have the benefit of one of these cities, for, for such they were designed: the rule with the Jews is, what is done by way of descent (i.e. which comes down and lights upon a man, and is not

levelled against him, or thrown up at him) he is to be exiled (or to have the benefit of a city of refuge), but what is not by way of descent, he is not to have it. Some think this is spoken of the wood which is cleaved, and not of the wood in which the iron is fixed; but the wise men say it is to be so understood; in which they are right.

**DEUT. 19:6. *Lest the avenger of blood pursue the slayer,*** These words are to be connected with (Deuteronomy 19:3), where it is ordered to prepare the way to the cities of refuge, and to divide the land into three parts, for the convenience of the slayer to flee thither, lest he that was next of kin, and incensed against the slayer, and determined to avenge what was done, should pursue after him: ***while his heart is hot;*** by reason of the loss of his relation, upon which his passions being raised, his heart becomes inflamed with wrath and anger; which pushes him upon an eager and hasty pursuit of the slayer, before he sits down and coolly considers and deliberates on the affair: ***and overtake him, because the way is long, and slay him;*** wherefore it was proper that everything should be done to make the way to these cities as easy and as short as it could be: ***whereas he was not worthy of death;*** had not committed an action deserving of it, it being done ignorantly and without notice, as follows: ***inasmuch as he hated him not in time past;*** (See Gill on "Deuteronomy 19:4").

**DEUT. 19:7. *Wherefore I command thee, saying, thou shalt separate three cities for thee.***] This was to be done immediately, as soon as they were settled in the land of Canaan, and established in the possession of it, the inhabitants being cut off, or driven out, or however subdued.

**DEUT. 19:8. *And if the Lord thy God enlarge thy coast,*** Extend it further than it was upon their first settlement, even carry it as far as the river Euphrates, as in the times of Solomon, (1 Kings 4:21,24). Jarchi interprets it of such an enlargement as to give them the land of the Kenites, the Kenizzites and Kadmonites: ***(as he hath sworn unto thy fathers), and give thee all the land which he promised to give unto***

*thy, fathers:* Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; (see Genesis 15:19 26:3,4 28:13,14).

**DEUT. 19:9.** *If thou shalt keep all these commandments to do them, which I command thee this day,* A phrase often met with before, and signifies the putting in practice the several laws, moral, ceremonial, and judicial, which Moses was now making a repetition of, and enjoining the observance of them by a divine authority: *to love the Lord thy God;* which is the source and spring of genuine obedience to the commands of God: 227 *and to walk ever in his ways;* noting constancy and perseverance in them; now all this is mentioned as the condition of the enlargement of their coast, which would be the case if a due and constant regard was had to the laws of God: *and then shall thou add three cities more besides these three;* three more in the land of Canaan, besides the three now ordered to be separated in it, and besides the three on the other side of Jordan; so that there would have been nine in all, if these had been ever added; but that time never came: the Jews expect the addition of these three cities in the days of the Messiah but the Messiah is already come, and all those cities, as they were typical of him, have had their accomplishment in him the antitype of them, of which (See Gill on "Numbers 35:29").

**DEUT. 19:10.** *That innocent blood be not shed,* As it would be if such a slayer as before described was killed by the avenger of blood, before he could get to one of these cities of refuge, or supposing that they had not been appointed, or a sufficient number of them: *which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance;* to be enjoyed by them and their children after them, provided they did not defile it by their sins, but observed the commands of the Lord to obey them and *so blood be upon thee;* the guilt of innocent blood crying for vengeance, as would be the case if such a man's blood was shed as before described; it seems as if the guilt would rather affect the whole land, for not having a proper provision of "asylums" for such persons, than the avenger of blood.

**DEUT. 19:11.** *But if any man hate his neighbour,* Has conceived enmity in his heart against him, bears him a mortal hatred, and has formed a scheme in his mind to take away his life: *and lie in wait for him* knowing and expecting he will come by in such a way at such a time: *and rise up against him;* out of the place where he lay in wait, just at the time he is passing by: *and smite him mortally that he die;* or smite him *in soul or life*; in such a part where life is in danger, and the consequence of it is that he dies: 228 *and fleeth into one of these cities;* for shelter from the avenger of blood.

**DEUT. 19:12.** *Then the elders of his city shall send and fetch him thence,* The Targum of Jonathan is, "the wise men of his city," the sanhedrim, or court of judicature, or at least the civil magistrates of that city, to which such a murderer belonged, had a power to send to the city of refuge whither he was fled, and demand the delivering of him up to them, that his case might be tried before them, and it might appear whether he was a proper person to receive the benefit of the city of refuge or not, and if not, to pass sentence of death upon him, and see it executed as follows: *and deliver him into the hand of the avenger of blood, that he may die;* that is, after the examination and trial of him, and when he is found guilty, and sentence is passed upon him, then he was to be delivered into the hands of the avenger of blood, to be the executioner of that sentence.

**DEUT. 19:13.** *Thine eye shall not pity him,* This is not said to the avenger of blood, who is not to be supposed to have any pity or compassion on such a person, but to the elders, judges, and civil magistrates of the city to which he belonged, who took cognizance of his case; these were to show him no favour on account of his being a citizen, a neighbour, a relation or friend, or a rich man, or on any account whatever; but without favour or affection were to judge him and put him to death as a murderer; (see Numbers 35:21), *but thou shall put away the guilt of innocent blood from Israel;* by which they would be defiled, and be liable to punishment for it; (see Numbers

35:33,34), the Targum of Jonathan is, “shall put away those that shed innocent blood out of Israel;” put them away by death: **that it may go well with thee**; with the whole land and its inhabitants, and with the city particularly, and the magistrates, and men of it, to which the murderer condemned to death belonged, being continued in the enjoyment of all temporal blessings and mercies. 229

**DEUT. 19:14. *Thou shalt not remove thy neighbour’s landmark***, By which one man’s land is distinguished from another; for so to do is to injure a man’s property, and alienate his lands to the use of another, which must be a very great evil, and render those that do it obnoxious to a curse, (Deuteronomy 27:17) **which they of old have set in thine inheritance, which thou shalt inherit in the land that the Lord thy God giveth thee to possess it**; the land of Canaan: this is thought to refer to the bounds and limits set in the land by Eleazar and Joshua, and those concerned with them at the division of it; when not only the tribes were bounded; and distinguished by certain marks, but every man’s estate, and the possession of every family in every tribe which though not as yet done when this law was made, yet, as it respects future times, might be said to be done of old, whenever there was any transgression of it, which it cannot be supposed would be very quickly done; and it is a law not only binding on the inhabitants of the land of Canaan, but all others, it being agreeably to the light and law of nature, and which was regarded among the Heathens, (Proverbs 22:28 23:10 (See Gill on “Hosea 5:10”)).

**DEUT. 19:15. *One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth***, Whether capital sins, or pecuniary debts; or whatsoever sins a man may be guilty of whether sins against the first or second table of the law, whether greater or lesser sins, whether in moral or civil things; the Jews except only in the case of a woman suspected of adultery and of beheading the heifer: **at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established**; either for acquittance

or condemnation; and the witnesses may not, as Jarchi says, write their testimony in a letter, and send it to the sanhedrim, nor may an interpreter stand between the witnesses and the judges; (see Gill on “Deuteronomy 17:6”).

**DEUT. 19:16. *If a false witness rise up against any man***, In a court of judicature: **to testify against him**: that which is not true of him, let it be in what case it will; Aben Ezra instances in idolatry, but it holds good of any other.

**DEUT. 19:17. *Then both the men between whom the controversy is***, The man that bears the false witness, and the man against whom it is borne: 230 **shall stand before the Lord**; as in the presence of him, the omniscient God, and as represented by judges and civil magistrates, whose vicegerents they are; so it seems to be explained in the next words, which are exegetical of these: **before the priests and the judges which shall be in those days**; which shall compose the sanhedrim, or court of judicature; and this seems to confirm it, that by priest and judge, in (Deuteronomy 17:9,12) are meant priests and judges; Jarchi says, this Scripture speaks of witnesses, that is, of the false witness that testifies wrong against a man, and another that contradicts his testimony, and teaches that there is no witness by women; and so it is elsewhere said, an oath of witness is made by men, and not by women; on which it is observed that a woman is not fit to bear witness, as it is written, **then both the men**, men and not women; and the above writer remarks further, that it teaches that they ought to bear testimony standing.

**DEUT. 19:18. *And the judges shall make diligent inquisition***, Into the case before them, into the nature of the evidence and proof that each witness brings for or against; so the Targum of Jonathan, “the judges shall interrogate the witness, by whom these things are said, well;” shall thoroughly examine the testimony given, and look carefully into it: **and, behold, if the witness be a false witness, and hath testified falsely against his brother**; it appears plainly by full evidence that he has testified a falsehood of him.

**DEUT. 19:19.** *Then shall ye do unto him as he had thought to have done unto his brother,*

Inflict the same fine or punishment on him he thought to have brought his brother under by his false testimony of him; whether any pecuniary fine, or whipping and scourging, or the loss of a member, or the value of it, or death itself; whether stoning, strangling, burning, or killing with the sword: though, in the case of accusing a priest's daughter of adultery, as Jarchi observes, such were not to be burnt, as would have been her case if proved, but strangled: 231 *so shalt thou put the evil away from among you;* the evil man that bears a false testimony of his brother, or the guilt of sin which would be incurred by conniving at him.

**DEUT. 19:20.** *And those which remain shall hear, and fear,* Those which survive the false witness shall hear of the punishment inflicted on him, and fear to commit the like sin, lest they should be punished in like manner.

**DEUT. 19:21.** *And thine eye shall not pity,* The false witness when convicted; this is directed to the judges, who should not spare such an one through favour or affection, but pronounce a righteous sentence on him, and see it executed, in proportion to the crime, and that according to the law of retaliation: *but life shall go for life;* in such a case where the life of a person must have gone, if the falsehood of the testimony had not been discovered, the false witness must suffer death; in other cases, where a member would have been lost, or the price of it paid for, the same penalty was to be inflicted: *eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot;* that is, the price of an eye an eye, etc. (see Exodus 21:23,24 Leviticus 24:19,20). 232

## Deuteronomy 20

In this chapter rules are given to be observed in times of war. When a battle was near, a priest was to address the soldiers, and encourage them to fight, (Deuteronomy 20:1-4), then the officers were to declare who might return home, (Deuteronomy 20:5-9) when an enemy's city was approached, peace was to be

proclaimed on certain conditions, which, if accepted of, the inhabitants were to be tributaries and servants, but if not, when taken, all were to be put to the sword, excepting women, children, and cattle, (Deuteronomy 20:10-15), but those of the seven nations were to be utterly destroyed, (Deuteronomy 20:16-18), and, during a siege, no trees bearing fruit fit for food were to be cut down, (Deuteronomy 20:19).

**DEUT. 20:1.** *When thou goest out to battle against thine enemies,* There were two sorts of war the Israelites were engaged in, one commanded and another permitted, as Maimonides distinguishes; one was by the order and appointment of God, as against the seven nations of Canaan; the other was voluntary and arbitrary, which was left to their own discretion and will, as they saw fit, when they were provoked or distressed, or were invaded by their enemies, or they saw reason to go out against them, and either act the offensive or defensive part, or both; and of each of these some things are said in this chapter: *and seest horses and chariots, and a people more than thou;* the Israelites had no horses, and so no chariots, their armies were all infantry; but their neighbouring nations that made war with them had a large cavalry, and multitudes of chariots, which made them very formidable; thus Shishak, king of Egypt, in the times of Rehoboam, came against Jerusalem with 1200 chariots and 60,000 horsemen, and people without number; and Zerah the Ethiopian, in the times of Asa, came against him with an host of 100,000 men, and three hundred chariots, (2 Chronicles 12:2,3 14:9) *be not afraid of them;* because of the strength of their cavalry, the terrible approaches of their chariots, and the number of their men: 233 *for the Lord thy God is with thee;* hence, as Hezekiah says, more would be with them than with their enemies, with whom was an arm of flesh, but with them the Lord their God, (2 Chronicles 32:7,8) and so the Targum of Jonathan, "for all of them shall be reckoned as one horse and one chariot before the Lord your God;" with whom numbers are nothing; and which adds, "for his Word shall be

your help;" the eternal Logos, or Word of God; so Onkelos; and if God and his Word, his only begotten Son, are on the side of his people, they have nothing to fear from enemies, though ever so many and mighty: **which brought thee out of the land of Egypt**; which is observed for the encouragement of their faith and confidence in him; for he that did that for them, what is it he cannot or will not do?

**DEUT. 20:2 And it shall be, when ye are come nigh unto the battle**, When all things are preparing for it, and it seems unavoidable: **that the priest shall approach and speak unto the people**; not any priest, but one appointed for this service; who is called **the anointed of war**, as Jarchi and Aben Ezra observe, and concerning whom Maimonides is more particular; he says, "they appoint a priest to speak to the people at the time of war, and they anoint him with the anointing oil, and he is called the anointed of war; twice the anointed of war speaks unto the people, once in a book at the time they go forth, before they set in battle array, he says to the people, "what man is there", etc. and when he has caused his words to be heard, he returns; at another time, when they are set in array, he says, "fear not", etc." this man seems to be an emblem of Gospel ministers, who are anointed with the gifts and graces of the Spirit of God, and whose business it is to encourage the people of God to fight the Lord's battles against sin, Satan, and the world, and not to be afraid of their spiritual enemies; directing them to take to them the whole armour of God, and to endure hardness as good soldiers of Christ, to follow him the captain of their salvation, <sup>234</sup> assuring them of victory through him who makes them more than conquerors, and that their warfare is or shortly will be accomplished.

**DEUT. 20:3. And shall say unto them, hear, O Israel**, Exciting their attention to what he was about to say, and which, as Jarchi observes, was spoken in the holy tongue, or in the Hebrew language: **you approach this day unto battle against your enemies**; were marching or ready to march, preparing to engage with them, and a battle seemed near at hand: **let not your hearts**

**faint, fear not, and do not tremble, neither be ye terrified because of them**; many words are made use of to animate them against those fears which the strength, number, and appearance of their enemies, would be apt to cause in them. Jarchi observes, that here are four exhortations, answerable to four things which the kings of the nations do (in order to inject terror into their enemies); they shake their shields, to clash them one against another, that hearing their noise they may be afraid of them and flee; they prance their horses, and make them neigh, to cause the noise of the hoofs of their horses to be heard; they shout with their voices, and blow with their trumpets: and accordingly these several clauses are so interpreted in the Misnah "and let not your hearts faint"; at the neighing of the horses, and the brightness of swords: "fear not"; at the clashing of shields: "and do not tremble"; at the sound of trumpets: "neither be ye terrified" at the voice of shouting;" and no doubt but it takes in everything that has a tendency to cause fear, faintness, and dismay, which they are cautioned against.

**DEUT. 20:4. For the Lord your God is he that goeth with you**, To battle, and therefore they had no reason to fear and be dismayed, to be fainthearted, terrified, and tremble: **fear not, I am with thee**, (Isaiah 41:10), this, according to the Misnah, respects the ark, and so Jarchi, which was a symbol of the divine Presence, and went with them to battle; (see Joshua 6:4 1 Samuel 4:3-5) **to fight for you against your enemies, to save you**; to annoy and destroy the one, and to protect and save the other; thus far the anointed priest <sup>235</sup> addressed the people in an oration to this purpose: the account Maimonides gives of it is, that "when they have set their ranks, and are near to a battle, the anointed of war stands on an high place, and all the ranks before him, and says to them in the holy tongue, "hear, O Israel", etc. unto to save you; and then another priest under him causes it to be heard by all the people with an high voice;" he repeated what the anointed of war had said, and expressed it with a loud voice, that all might hear.



**DEUT. 20:5. *And the officers shall speak unto the people,*** What these officers were is not easy to say; they seem not to be officers of the army, for they are distinguished from captains of the armies, (Deuteronomy 20:9), unless they can be thought to be general officers; but the word for them is the same that is used of such that attended the judges and were ministers to them, (Deuteronomy 16:18), and perhaps they were a sort of heralds that published and proclaimed what the anointed of war had said; and so the above writer affirms, that what here follows was first spoken by him, and after that (what is said, (Deuteronomy 20:3,4)) the anointed of war speaks, saying, ***what man is there,*** (to the end of (Deuteronomy 20:7)) thus far the anointed of war speaks, and then an officer causes all the people to hear it with an high voice, saying, ***what man is there that hath built a new house, and hath not dedicated it?*** or perfected it, as the Targum of Jonathan, not quite finished it, has not, as that paraphrast says, fixed in it the door posts, or rather perhaps he means the Mezuzah, or writing, which the Jews thought themselves obliged to fasten to the door posts of their houses; (see Deuteronomy 11:20) until this was done, an house was not thought to be completed; though Jarchi interprets this of inhabitation; of a man's having built a house, but has not yet dwelt in it; (see Deuteronomy 28:30), so Josephus explains it, of its not having been used and enjoyed by a man a full year; but there seems to be something more than all this in dedication; for though it does not signify a consecration or dedication of it to holy uses, as the dedication of the tabernacle and temple, yet there was something done, some ceremony used at entrance into a new house; a good man entered into it, no doubt, with prayer and praise, as the thirtieth psalm was composed by David at 236 the dedication of his house; (see Nehemiah 12:27) and perhaps it was usual to have their friends together, and make a cheerful entertainment on the occasion. Ben Melech on the place, assures us it was a custom to make a feast and merriment at eating the first meal in a new house: ***let him go and return to his house,***

***lest he die in the battle, and another man dedicate it;*** or perfect it, as the above Targum, or dwell in it, as well as have the pleasure of entertaining his friends in it at the first opening of it; this was either a command, enjoining a man, in such a circumstance, to return, and so the rest that follow, or a permission to him, allowing him to do it if he thought fit.

**DEUT. 20:6. *And what man is he that hath planted a vineyard, and hath not yet eaten of it?*** Which he has a right to do, and it is hard for him to be deprived of it, (1 Corinthians 9:7) or "hath not made it common"; according to the law in (Leviticus 19:23-25). Three years the fruit of trees, and so of vines, might not be eaten; in the fourth, they were devoted to the Lord, and might be redeemed from the priest, and so made common; and on the fifth year were eaten in course; so the Targums of Jerusalem, Jonathan, and Jarchi, interpret it: "let him also go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man eat of it"; or make it common, according to the above law: Aben Ezra seems to have another sense of this passage, deriving the word from another, which signifies piping and dancing, and observes, that it was a custom to sing, pipe, and dance in vineyards; and the Septuagint version is, "hath not been made merry of it"; though that may signify not having drank of the wine of it, to be made merry with it.

**DEUT. 20:7. *And what man is there that hath betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her?*** Home to his house and bedded with her; has only betrothed her, but is not properly married to her, the nuptials are not completed; this the Jews understand of anyone betrothed to him, whether a virgin or a widow, or the wife of a deceased brother (yea, they say, if his brother is dead in war, he returns and comes home), but not of a former wife divorced and received again: ***let him go and return unto his house, lest he die in battle, and another man take her;*** or marry her.

**DEUT. 20:8. *And the officers shall speak further unto the people,*** According to Maimonides, the priest the anointed of war spoke to the 237 end of (Deuteronomy 20:7)

and which the officers repeated after him to the people aloud, as before observed; and then after that an officer speaks of himself, or in his own words, and not in those of the priest, as follows; *what man that is fearful*, etc. and then another officer causes all the people to hear it: *and they shall say, what man is there that is fearful and fainthearted?* that has not courage to face his enemies, to whom the terrors of war, and especially of death, are dreadful; the Targum of Jonathan adds, "because of his sin;" whose sins stare him in the face, and lie heavy on his conscience; so that he is afraid he shall die in battle, and in his sins, and suffer divine vengeance; both these senses are observed in the Misnah . According to R. Akiba, a fearful and fainthearted man is one "that cannot stand in battle array, or behold a drawn sword; but R. Jose the Galilean says, he is one that is afraid of the transgressions he has committed; and therefore the law joins to this all those things for which a man may return;" as having built a new house, planted a vineyard, and betrothed a wife; that so it might be thought it was on account of one or other of these that he returned, and not through faintheartedness, either because of the terrors of war, or of his own conscience for his sins: *let him go and return to his house, lest his brethren's heart faint as well as his heart*; lest, by his pale looks and trembling joints, his fainting fits and swoons, he discourage the rest in the same company with him, and by his example make them unfit for war also.

**DEUT. 20:9.** *And it shall be, when the officers have made an end of speaking unto the people*, By reciting what the anointed of war said unto them, and by speeches of their own framing, to encourage to the battle; and all were dismissed that had leave to depart, and chose to take it: *that they shall make captains of armies to lead on the people*; on to battle; that is, either the officers should do this, which may seem to confirm what has been hinted, that they might be generals of the army, who constituted captains under them, to lead the people on to battle: unless this is to be understood of the princes of Israel, or of the

king when they had one, and 238 his ministers; for it does not appear in any instance that the people chose their own officers over them, to go out before them, and lead them on to battle; or "to be at the head of them" ; which the Jewish writers understand in a very different sense; not to head them, or be at the head of them, to direct and command them, but to keep them from deserting: their sense is, that the officers having dismissed persons in the circumstances before described, and set stout men before them, and others behind them (i.e. the army of the people), with iron hatchets in their hands, and every one that sought to return, they had power to cut off his legs; since flight is the beginning of falling before their enemies .

**DEUT. 20:10.** *When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it*, This is to be understood of an arbitrary war, as Jarchi observes; which they engaged in of themselves, or were provoked to by their enemies; which was their own choice, and according to their own will and pleasure; and their conduct towards their enemies in it was different from that in a war with the seven nations, commanded by the Lord, and distinguished from it, (Deuteronomy 20:15,16). *then proclaim peace unto it*; that is, offer them terms of peace; which were, that the inhabitants of it should renounce idolatry, and become their tributaries and servants.

**DEUT. 20:11.** *And it shall be, if it make thee answer of peace*, Comply with the terms of peace offered: *and open unto thee*; the gates of the city and its garrisons, and deliver all into their hands: *then it shall be that all the people that is found therein*; some having made their escape before the surrender of the city: *shall be tributaries unto thee*: pay a yearly tax imposed upon them, as the Moabites sometimes did, and which was paid in lambs and rams with the wool, (2 Kings 3:4) *and they shall serve thee*; not as slaves, or be in continual bondage and servitude; but upon occasion be called out to any public service, as joining them against their enemies, rebuilding palaces and cities, or repairing walls of cities, and the like; and in general acknowledge their dominion over

them, and their own subjection to them, by paying an annual tribute, or 239 sending gifts unto them; thus the Moabites, Syrians, and Edomites, became the servants of David, (2 Samuel 8:2,6,14).

**DEUT. 20:12.** *And if it will make no peace with thee,* Will not accept of terms of peace offered: *but will make war against thee;* come out and fight, or prepare to defend themselves: then thou shalt besiege it; surround and block it up on all sides with their forces; the Jews say only on three sides, leaving one for any to flee and make their escape if they thought fit; (see Gill on "Numbers 31:7").

**DEUT. 20:13.** *And when the Lord thy God hath delivered it into thine hands,* When, what with pressures without, and calamities within, the city is obliged to surrender: this is not to be imputed to the methods and arts of war used in besieging, or to the courage and skill of the besiegers; but to the power and providence of God succeeding means used, and sending famine or pestilence among the besieged, and inclining their hearts to deliver up their city: *thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword;* the men in it, grown persons, as distinguished from little ones in the next verse; because it was owing to these it was not surrendered at once, when terms of peace were offered.

**DEUT. 20:14.** *But the women, the little ones, and the cattle,* These were to be spared; women, because of the weakness of their sex, and subjection to their husbands; and little ones, which take in males as well as females, as Jarchi observes, because of their tender age; and cattle because of their insensibility; all these having had no concern in holding out the siege: *and all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof, shall thou take unto thyself;* gold, silver, merchandise, household goods, utensils in trade, and whatever was of any worth and value to be found in their houses: *and thou shall eat the spoil of thine enemies, which the Lord thy God hath given thee;* that is, enjoy all their wealth and riches, estates and possessions; for this is not to be restrained to things eatable only.

**DEUT. 20:15.** *Thus shalt thou do unto all the cities which are very far off from thee,* As all such were reckoned that were without the land of Israel, even all in their neighbouring nations, the Moabites, Edomites, Ammonites, 240 Syrians, etc. for the children of Israel never went to war with any very distant nations, unless they came unto them and invaded them; nor did they seek to carry their conquests to any great distance, when the most powerful and victorious, as in the days of David and Solomon: *which are not of the cities of these nations;* of these seven nations, as the Targum of Jonathan, the seven nations of the land of Canaan; all that were not of them were accounted foreign cities, and at a distance.

**DEUT. 20:16.** *But of the cities of those people, which the Lord thy God doth give thee for an inheritance,* The cities of the seven nations, six of which are mentioned by name in the next verse: *thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth;* the reason of this severity was because of their wickedness, the capital crimes and gross abominations they were guilty of, and for which they deserved to die; and on account whereof they were reserved to this destruction, when the measure of their iniquities was full, such as idolatry, incest, witchcraft, soothsaying, necromancy, etc. (see Leviticus 18:3,24,25,27 20:2-23 Deuteronomy 18:9-12).

**DEUT. 20:17.** *But thou shalt utterly destroy them,* Men, women, and children: some think this is to be understood only of such cities which did not accept of terms of peace; for they are of opinion that Joshua made proclamation of peace to all the cities of Canaan; which being not complied with, he destroyed them as they fell into his hands; and they suppose that the Gibeonites had not heard of such a proclamation, and therefore were spared; and it is certain that there were many who were suffered to live among them, who it may be thought were allowed on their becoming proselytes, which was one of the terms of peace, as Rahab and her household did, and which is the sense of some of the Jewish writers. Jarchi on the following verse observes, that if they repented, and became proselytes,

they might be received: namely, *the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites*; one of the seven nations is here omitted, the Girgashites, as they are also in (Exodus 23:23). It is said, that "Joshua sent three letters into the land of Israel before they went into it; in the first, whoever would turn (and flee) might; in the second, whoever would make peace might; in the third, whoever would make war might: the Girgashites, believing God, went to 241 Africa, according to (Isaiah 36:17), the land there is Africa; the Gibeonites made peace and dwelt in the land; thirty one kings made war, and fell:" *as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee*; (Deuteronomy 7:1,2).

**DEUT. 20:18.** *That they teach you not to do after all their abominations*, This is another reason why they were to be utterly destroyed, not only because of the abominations which they committed, but to prevent the Israelites being taught by them to do the same; wherefore, as before observed from Jarchi, such as became proselytes were suffered to live among them, because there was no danger of idolatry from them, which even proselytes of the gate renounced; and though all other abominations are included, yet this is particularly respected, as appears from the following clause: *which they have done unto their gods*; to the honour of whom not only many superstitious rites and ceremonies were performed, and idolatrous actions committed, but acts of lewdness, and even unnatural uncleanness: *so should ye sin against the Lord your God*; a sin the most provoking to him, as the sin of idolatry was; and cause his anger to rise to such a degree, as to suffer them to be carried captive from the land he gave them to inherit; and which afterwards, was the case, and that through learning the manners and customs of these people; (see Psalm 106:34-42).

**DEUT. 20:19.** *When thou shalt besiege a city a long time, in making war against it to take it*, Before it will surrender; it holding out the siege a considerable time: the Hebrew text says, "many days"; which the Targum of Jonathan

interprets of all the seven days, to make war against it, in order to subdue it on the sabbath day. Jarchi observes, that "days" signify two, and "many" three; hence it is said, they do not besiege cities of the Gentiles less than three days before the sabbath; and he also says it teaches that peace is opened or proclaimed two or three days first: *thou shalt not destroy the trees thereof by forcing an axe against them*; that is, not cut them down with an axe, such trees as were without the city, and in the power of the besiegers: what sort of trees are meant appears by what follows: 242 *for thou mayest eat of them*; the fruit of them, which shows them to be fruit trees, and gives a reason for not cutting them down, since they would be useful in supplying them with what was agreeable to eat: *and thou shalt not cut them down to employ them in the siege*; in building bulwarks and batteries, and making of machines to cast out stones, and the like, to the annoyance of the besieged; which might as well or better be made of other trees, as in the next verse: *for the tree of the field is man's life*; by the fruit of which, among other things, his life is supported and maintained: but some give a different version and sense of this clause, for the tree of the field is man, or is man's; it is his property; but this is not a sufficient reason why it should not be cut down, whether the property of the besieger, in whose hand it is, or of the besieged, to whom it belonged: or, "for, is the tree of the field a man" ? that has given any reason of being thus used? no; it is no cause of the war, nor of the holding out of the siege; and had it a voice, as Josephus observes, it would complain of injury done it, and apologize for itself. Some supply the negative, "for the tree of the field is not a man"; so the Targum of Onkelos, as well as makes it a comparative form of speech; "for not as a man is the tree of the field, to come out against thee in a siege;" the Targum of Jonathan is, "for not as a man is the tree of the field, to be hid from you in a siege;" or, as some in Aben Ezra express it, "it is not as a man, that it should flee from before thee;" it can neither annoy thee, nor get out of thy way; and therefore to lift up an axe against it, to cut it down, as if it was a

man, and an enemy that stood in the way, is ridiculous and weak; though the sense of the said writer himself is the same with that of our version; but what seems best is to read the words, "**for, O man, of the trees of the field**" (there is enough of them) to bring "**before thee for a bulwark**"; to make use of, without cutting down fruit trees: though some understand it metaphorically, that as the tree of the field is, so is man, or should be, bring forth fruit, that he may not be cut down; (see Matthew 3:10). Plutarch relates, that it was forbidden the worshippers of Osiris to destroy garden trees.

**DEUT. 20:20. Only the trees which thou knowest that they be not trees for meat, Which might be known not only by their not having fruit upon them, but by other tokens, and even at a time of year when there was no fruit on any, which might be sometimes the season of a siege: thou shalt destroy and cut them down;** if so to do was of any disservice to the enemy, or of any service to them, as follows; they had a liberty to destroy them if they would: **and thou shalt build bulwarks against the city that maketh war, until it be subdued;** build bulwarks of the trees cut down, and raise batteries with them, or make machines and engines of the wood of them, to cast stones into the city to annoy the inhabitants of it, in order to make them surrender, and until they do it. All this may be an emblem of the axe being to be laid to fruitless trees in a moral and spiritual sense; and of trees of righteousness, laden with the fruits of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, being preserved and never to be cut down or rooted up; (see Matthew 3:10 Isaiah 60:3 Matthew 15:13). 244

### Deuteronomy 21

This chapter treats of the beheading of the heifer, for the expiation of unknown murder, and the rules to be observed in it, (Deuteronomy 21:1-9) of a beautiful captive woman an Israelite is desirous of having for his wife, and what methods he must take to accomplish it, (Deuteronomy 21:10-14), of giving the double portion to the firstborn, which he must not be deprived of in favour of

the son of a beloved wife, (Deuteronomy 21:15-17) and of the stubborn and rebellious son, who remaining so must be put to death, (Deuteronomy 21:18-21) and of burying a person hanged on a tree the same day he is executed, (Deuteronomy 21:22,23).

**DEUT. 21:1. If one be found slain,** After public war with an enemy, Moses proceeds to speak of a private quarrel and fight of one man with another, in which one is slain, as Aben Ezra observes: **in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee to possess it;** where murders might be committed more secretly, and remain undiscovered, when they came to live in separate cities, towns, and villages, with fields adjacent to them, than now encamped together: **lying in the field;** where the quarrel begun, and where the fight was fought: or, however, where the murderer met with his enemy, and slew him, and left him; it being common for duels to be fought, and murders committed in a field; the first murder in the world was committed in such a place, (Genesis 4:8). The Targum of Jonathan is, "not hidden under an heap, not hanging on a tree, nor swimming on the face of the waters;" which same things are observed in the Misnah, and gathered from some words in the text: **in the land,** and so not under a heap; **lying,** and so not hanging; 245 **in the field,** and so not swimming on the water: **and it be not known who hath slain him;** the parties being alone, and no witnesses of the fact, at least that appear; for, if it was known, the heifer was not beheaded, later mentioned; and one witness in this case was sufficient, and even one that was not otherwise admitted.

**DEUT. 21:2. Then thy elders and thy judges shall come forth,** From the city or cities near to which the murder was committed, to make inquiry about it, and expiation for it; so Aben Ezra interprets it of the elders of the cities near, but others understand it of the elders of the great sanhedrim at Jerusalem; so the Targum of Jonathan, "then shall go out from the great sanhedrim two of thy wise men, and three of thy judges;" and more expressly the Misnah, "three go out from the great sanhedrim in Jerusalem;" R. Judah says five, "it is said "thy

elders" two, and "thy judges" two," and there is no sanhedrim or court of judicature equal (or even), therefore they add to them one more: **and they shall measure unto the cities which are round about him that is slain**; that is, from the place where the slain lies, as Jarchi rightly interprets it; on all sides of it, from the four corner's, as the Targum of Jonathan, the cities round about the slain. Maimonides says, they do not behead the heifer for, nor measure, but to a city in which there is a sanhedrim: if it is found between two cities (that is, at an equal distance), both bring two heifers (Maimonides says they bring one between them, which is most reasonable); but the city of Jerusalem does not bring an heifer to be beheaded: the reason is, because it was not divided to the tribes. This measuring, one would think, should be only necessary when it was not certain which was the nearest city; and yet Maimonides says, even when it was found on the side of a city, which was certainly known to be nearest, they measured; the command, he observes, is to measure. 246

**DEUT. 21:3. And it shall be, that the city which is next unto the slain man**, And so suspected, as the Targum of Jonathan, of the murder; or the murderer is in it, or however belonged to it: **even the elders of the city shall take an heifer**; of a year old, as the same Targum, and so Jarchi; and in this the Jewish writers agree, that it must be a year old, but not two; though heifers of three years old were sometimes used in sacrifice, (Genesis 15:9) a type of Christ, in his strength, laboriousness, and patience; (see Numbers 19:2) **which hath not been wrought with**; in ploughing land, or treading out corn: **and which hath not drawn in the yoke**, which never had any yoke put upon it; or however, if attempted to be put upon it, it would not come under it, and draw with it: no mention is made, as usual, that it should be without blemish: because though in some sense expiatory, yet was not properly a sacrifice, it not being slain and offered where sacrifices were; hence it is said in the Misnah, that a blemish in it did not make it rejected, or unlawful for use: nevertheless, this heifer may

be a type of Christ, whose sufferings, bloodshed, and death, atone for secret and unknown sins, as well as for open and manifest ones, even for all sin; and its being free from labour, and without a yoke, may signify the freedom of Christ from the yoke of sin, and the service of it, and from human traditions; that he was not obliged to any toil and labour he had been concerned in, or to bear the yoke of the law, had he not voluntarily undertaken it of himself; and that he expiated the sins of such who were sons of Belial, children without a yoke; and for the same reason, this heifer not being required to be without blemish, might be because Christ, though he had no sin of his own, was made sin for his people, and reckoned as if he had been a sinner; though indeed, had this been the design of the type, all the sacrifices which typified Christ would not have required such a qualification, to be without blemish, as they did.

**DEUT. 21:4. The elders of that city shall bring down the heifer unto a rough valley**, Cities being generally built on hills, and so had adjacent valleys, to which there was a descent; but here a rough valley, or the rougher part of it, was selected for this purpose. As a valley is low, and this a rough one, it may be an emblem of Christ's being brought into this lower world, from heaven to earth, to do the will of his Father, which was to work out the salvation of his people; and of his coming into the lower parts of the earth, the womb of the virgin, at his incarnation, and to the grave at 247 his death, (Psalm 139:15 Ephesians 4:9), and of the low estate he came into by the assumption of human nature; through appearing in the form of a servant, being in indigent circumstances, and ministered to by others, and needing the assistance of angels in the wilderness and garden, by which it appeared he was made lower than they; by his being despised of men, and forsaken by his Father; all which are proofs of the low estate he was brought into, fitly signified by a valley, and which was a rough valley to him; in which he was roughly treated, his life being sought after in his infancy by Herod, which obliged the flight of his parents

with him into Egypt; and being not received, but rejected by his own, as the King Messiah, whom they would not have to reign over them, and loaded with opprobrious names by them; and who often sought and attempted by various ways to take away his life; and when apprehended and examined before the high priest, and in Pilate's hall, was used in the rudest manner, being spit upon, buffeted, and scourged; and when led out to be crucified, was treated in the most barbarous and scornful manner, and was put to death in the most painful and shameful way; and, above all, was severely handled by the justice of God, being numbered among the transgressors, when the sword of justice was awaked against him, and he was not in the least spared, but wrath came upon him to the uttermost for the sins of his people; so that this world he was brought into proved a rough valley indeed to him. This some take to be an emblem of the hard heart of the murderer who had committed such a barbarous and cruel action as to kill a man; or of the hard heart of a sinner, into which Christ is brought through the ministry of the word; or of the infamous place, Calvary, where Christ was brought to suffer death; but the former is best. Some interpret it, a "strong stream", or "rapid torrent"; so Maimonides and others; and indeed in valleys there are generally streams or brooks of water, but this seems not so well to agree with what follows: **which is neither cared nor sown**; that is, neither ploughed nor sown, but quite an uncultivated place; and this the Jews understand not of what it had been, or then was, but what it should be hereafter; that from henceforward it should never be manured, but lie barren and useless; so it is said in the Misnah, the place is forbid sowing or tilling, but is free to dress flax in, or to dig stones out of it: so R. Joseph Kimchi interprets this of a fat and fruitful valley, which was not to be tilled nor sown from thenceforward for time to come; the reason of which he thinks was, that they might be the 248 more careful of their countries and borders, and how they encouraged bloody minded men to dwell among them; that no slain person might be

found there, and so they lose a choice part of their possessions; and to the same purpose Maimonides: and this became true of the fruitful land of Judea and Jerusalem, after the sufferings and death of Christ there, (Luke 21:24) **and shall strike off the heifer's neck there in the valley**; with an axe, on the back part of it, in the midst of the valley, as the Targum of Jonathan, and the same is said in the Misnah: in this it was a type of Christ, who was put to death at the instigation of the elders of the Jewish nation, (Matthew 27:1,12,20) and without the gates of Jerusalem at Golgotha; (see Hebrews 13:11-13).

**DEUT. 21:5. And the priests the sons of Levi shall come near**, Who were clearly of the tribe of Levi, as Aben Ezra notes; about whom there could be no dispute; for it seems there sometimes were persons in that office, of whom there was some doubt at least whether they were of that tribe; these seem to be such that belonged to the court of judicature at Jerusalem; (see Deuteronomy 17:9), who were to be present at this solemnity, to direct in the performance of it, and to judge and determine in any matter of difficulty that might arise: **for them the Lord thy God hath chosen to minister unto him**; in the service of the sanctuary, by offering sacrifices, etc. **and to bless in the name of the Lord**; the people; (see Numbers 6:23- 27) **and by their word shall every controversy and every stroke be tried**; every controversy between man and man respecting civil things, and every stroke or blow which one man may give another; and whatsoever came before them was tried by them, according to the respective laws given concerning the things in question, and were not determined by them in an arbitrary way, according to their own will and pleasure; (see Deuteronomy 17:8- 11).

**DEUT. 21:6. And all the elders of that city that are next unto the slain man**, The whole court of judicature belonging to it, all the magistracy of it; even though there were an hundred of them, Maimonides says: 249 **shall wash their hands over the heifer that is beheaded in the valley**: in token of their innocence, and this

they did not only for themselves, but for the whole city, being the representatives of it; (see Psalm 26:6 Matthew 27:24). Some think that this is a confirmation of the sense embraced by some, that it was a strong stream to which the heifer was brought; and there might be a stream of water here, and a valley also; though it would be no great difficulty to get from the city, which was near, a sufficient quantity of water to wash the hands of the elders with. This may denote the purification of sin by the blood of Christ, when it is confessed over him; and shows that priests and elders, ministers of the word, as well as others, stand in need of it; and that even those concerned in the death of Christ shared in the benefits of it.

**DEUT. 21:7.** *And they shall answer and say,* The elders of the city, at the time of the washing of their hands: *our hands have not shed this blood;* have been no ways concerned in it, nor accessory to it: the Targum of Jonathan is, "it is manifest before the Lord that he did not come into our hands, nor did we dismiss him, that has shed this blood;" which is more fully explained in the Misnah ; for had they been aware of him, or had any suspicion of him or his design, they would have detained him, or at least would not have suffered him to have departed alone: *neither have our eyes seen;* it, or him; so the Targum of Jerusalem, "our eyes have not seen him that hath shed this blood;" by which expression is meant, that they had no manner of knowledge of the murderer, nor of any circumstance that could lead them to suspect or conclude who he was.

**DEUT. 21:8.** *Be merciful, O Lord, to thy people Israel, whom thou hast redeemed,* Out of Egyptian bondage, and claimed as his own; and therefore it is requested he would be favourable to them, and show them mercy, and not punish them for a sin they were entirely ignorant of, though done by some one among them, whom as yet they could not discover. The words seem to be the words of the elders continued, who having made a declaration of their innocence, humbly request mercy of God, not only for themselves, but for all the people of Israel; yet, both the Targums of 250 Onkelos and

Jonathan take them to be the words of the priests, and so does Jarchi, and the same is affirmed in the Misnah : *and lay not innocent blood unto thy people of Israel's charge;* impute not the guilt of innocent blood to a people in general, when only a single person, and he unknown, is chargeable with it: or put it not "in the midst" of thy people; let it not be placed to the whole, because it cannot be found out whose it is, though it is certain it is one in the midst of them: *and the blood shall be forgiven them;* that is, God will not impute it, and place it to their account, or lay it to their charge; but will graciously consider the beheading of the heifer as an expiation of it: it is said in the Misnah , "if the murderer is found before the heifer is beheaded, it goes forth and feeds among the herd; but if after it is beheaded, it is buried in the same place; and again, if the heifer is beheaded, and after that the murderer is found, he shall be slain," so the Targums, and Jarchi on the next verse.

**DEUT. 21:9.** *So shalt thou put away the guilt of innocent blood from among you,* Which otherwise, the person not being found out, and brought to just punishment for it, would devolve upon the whole. Aben Ezra interprets it the punishment of innocent blood, which, by the above method being taken, would not be inflicted on them: *when thou shalt do that which is right in the sight of the Lord;* as it was to observe this law concerning the beheading of the heifer, with all the rites and ceremonies belonging to it here enjoined; as well as every other command, statute, and ordinance of the Lord, which are all right to be done, (Psalm 19:8).

**DEUT. 21:10.** *When thou goest forth to war against thine enemies,* This refers to an arbitrary war, as Jarchi remarks, which they entered into of themselves, of choice, or through being provoked to it by their enemies; and not a war commanded by the Lord, as that against the seven nations of Canaan, and against Amalek; since there were to be no captives in that war, but all were to be destroyed: 251 *and the Lord thy God hath delivered them into thine hands;* given them



the victory over their enemies, so that they were obliged to surrender themselves to them prisoners of war: **and thou hast taken them captive**, or "led his or their captivity captive"; led them captive who used to lead others, denoting their conquest of victorious nations; see a like phrase in (Psalm 68:18).

**DEUT. 21:11. And seest among the captives a beautiful woman**, Whether a virgin, wife, or widow, according to the Jewish writers, even though another man's wife; so Jarchi, and Maimonides; the marriages of Gentiles being reckoned by the Jews no marriages: **and hast a desire unto her**; being captivated with her beauty; some understand this of the strength and rage of lust, but it rather signifies a passionate desire of enjoying her in a lawful way, as follows: **that thou wouldst have her to thy wife**; to be married to her in a legal manner; for though it was not allowed the Israelites to marry any of the seven nations of Canaan, nor indeed with any of other nations continuing in their idolatry; yet they might marry such as became their captives and servants, and were wholly in their own power; and especially if proselytes to their religion, and which this fair captive was to become before marriage, as is by some gathered from the following things to be done by her; though after all, this was only a permission, because of the hardness of their hearts, as is said of divorce; and that such marriages were not very grateful to God appears, as some have observed, from the ceremonies used before marriage, to render her contemptible; and the easy dismissal of her afterwards, according to the sense of some interpreters.

**DEUT. 21:12. Then thou shalt bring her home to thine house**, In order to make her his wife, after some things were done here directed to; for this is not to be understood of his taking her home with a view to defile her, as Maimonides interprets it; who observes, that when a man's lust so rages that he cannot subdue it, yet he ought not publicly to satisfy his lust, but to have the woman into a private and secret place, as it is said, **thou shalt bring her into the midst of thine house**; nor was he permitted to lie with

her in the camp, nor was it lawful for him to defile her a second time, until her mourning was at an end; though elsewhere he gives a different sense of this passage, and supposes the man to have lain with the captive woman, before the introduction of her into his house; for it is a 252 notion that prevails with the Jewish writers, that an Israelitish soldier might lie once with an Heathen woman taken captive, to gratify his lust, but might not repeat it; so it is said in the Talmud; yet it must be observed, that there are some, though but few, who are of opinion that the first congress was unlawful, and that he might not touch her until certain conditions were fulfilled, and they were married, as R. Jochanan; and which is embraced, supported, and defended by Abarbinel on the place, and in which he is undoubtedly right; and so it is understood by Josephus and Philo; for this law gives no liberty nor countenance to the violation of the beautiful captive. The plain meaning is, that when a Jewish soldier was passionately in love with a captive, and was desirous of making her his wife, he was to take her home to his house, where she was to remain, to see whether his passion of love would subside, or the woman become a proselyte, or however till certain rites were observed, and then he was permitted to marry her: **and she shall shave her head**; either that she might be the less engaging, her flowing locks, or plaited hair, or modish headdress, being removed from her, which had served to excite a passion for her; or as a token of mourning for her present afflicted state and condition; and in afflicted circumstances it was usual to shave the head; (see Job 1:20); and though it was forbidden the Israelites, yet not Gentiles; (Deuteronomy 14:1) **and pare her nails**; this and the former some think were ordered to make her fit to be his wife, and were a sort of purification of her, and an emblem of her having renounced Heathenism, and having departed from it, and laid aside all superfluity of former naughtiness; but this phrase is interpreted in the Targum of Onkelos, "let her nails grow"; and so the Arabic version: and this the Jewish writers say was ordered to be done,

that she might appear ugly and disagreeable to him, and be abhorred by him; so Jarchi, Aben Ezra, and Ben Melech; the same is observed by Maimonides, and is the sense of R. Akiba. Another of their writers think it refers to a custom in some nations to dye their nails. "The daughters of the Heathens (he says) used to adorn the nails of their hands and feet, and dye them with various colours, according to the custom of the Ishmaelites (or Turks); that there might be a variety in their hands, and men might look at them, take them and handle them until the fire of hell, and an evil concupiscence, burned; 253 wherefore this is ordered that they might let them grow, without any preparation or die." But perhaps this neglect of their nails, and suffering them to grow, was in token of mourning as well as shaving the head, as also sometimes even paring the nails was done on the same account.

**DEUT. 21:13. *And she shall put the raiment of her captivity from off her,*** Her beautiful garments, and gay apparel, in which she was taken captive; and which tended to stir up the stronger affection for her, and greater desire after her; and therefore, as some think, were ordered to be removed, to abate the ardour of love to her. Jarchi observes, that the daughters of the Gentiles used to adorn themselves in war, that they might cause others to commit fornication with them; and another writer before referred to says, the daughters of Heathens used to adorn themselves in raiment of silk, and purple, and fine linen, and needlework, to allure and entice men with them; and therefore the law obliges to put off her beautiful garments, and clothe her with old worn out ones, that she might be less agreeable to him; though the putting off her fine clothes, and being clad with sordid ones, might be only as a token of mourning; as it was customary at such times to lay aside richer clothing, and put on sackcloth, (Jon 3:6) ***and shall remain in thine house:*** shut up there, and never stir out, as the same writer interprets it. Maimonides says, that she was to be with him in the house, that going in and out he might see her, and she become abominable to him; though perhaps it

was only that he might have an opportunity of observing her manners, and of conversing with her, in order to make a proselyte of her; so the Targum of Jonathan interprets it of dipping herself, and becoming a proselytess in his house; or else, as the rest, her abiding in the house, and not going out, might be on account of mourning, as follows: ***and bewail her father and her mother a full month;*** who were either dead in the battle, or however she had no hope of seeing them any more, being a captive, and likely to be settled in another man's house in a foreign country, and so take her farewell of her father's house in this mournful manner. The Jews are divided about the sense of these words; some take them simply to signify her parents, others her idols, according to (Jeremiah 2:17). The Targum of Jonathan is, "and weep for the idols of the house of her father and her mother;" 254 meaning not for the loss of them, but for the idolatry of her father's house she was now convinced of, being become a proselytess, according to the paraphrast; but the last seems only to have respect to the loss of her father and mother, which she was to bewail a whole month, or "a moon of days"; as many days as the moon is going its course, which it finishes in twenty seven days, seven hours, and forty three minutes, and this is called the periodical month; but is longer in passing from one conjunction of it with the sun to another, called the synodical month, and its quantity is twenty nine days, twelve hours, and forty four minutes. Maimonides says, she was to stay in his house three months, one month of mourning, and two after that, and then he was to marry her. The reason of this the Targum of Jonathan explains, by paraphrasing the words thus, "and shall stay three months, that it may be known whether she is with child;" that is, by his lying with her before when taken with her beauty, that so he might distinguish this child begotten on her in Heathenism, from what he might have by her after marriage, which is supposed to be the case of Tamar and Absalom; but as there is no foundation in the text for a permission to lie with her before marriage, so neither for these additional months; only one

month was required, which was the usual time for mourning for deceased relations; (see Numbers 20:29 Deuteronomy 34:8) **and after that thou shalt go in unto her**; and not before: **and be her husband, and she shall be thy wife** he continuing to love her, and she having become a proselytess.

**DEUT. 21:14. And it shall be, if thou have no delight in her**; Either some time after marriage: **then thou shalt let her go whither she will**; by a bill of divorce, as the Targum of Jonathan, who understands it in this sense, and as the connection of the words seems to require; or else before marriage, at the month's end, or any time before, that if his affections cooled towards her, and all the above methods tended to abate his love of her, then he was obliged to dismiss her, or to grant her her freedom, and let her go wherever she pleased; she was no longer his captive, nor his servant: 255 **but thou shalt not sell her at all for money**; as he might have done if he had not made such a proposal to her, and obliged her to the observance of such rites and ceremonies as he did, in order to make her his wife: **thou shalt not make merchandise of her**; which seems to express the same thing, and therefore something else is rather intended; as that he should neither make any gain of her by selling her to another, nor retain her in his own service, nor make use of her as a slave; so Jarchi says, that in the Persian language they call service by this word, and which also he says he learnt from an eminent writer of theirs, R. Moses Hadarsan; with which Maimonides agrees, who explains it, shall make no use of her service, or serve himself by her; he should have no profit by her, either by sale, or servitude: **because thou hast humbled her**; which phrase it must be owned is often, used of unlawful commerce with a woman, of defiling her, or violating her chastity; and so may seem to confirm the notion of those who think that he lay with her before he took her to his house, and therefore, upon a refusal to marry her afterwards, was obliged to this loss; though the word signifies any kind of affliction, as this was a very great one, a great mortification to her, to

be taken into his house, to have her head shaved, and her nails pared, or suffered to grow, and her fine clothes changed for sordid ones; and all this with a profession of a design to marry her, and yet after all is deceived and disappointed by him; wherefore for such a conduct toward her he was obliged to give her her freedom.

**DEUT. 21:15. If a man have two wives**, Which is supposed, but not approved of, though permitted because of the hardness of men's hearts; for it was not so from the beginning, when only one man and one woman were created, and joined together in marriage; but as it was connived at, and become customary, a law is made to prevent confusion, and preserve order in families: **one beloved and another hated**; or less loved, yet continued his wife, and not divorced. Aben Ezra observes, this follows upon the former, because it is there said, that though first he had a desire to her (the captive beautiful woman), yet afterwards had no delight in her: **and they have borne him children both, the beloved and the hated**; as Rachel and Leah did to Jacob, who were, the one very much beloved by him, and the other less: 256 **and if the firstborn son be hers that was hated**; or not so much beloved as the other, as was the case in the above instance.

**DEUT. 21:16. Then it shall be, when he maketh his sons to inherit that which he hath**, By a will in writing, or byword of mouth, or by a deed of gift, actually bestowing his goods upon them, and dividing among them what he is for the present possessed of; (see Luke 15:12), **that he may not make the son of the beloved firstborn before the son of the hated, [which is] indeed the firstborn**; that is, when such is the case, that the son of his wife he has the least value for is really his firstborn, he may not, through favour and affection to the wife he loves better, prefer her son, and declare him to be the firstborn, by devising to him or bestowing on him the double portion of his goods; for so to do would not be right, or agreeably to the will and law of God; for though previous to this law the birthright was given to Joseph, the eldest son of Rachel, the most

beloved wife of Jacob, before Reuben who was the son of Leah, less beloved by him, and was in fact his firstborn; yet this was owing to the sin of Reuben, and by the appointment of God; (see Genesis 49:3,4 1 Chronicles 5:2,3).

**DEUT. 21:17. *But he shall acknowledge the son of the hated for the firstborn,*** Own him and declare him to be so, both by his will and the division of goods by him; or he shall “separate” him, as Onkelos; distinguish him from all his other sons, and make known to all, as the Targum of Jonathan, that he is his firstborn: ***by giving him a double portion of all that he hath;*** or, “that is found with him” ; which he was in the possession of when he made his will, or divided his goods; and so refers not to what might come into his hands afterwards, or should be his in reversion afterwards; in this the firstborn had not his double portion, only in what his father was for the present possessed of; so that if a man had two sons, his goods were divided into three parts, and the firstborn took two parts, and the other the third; if three sons, they were divided into four parts, of which the firstborn had two parts, and the others each of them one; if four sons, they were divided into five parts, and the firstborn took two, and the other three one apiece, and so in proportion; the division was made according to their number: ***for he is the beginning of his strength;*** as Jacob said, of Reuben, (see Gill on “Genesis 49:3”) the right of the firstborn is his; before this law was 257 given, there was a birthright, or a privilege belonging to the firstborn, which gave him the preeminence in the family to his brethren; but whether he was entitled to a double portion of goods, previous to this law, is not certain; however, by this it was his right, and might not be alienated from him; for, according to the Jewish canons , “if a man say, such an one my son, the firstborn, shall not take the double portion, and my son such an one shall not inherit with his brethren, he says nothing, cause he disposes contrary to what is written in the law.” This law of the firstborn in the mystery of it may respect our Lord Jesus Christ, the firstborn of God, and the firstborn of Mary;

and who had a double portion of the gifts and grace of the Spirit, or rather the Spirit without measure, the oil of gladness he was anointed with above his fellows, and is the firstborn among many brethren, among whom in all things he has the preeminence; and also the elect of God, the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven, who have a double portion, both temporal and spiritual things, the promise of this life and that to come, grace here and glory hereafter; and the ultimate glory is but one inheritance, they all share alike in, being equally children, and all firstborn; and it may have regard also to the Jewish and Gentile churches, the former was the beloved wife, the latter some time not beloved, and yet the children of the Gentile church have a larger measure of the Spirit than those of the Jewish church had; (see Romans 9:25).

**DEUT. 21:18. *If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son,*** It is observed that this law quickly follows, and is subjoined to that which relates to the marriage of a woman taken captive, because often from such marriages wicked and refractory children have sprung, and which they exemplify in the case of Absalom, whose mother they say David took in war and married: the character of such a son follows, and by which it may be known that he is stubborn and rebellious; stubborn in his nature, and rebellious in his actions; behaves contrary to the laws of God, and the instructions of his parents; what he should do, that he does not; and what he should not do, that he does; will not do what is commanded him, and will do what is forbidden him, notwithstanding all counsels, admonitions, and corrections given him; ***which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother;*** is disobedient to the commands of either of them; see (Proverbs 30:17) 258 and, when they have chastened him, will not hearken to them; when they have reprov'd him by words, and corrected him with blows; the Jews understand this of scourging or beating by the order of the sanhedrim, after admonition given; it is said , “they admonish him before three (a court of judicature consisting of three judges), and they

beat him; but it seems rather to respect private corrections of their own by words and stripes, which having no effect, they were to proceed as follows."

**DEUT. 21:19.** *Then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him,* With their own hands, or cause him to be apprehended by others, in which they were to agree, and which the Jews gather from hence; "if (say they ) the father is willing (to bring him to justice), and the mother not willing, if his father is not willing and the mother is willing, he is not reckoned a stubborn or rebellious son, until they both agree:" *and bring him out unto the elders of his city;* according to the Misnah , the sanhedrim, or court of judicature, consisting of twenty three; for they say, that after he has been admonished and scourged by order of the bench of three, if he returns to his corrupt and wicked ways again, he is judged by the court of twenty three: *and unto the gate of his place;* or city, where the court sat; so the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan, to the gate of the sanhedrim of his place.

**DEUT. 21:20.** *And they shall say unto the elders of his city,* In open court, what follows, at the same time, according to the Targum of Jonathan, acknowledging their own sins, for which such a calamity had befallen them, saying, "we have transgressed the decree of the word of the Lord, because is born unto us a son that is stubborn, etc." (see John 9:2) *this our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice;* one of an obstinate disposition, will have his own will and way, is perverse and refractory; honours not, but despises his parents, and is disobedient to their commands, unruly and ungovernable: the Jews gather many things from hence, for which there is little foundation, as that they must be neither 259 dumb, nor blind, nor deaf; though what they further observe is not much amiss, concerning this rebellious child, that the law respects a son and not a daughter, because a daughter generally is more tractable; and less capable of doing mischief than a son; and a son and not a man, for if at man's estate, and for himself, he is not under the power of his parents; and yet not

a child or a little one, for that is not comprehended in the commands; he must be according to them thirteen years of age and one day, and he must be a son and not a father : *[he is] a glutton and a drunkard;* which, according to the Misnah , is one that eats half a pound of flesh, and drinks half a log of Italian wine; R. Jose says, a pound of flesh and a log of wine; but the decision was not according to him; the first rule stood: now half a pound of flesh, and half a log of wine, which was about three egg shells, or a quarter of a pint, would be at this day reckoned very little by our grandsons of Bacchus, as Schickard observes ; but in an age of severer discipline, as he says, in the tender candidates of temperance, it was reckoned too much, and was a presage of a future glutton: and it must be further observed to denominate him a rebellious son, what he ate and drank was to be what he stole from his parents, and did not eat and drink it at home, but abroad, and in bad company; so Jarchi remarks on the text, he is not guilty until he steals, and eats half a pound of flesh, and drinks half a log of wine; in which he seems to have respect to the Jewish canon , "if he steals from his father and eats it in a place in his father's power, or from others and eats it in a place in their power, or from others and eats it in a place in his father's power; he is not reckoned a stubborn and rebellious son, unless he steals from his father, and eats it in a place in the power of others," (see Proverbs 23:20), the Jews seem to refer to this when they charged Christ with being a glutton and a winebibber, (Matthew 11:19) being desirous of having him thought as such an one.

**DEUT. 21:21.** *And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die,* The populace; that is, after his trial is finished, and he is condemned to die; and he was not stoned until the three first judges were there (by whom he was admonished, and ordered to be beaten), as it said, "this is our son", this is he that was beaten before you ; and according to the Targum of Jonathan, 260 "if he feared (God, and showed any token of repentance) and received instruction, and they (his parents) desired to preserve him alive, they preserved

him; but if he refused and was rebellious, then they stoned him;" but the Jews say this law, and that of retaliation, were never put into execution: ***so shalt thou put away evil from among you***; put a stop to, and prevent such an evil for the future, and remove the guilt of it; or, as the Targum of Jonathan, him that doeth that evil: ***and all Israel shall hear, and fear***; it being to be publicly notified throughout the land, that such an one suffered death for such a crime, which would be a means of deterring others from the same; so Jarchi remarks, "here (says he) a proclamation was necessary to be made by the sanhedrim, as that such an one was stoned because he was stubborn and rebellious;" for the mystical sense of this (see Ephesians 2:2 Colossians 3:6).

**DEUT. 21:22. *And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death***, This before mentioned, or any other that deserves death, any kind of death, as strangling, killing with the sword, burning and stoning, to which the Jews restrain it here: ***and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him, on a tree***; is condemned to stoning, and after that they hang him, as the Targum of Jonathan; and according to the Jewish Rabbins, as Jarchi observes, all that were stoned were to be hanged, and only men, not women; for it is remarked that it is said "him" and not "her": about this there is a dispute in the Misnah; "all that are stoned are hanged, they are the words of R. Eliezer; but the wise men say none are to be hanged but the blasphemers and idolaters; a man is to be hanged with his face to the people, a woman with her face to the tree, they are the words of R. Eliezer; but the wise men say, a man is to be hanged, but no woman, to whom R. Eliezer replied, did not Simeon Ben Shetach hang women in Ashkelon? they answered him, he hung eighty women (at once), but they do not judge or condemn two in one day;" 261 so that this was a particular case at a particular time, and not be drawn into an example: in the same place it is asked, "how they hang one? they fix a beam in the earth, and a piece of wood goes out of it (near the top of it, as one of the commentators remarks), and join his two hands together and hang him;" that is, by his

hand, not by his neck, as with us, but rather in the crucifixion; only in that the hands are spread, and one hand is fastened to one part of the cross beam, and the other to the other end.

**DEUT. 21:23. *His body shall not remain all night upon the tree***, Which is to be understood of any and everyone that was hanged, and not of the rebellious son only; of whom Josephus says, that he was to be stoned by the multitude without the city, and having remained a whole day for a spectacle unto all, was to be buried at night; and indeed such a person was not to remain hanging on the tree any part of the night, but to be taken down at sun setting; so the Targum of Jonathan, "ye shall bury him at sun setting;" so says Maimonides, they hang a man near the setting of the sun and loose him immediately, and if he continues they transgress a negative precept, "his body shall not remain", etc. yea, according to him and to the Misnah, and which agrees with the practice of the Jews to this day, not only those that were put to death by the sanhedrim, but whoever suffered his dead to remain unburied a night transgressed a negative command, unless he kept him for his honour, to get for him a coffin and shroud: ***but thou shalt in any wise bury him in that day***: by all means, if possible; malefactors were not buried in the sepulchre of their fathers, but there were two burying places provided by the sanhedrim, one for those that were stoned and burnt, and another for those that were killed with the sword and strangled; and even the instruments of their death were to be buried also, as Maimonides relates, the tree on which he is hanged is buried with him, that there may be no remembrance of the evil, and they say, this is the tree on which such an one was hanged; and so the stone with which he is stoned, and the sword with which he is killed, and the napkin with which he is strangled, all are buried in the place where he is put to death, but not in the grave itself: ***for he that is hanged is accursed of God***: plainly appears to be so, having committed some foul sin which has brought the curse of God upon him, 262 and which being hanged on a tree was a plain proof and declaration of; and therefore having hereby

suffered the rigour of the law, the curse of it, his body was ordered to be taken down; for the words are not a reason of his being hanged, but a reason why being hanged, and so openly accursed, he should not remain hanging, but be taken down and buried: the meaning is not, as Onkelos gives it, that "because he sinned before the Lord he is hanged," and particularly was guilty of blasphemy; which is given as the reason of his being hanged, and as the sense of this passage; on the mention of which it is said, "it is as if he should say, wherefore is he hanged? because he cursed God, and the name of God was found profaned:" but though this, or any other capital crime, may be allowed to be the reason of the man's being hanged, and so apparently accursed; yet this is not the reason of his being loosed from thence, but his having bore the curse and satisfied the law: and hence this is applied to Christ by the apostle, in (Galatians 3:13) showing, that his hanging on the tree was an indication and proof of his being made sin and a curse for his people, or that he bore the curse of the law for their sins, and that the taking of him down from the tree, and burying him, signified the removing the curse from him and his people for whom he suffered; or that thereby he redeemed them from the curse of the law, as the apostle expresses it: **that thy land be not defiled, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance:** which is another reason for taking down the body from the tree and burying it, lest the land of Canaan, which the Lord had given them for an inheritance, and which was typical of the undefiled inheritance, (1 Peter 1:4) should be polluted, both in a natural sense, through the putrefaction and corruption, and the disagreeable smell of a dead body, and in a ceremonial sense, as every carcass was defiling, if a person but entered where it was; and therefore a dead body was not to be left hanging openly in the air, and rotting there. 263

## Deuteronomy 22

In this chapter are various laws, concerning care of a neighbour's cattle gone astray or in distress, and of anything lost by him,

(Deuteronomy 22:1-4), forbidding one sex to wear the apparel, of another, (Deuteronomy 22:5) and the taking away of the dam with the young found in a bird's nest, (Deuteronomy 22:6,7), ordering battlements to be made in a new house, (Deuteronomy 22:8), prohibiting mixtures in sowing, ploughing, and in garments, (Deuteronomy 22:9-11), requiring fringes on the four quarters of a garment, (Deuteronomy 22:12), fining a man that slanders his wife, upon producing the tokens of her virginity, (Deuteronomy 22:13-19) but if these cannot be produced, then orders are given that she be put to death, (Deuteronomy 22:20-21), then follow other laws, punishing with death the adulterer and adulteress, and one that hath ravished a betrothed damsel, (Deuteronomy 22:22-27), amercing a person that lies with a virgin not betrothed and she consenting, and obliging him to marry her, and not suffering him to divorce her, (Deuteronomy 22:28-29) and another against a man's lying with his father's wife, (Deuteronomy 22:30).

**DEUT. 22:1. *Thou shalt not see thy brother's ox or his sheep go astray***, Or "driven away"; frightened and starved away from the herd or from the flock by a wolf or dog; and the ox and sheep are put for every other creature a man has, as camels, asses, etc. which last sort is after mentioned; and a brother means not one in the natural relation of kindred only, for it is supposed, in the next verse, that he might not only be at a distance, but unknown; nor by religion only, or one of the commonwealth or church of the Jews, for what is enjoined is a piece of humanity the law of nature requires and directs unto, and is even to be done to enemies, (Exodus 23:4) and hide thyself from them; make as if he did not see them, and so be entirely negligent of them, and takes no care and show no concern about them, but let them go on wandering from the herd and flock from whence they were driven, and to which they cannot find the way of themselves: 264 ***thou shalt in any case bring them again to thy brother:*** to his herd or flock, or to his house, and deliver them into his own hands, or to the care of his servants.

**DEUT. 22:2. *And if thy brother be not nigh unto thee,*** Does not live in the same neighbourhood, but at some considerable distance; so that he cannot soon and easily be informed of his cattle, or they be sent to him: ***or if thou know him not;*** the owner of them, what is his name, or where he lives: ***then thou shalt bring it into thine house;*** not into his dwelling house, but some out house, barn, or stable: ***and it shall be with thee;*** remain in his custody, and be taken care of by him; and, as the Targum of Jonathan says, "be fed and nourished by him"; for, according to the Jewish canon, whatsoever could work and eat, that should work and eat, and whatsoever did not work and eat was to be sold; for which there was a set time, as the commentators say, for large cattle, as oxen, twelve months; for lesser cattle, as sheep, goats, etc. three months, here it is fixed, ***until thy brother seek after it;*** though in the mean while the finder was to make use of means, whereby the owner might be informed of it; for whatsoever was lost, in which were marks and signs by which inquiries might be made, were to be proclaimed; (and it is asked) how long a man was obliged to proclaim? until it was known to his neighbours; some say (he must proclaim it) at three feasts, and seven days after the last feast, so that he may go home three days, and return three days, and proclaim one day; if (the owner) tells what is lost, but does not tell the marks or signs, he may not give it him; and a deceiver, though he tells the signs, he may not give it him, as it is said, "until thy brother seek after it"; until thou inquirest of thy brother whether he is a deceiver or not: and elsewhere it is said, formerly if a man lost anything, and gave the signs or marks of it, he took it; but after deceivers increased, it was ordered to be said to him, bring witnesses that thou art not a deceiver, and take it; and in the same place it is observed, that there was at Jerusalem a stone, called Eben Toim, "the stone of strays", and whoever had lost or found anything repaired thither, and gave the signs and marks of it, and took it: ***and thou shalt restore it to him again;*** he having made it fully to appear to be his, and having defrayed all

expenses in advertising and keeping it; but if 265 no owner appear to claim it, or not to satisfaction, the finder was to keep it as his own; but otherwise he was by all means to restore it, or, as in (Deuteronomy 23:1) "in restoring thou shalt restore them", that is, certainly restore them; and continually wherever it so happens: the Jewish canon is, "if he restores it, and afterwards it strays away, and he restores it again and it strays away, even though four or five times, he is bound to restore it; as it is said, "in restoring thou shalt restore them"; Maimonides says, that even an hundred times he is bound to restore them."

**DEUT. 22:3. *In like manner shall thou do with his ass,*** As with his ox or sheep when astray, and found, keep it until it is owned, and then restore it; this is expressly mentioned in (Exodus 23:4) ***and so shalt thou do with his raiment;*** if that is lost and found, it must be restored to the owner, he describing it; a garment is particularly mentioned, it is said, because in every garment there is a mark or sign by which the owners can inquire about it; for it is made by the hands of men, and does not come from anything common: ***and with all lost things of thy brother's, which he hath lost, and thou hast found, shalt thou do likewise:*** this comprehends everything that is lost, that is properly so; it is asked; "what is a lost thing? if a man finds an ox or a cow feeding in the way, this is not a lost thing; an ass whose instruments are inverted, and a cow running among the vineyards, this is a lost thing:" ***thou mayest not hide thyself:*** from seeing it and taking care of it, in order to restore it to the right owner; or dissemble a sight of it, and pretend he never saw it, and so entirely neglect it. In some instances the Jews allow they were not obliged to take any notice or care of it, as, "if a man find a cow in a cow house (which is not shut), he is not obliged (to take care of it); if in a public place, he is obliged; if it is in a burying ground he may not defile himself for it."

**DEUT. 22:4. *Thou shalt not see thy brother's ox or his ass fall down by the way,*** And lie under his burden, not being able to rise with it of himself, nor with all the assistance about it,



without further help: 266 **and hide thyself from them**; cover thine eyes, or turn them another way, and make as if thou didst not see them in distress: **thou shalt surely help him to lift them up again**; that is, help the brother and owner of it, the ox and ass; assist him in getting them up again, and lay on their burden, and fasten them aright, which either were rolled off by the fall, or were obliged to be taken off in order to raise them up; and if this was to be done for an enemy, then much more for a brother, as is required, (see Gill on "Exodus 23:5"), or "lifting up, thou shall lift them up with him"; that is, most certainly do it, and lift with all his strength, and as often as there is occasion; if they fell down again after raised up, help is still to be continued, even, as Maimonides says, though it was an hundred times.

**DEUT. 22:5. The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man**, It being very unseemly and impudent, and contrary to the modesty of her sex; or there shall not be upon her any "instrument of a man", any utensil of his which he makes use of in his trade and business; as if she was employed in it, when her business was not to do the work of men, but to take care of her house and family; and so this law may be opposed to the customs of the Egyptians, as is thought, from whom the Israelites were lately come; whose women, as Herodotus relates, used to trade and merchandise abroad, while the men kept at home; and the word also signifies armour, as Onkelos renders it; and so here forbids women putting on a military habit and going with men to war, as was usual with the eastern women; and so Maimonides illustrates it, by putting a mitre or an helmet on her head, and clothing herself with a coat of mail; and in like manner Josephus explains it, "take heed, especially in war, that a woman do not make use of the habit of a man, or a man that of a woman;" nor is he to be found fault with so much as he is by a learned writer, since he does not restrain it wholly to war, though he thinks it may have a special regard to that; for no doubt the law respects the times of peace as well as war, in

neither of which such a practice should obtain: but the Targum of Jonathan very wrongly limits it to the wearing fringed garments, and to phylacteries, which belonged to men: **neither shall a man put on a woman's garment**; which would betray effeminacy and softness unbecoming men, and would lead the way to many 267 impurities, by giving an opportunity of mixing with women, and so to commit fornication and adultery with them; to prevent which and to preserve chastity this law seems to be made; and since in nature a difference of sexes is made, it is proper and necessary that this should be known by difference of dress, or otherwise many evils might follow; and this precept is agreeably to the law and light of nature: it is observed by an Heathen writer, that there is a twofold distribution of the law, the one written, the other not written; what we use in civil things is written, what is from nature and use is unwritten, as to walk naked in the market, or to put on a woman's garment: and change of the clothes of sexes was used among the Heathens by way of punishment, as of the soldiers that deserted, and of adulteresses; so abominable was it accounted: indeed it may be lawful in some cases, where life is in danger, to escape that, and provided chastity is preserved: **for all that do so are an abomination to the Lord thy God**; which is a reason sufficient why such a practice should not be used. Some from this clause have been led to conclude, that respect is had to some customs of this kind used in idolatrous worship, which are always abominable to the Lord. So Maimonides observes, that in a book of the Zabians, called "Tomtom", it is commanded, that a man should wear a woman's garment coloured when he stood before the star of Venus, and likewise that a woman should put on a coat of mail and warlike armour when she stood before the star of Mars; which he takes to be one reason of this law, though besides that he gives another, because hereby concupiscence would be excited, and an occasion for whoredom given: that there was some such customs among the Heathens may be confirmed from Macrobius, and Servius as

has been observed by Grotius; the former of which relates, that Philochorus affirmed that Venus is the moon, and that men sacrificed to her in women's garments, and women in men's; and for this reason, because she was thought to be both male and female; and the latter says, there was an image of Venus in Cyprus with a woman's body and garment, and with the sceptre and distinction of a man, to whom the men sacrificed in women's garments, and women in men's garments; and, as the above learned commentator observes, there were many colonies of the Phoenicians in Cyprus, from whom this custom might come; and to prevent it obtaining among the Israelites in any degree, who were now coming into their country, it is thought this law was made; for the priests of the 268 Assyrian Venus made use of women's apparel, and in the feasts of Bacchus men disguised themselves like women.

**DEUT. 22:6. *If a bird's nest chance to be before thee in any tree, or on the ground,***

Which are the usual places in which birds build their nests; and this, as Jarchi observes, excepts such nests that are prepared, that is, that are purposely made for fowls kept at home; and with which agrees the Jewish canon, which says "the letting go (the dam out of) the nest is not used but of a fowl, and it is not used but of what is not prepared; what is that which is not prepared? such as geese and hens, whose nest is in an orchard; but if their nest is in the house, and so doves kept at home, a man is free from letting (the dam) go;" that is, he is not obliged to let it go; and this is to be understood of clean birds only; so the Targum of Jonathan, "the nests of clean birds;" agreeably to the same canons and the explanation of them, "an unclean bird is free from letting go; so an unclean bird, that sits upon the eggs of a clean bird, also a clean bird that sits upon the eggs of an unclean bird, are free from letting go," or persons are not obliged to let such go: ***whether they be young ones or eggs;*** that are in the nest; and the Jewish canon is, "if there is but one young one, or one egg, a man is obliged to let go the dam, as it is said a nest: a nest is a word of a large sense:" ***and the dam sitting***

***upon the young or upon eggs, thou shalt not take the dam with the young;*** according to the above canon, "if she is flying at the time her wings reach the nest, a man is bound to let her go; but if her wings touch not the nest, he is free from letting her go--if the young ones are capable of flying, or the eggs rotten, he is free from letting her go, as it is said, and the dam sitting, etc. as the young are alive, so the eggs must be firm and sound, rotten ones are excepted; and as eggs have need of their dam, so the young have need of their dam; those (therefore) that can fly are excepted:" the dam is not to be taken with her young upon any account; yea, it is said, not even to cleanse a leper; and whoever does take her is to be beaten: this law was made partly to preserve the species of birds, and prevent the decrease of them; for a dam let go might breed again, and to this purpose are the verses ascribed to Phocylides, which contain the substance of this law, and this reason of it: and partly, as Maimonides observes, that the dam might not be afflicted at the sight of the spoil of her young; for this law does not prohibit the taking of her in any other place but in her nest, nor after her young are taken, but not together; and, as the same writer remarks, if the law would have such care taken of beasts and birds, that they might be freed from sorrow and distress, how much more of man? Wherefore the intention of this law is to teach humanity, compassion, and pity in men to one another, and to forbid cruelty, covetousness, and such like vices; as also to instruct in the doctrine of Providence, which has a respect to birds; and our Lord may be thought to have this law in view, (Luke 12:6).

**DEUT. 22:7. *But thou shalt in any wise let the dam go, and take the young to thee,*** Or "in letting go, let go", or "in sending, send away"; that is, willingly, certainly, entirely, frequently, always; so the Jewish canons, "if anyone lets her go, and she returns, even four or five times, he is obliged to let her go, as it is said, "in letting go, let go";" nay, Maimonides says, even a thousand times; the canon proceeds, "if anyone says, lo, I take the dam and let go the young, he

is obliged to let her go; if he takes the young, and returns them again to the nest, and after that returns the dam to them, he is free from letting her go;” **that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days;** the Targum of Jonathan is, “that it may be well with thee in this world, and thou mayest prolong thy days in the world to come:” the same blessing that is promised to observers of the fifth command, which is one of the weightier matters of the law, is made to this; which the 270 Jews say is but as the value of a farthing, or of little account in comparison of others; wherefore, as Fagius rightly observes, God, in bestowing such rewards, has regard not to the works of men, but to his own grace and kindness; for what merit can there be in letting go or preserving the life of a little bird?

**DEUT. 22:8. When thou buildest a new house,** Which is to be understood of a house to dwell in, not of a granary, barn, or stable, or such like, and every house that is not four cubits square, as Maimonides observes : **then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof;** in the Talmud it is asked, what is the meaning of, or why is it said, “thy roof?” to except synagogues and schools; the gloss upon which is, synagogues, etc. do not belong to any single person, and besides are no dwelling place. A battlement, as Jarrift describes it, was a fence round the roof; or, as more fully described by Kimchi, it was an edifice made for a roof round about it, ten hands high, or more, that a person might not fall from it; so Ben Melech from him. The reason of this law was, because the roofs of houses in those countries were flat, on which they used to walk for diversion and recreation, or retire for devotion, meditation, prayer, and social conversation; such they were in the times of the Canaanites, (Joshua 2:6) and in the times of Saul and David, (1 Samuel 9:25 2 Samuel 11:2 16:21) and in the times of the New Testament; (see Gill on “Matthew 10:27”), (see Gill on “Matthew 24:17”), (see Gill on “Mark 2:4”), (see Gill on “Acts 10:9”), and so in later times, and to this day. Rauwolff, traveller in those parts, relates, that at Tripoli in Phoenicia, “they have low houses, ill built, and flat at the top, as they

are generally in the east; for they cover their houses with a flat roof or floor, so that you may walk about as far as the houses go, and the neighbours walk over the tops of their houses to visit one another; and sometimes in the summer they sleep on the top of them.” Now to prevent falling from thence, and mischief thereby, such a battlement as before described was ordered: **that thou bring not blood upon thy house;** be not the occasion of blood being shed, or contract guilt of blood through negligence of such a provision the law directs to, the guilt of manslaughter, or of shedding innocent blood in thy house, as the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem; 271 hence the Talmudists extend this to other things, and by this law also they suppose men are bound to guard against all dangers in any other way; as if a man had a well or pit of water in his courtyard, he ought either to put a cover over it, or to make a fence round it as high as this battlement : **if any man fall from thence;** that is, if a man walking on the roof of an house should make a slip or a false step, and stumble and reel, and so be falling, and fall from thence; which might have been prevented, even his falling from thence or to the ground, if such a battlement had been made.

**DEUT. 22:9. Thou shall not sow thy vineyards with divers seeds,** As wheat and barley between the rows of the vines; and this is to be understood only of divers sorts of corn, and of divers sorts of herbs, but not of trees; hence we read of a fig tree in a vineyard, (Luke 13:6), and this only respects what is sown with design, and not what is casual, as the Jews interpret it ; “if a man passes through a vineyard, and seeds fall from him, or they are carried out along with dung, or with water; or when a man is sowing, and a storm of wind carries it behind him (i.e. to a vineyard behind him), it is lawful;” that is, it may be let grow, and the fruit of it enjoyed; the same here is said of the vineyard as of the field in (see Gill on “Leviticus 19:19”); **lest the fruit of thy seed which thou hast sown, and the fruit of thy vineyard; be defiled;** that is, lest not only the increase of these divers seeds sown, but also the increase of the vines among

which they are sown, become unlawful, and unfit for use, and so a loss of all be sustained: the Targum of Jonathan is, "lest it be condemned to burning;" or thou art obliged to burn it; for, according to the Jewish canons, the mixtures of a vineyard, or the divers seeds of it, and the increase thereof, were to be burnt; and the commentators of the Misnah frequently explain this phrase by "*lest it be burnt*".

**DEUT. 22:10. *Thou shalt not plough with an ox and an ass together,*** They might be used separately, but not together; nor was it uncommon in some countries for asses to be employed in ploughing as well as oxen. Pliny 272 makes mention of some fruitful land in Africa, which when it was dry weather could not be ploughed by oxen, but after showers of rain might be ploughed by a mean little ass; so Leo Africanus says, the Africans only use horses and asses in ploughing. The reason why they were not to be put together was either (as some think) lest the law should be broken which forbids the gendering of cattle with a divers kind, (Leviticus 19:19) but Aben Ezra thinks the reason is, because the strength of an ass is not equal to the strength of an ox; and therefore he supposes this law is made from the mercy and commiseration of God extended to all his creatures; though perhaps the better reason is, because the one was a clean creature, and the other an unclean, and this instance is put for all others; and with which agree the Jewish canons, which run thus, "cattle with cattle, wild beasts with wild beasts, unclean with unclean, clean with clean (i.e. these may be put together); but unclean with clean, and clean with unclean, are forbidden to plough with, to draw with, or to be led together." The mystery of this is, that godly and ungodly persons are not to be yoked together in religious fellowship: (see 2 Corinthians 6:14).

**DEUT. 22:11. *Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts,*** The Jews say nothing is forbidden under the name of sorts but what is spun and wove, as it is said, "thou shalt not wear sheatnez", a thing that is carded, spun, and wove; which Ainsworth translates "linsie woosie", and is explained by what follows: as

"of woollen and linen together"; of which (see Gill on "Leviticus 19:19"), whereas Josephus observes, this was granted to the priests only to wear such garments. Bochart affirms it to be false; but that great man is mistaken; the blue, purple, and scarlet, in the priests' garments, were no other than dyed wool; and it is a sentiment in general received by the Jews, that the priests wore no other but woollen and linen in their service; see the note on the above place; otherwise this law is so strictly observed, as not, to sew a woollen garment with linen thread, and so on the contrary.

**DEUT. 22:12. *Thou shalt make thee fringes,*** Though a different word is here used from that in (Numbers 15:38), yet the same things are intended, and Onkelos translates both by one and the same word, and which is no other than a corruption of the Greek word used in (Matthew 23:5). Though there have been some, whom Aben Ezra takes notice of, who supposed that this is a law by itself, and to be observed in 273 the night, as that in (Numbers 15:38) was in the day; but these he warmly opposes, and calls them liars: ***upon the four quarters of thy vesture, wherewith thou coverest thyself;*** upon the four skirts of the uppermost vesture, called Talith; (see Gill on "Numbers 15:38").

**DEUT. 22:13. *If any man take a wife, and go in unto her, and hate her.***] That is, marries a wife, and cohabits with her as man and wife, and after some time dislikes her, and is desirous of parting with her, and therefore takes the following wicked method to obtain it: this is to be understood of a virgin taken to wife, as the Targum of Jonathan explains it; and what follows confirms it.

**DEUT. 22:14. *And give occasions of speech against her,*** Among her neighbours, who by his behaviour towards her, and by what he says of her, will be led in all company and conversation to traduce her character, and speak of her as a very bad woman: ***and bring up an evil name upon her;*** take away her good name, and give her a bad one; defame her, and make her appear scandalous and reproachful to all that know her: though the Jews understand this not of private slander, but of bringing an

action against her in a public court of judicature, the substance of which follows: “and say, I took this woman, and when I came to her, I found her not a maid”; the sense is, that he had married her, and when he came to cohabit with her as man and wife, it appeared to him that she was vitiated, and not a pure virgin. This is the charge in court against her, the action laid by him; so Jarchi observes, a man might not say this but before a magistrate, in a court of judicature, which is thus represented by Maimonides ; “a man comes to the sanhedrim, and says, this young woman I married, and I did not find her virginites; and when I inquired into the matter, it appeared to me that she had played the whore under me, after I had betrothed her; and these are my witnesses that she played the whore before them.”

**DEUT. 22:15.** *Then shall the father and the mother of the damsel take*, Power from the court, according to the Targum of Jonathan; having leave and licence granted them to do what follows, these were to, and would, concern themselves in such an affair, partly for the credit and reputation of <sup>274</sup> their child, and partly for their own honour, who were in danger, as Jarchi observes, of coming into contempt for their ill education of her: *and bring forth the tokens of the damsel's virginity*; the sheet she lay in when she first bedded with her husband, in her parents' possession, and kept by them as a witness of her purity, should there ever be any occasion for it: and which were to be brought *unto the elders of the city in the gate*; which sat in the gate of the city to try causes: the Targum of Jonathan calls it the gate of the sanhedrim, or court of judicature; and, according to Maimonides , this court was the court of twenty three judges; for this was a capital crime accused of, a cause relating to life and death, which could not be heard and tried in a lesser court.

**DEUT. 22:16.** *And the damsel's father shall say unto the elders*, Not her mother; hence we learn, says Jarchi, that a woman has not power (or is not allowed) to speak before men; that is, in public (see 1 Corinthians 14:34) and it was

most proper for a father to appear in court for her, and defend her; and if she had no parents living then, those that brought her up, her guardians, that had the education of her, and placing her out in marriage, were to undertake her cause; or, as Josephus says, those that were next akin to her; or, as, Aben Ezra, one appointed by the court: *I gave my daughter unto this man to wife*; and, by the Jewish canons , a man might give his daughter in marriage, but a woman might not: *and he hateth her*; has taken a dislike to her, and wants to be rid of her, and therefore has brought this infamous action against her.

**DEUT. 22:17.** *And, lo, he hath given occasion of speech against her*, In the neighbourhood where they dwell; has been the cause of persons speaking reproachfully of her, as one of ill fame: *saying, I found not thy daughter a maid*; so that it seems he said this not only to his neighbours, and before a court of judicature, but to the parents of the damsel: *and yet these are the tokens of my daughter's virginity*; which were brought with him, and produced in open court: *and they shall spread the cloth before the elders of the city*; that they might have ocular proof and evidence of the truth of what he said, by <sup>275</sup> having spread before them the sheet stained with the blood of her virginity upon her husband's first congress with her. It seems that the mother, as well as the father, were present and concerned in this action: for it is said, “they shall spread”; and though the mother might not speak, she was the proper person to bring this cloth and spread it; and indeed it was particularly in her care and keeping; for we are told , that two persons, called *pynybcwc*, “the friends” of the bride and bridegroom, went first into their bedchamber, and thoroughly examined the bed, whether there was anything relating to the sign of virginity, by which one might impose upon another; and they stood all night keeping watch with great joy and cheerfulness, as if they had been the guards of a king and queen; (to which is thought the allusion is in (John 3:29)) their business was, when the bridegroom and bride came out, to rush in immediately, and examine

all things again; and knowing and owning the former linen sheets in which they had lain, took them and delivered them to the mother. Nor need spreading such a cloth before the court be thought unlikely because of the indecency of it, when it is observed that persons and things much more filthy came under the cognizance and examination of the priests, as leprous, menstruous, and profluvius persons, and their respective disorders; nor is it at all improbable that there should be such evident tokens as are said to be given, when it is observed, especially of the Jewish women, at what a tender age they were marriageable, and were frequently married, namely, when twelve years and one day old. And the Africans, as we are told, have a custom with them similar to this at a wedding; "a feast is prepared, and a certain woman waits without, until the bride is lain with; and then a linen cloth, stained with blood, is reached out to her, which she carries in her hands, and shows to the guests, crying out with a loud voice that this was a virgin hitherto not corrupt; then she, with other women, are splendidly received, first by the parents of the bridegroom, and then of the bride; but if she does not appear to be a virgin, she is returned to her parents under the disgrace of all, and the marriage made null and void." Indeed there are some Jewish writers, that interpret this cloth in a parabolical and allegorical sense, and understand by it witnesses that; would make the case as clear and plain as the spreading out a cloth or garment. They suppose that before the damsel was lain with she was examined by several matrons, who declaring her to be a virgin, gave it under their hands in writing to her parents, which they were capable of producing in court when there was occasion for it; so Jarchi says, this is a parable; the meaning is, they made things as clear and as plain as a new cloth; with which agrees the Talmud he seems to have taken it from, where on these words, and they shall spread the cloth, this remark is made; but the literal sense seems best.

**DEUT. 22:18.** *And the elders of that city shall take the man, and chastise him.*] Not with words, but blows. Jarchi interprets it of beating,

and so does the Talmud; and both the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan render it, "shall beat him;" that is, with the beating or scourging of forty stripes, save one.

**DEUT. 22:19.** *And they shall amerce him in an hundred shekels of silver,* Which was about twelve pounds of our money; this was double the dowry he would have been obliged to have given her, if he had put her away; which he might have done with less trouble, and with a greater certainty of being rid of her; but being willing to save that expense, took this wicked method to accuse her falsely; and therefore is fined double that sum: *and give them unto the father of the damsel;* as a sort of satisfaction or reparation for the scandal brought upon him and his family; if the damsel was fatherless, Maimonides says, she was to have them herself: *because he hath brought up an evil name upon a virgin in Israel:* defamed her among her neighbours and acquaintance, or brought a false accusation against her in court; alleging she was not a virgin when he married her, when she was one, which was a very great injury to her character: *and she shall be his wife, he may not put her away all his days:* and so he was disappointed in his view of getting rid of her, and obliged to retain her as his wife, though hated, and was not suffered to divorce her as long as he lived; which was permitted and connived at in other men, and which he might have done before, without bringing such a charge against her; all which must be very mortifying to him, as to be whipped, to pay a fine, keep his wife, and not allowed ever to divorce her.

**DEUT. 22:20.** *But if this thing be true,* Which the husband of the damsel laid to her charge, that she was no virgin when married to him, and she had committed whoredom, of which there was plain proof: *and the tokens of virginity be not found for the damsel;* by her parents, or those who had the care of her; or no sufficient reason could be assigned for the want of them, through any family defect, or any disorder of her own; which, as Maimonides says, the judges were to inquire into.

**DEUT. 22:21.** *Then they shall bring out the damsel to the door of her father's house*, For his greater disgrace, and as a sort of punishment for his neglect of her education, not taking care to instruct her, and bring her up in a better manner: *and the men of her city shall stone her with stones, that she die*; which was the death this sort of adulteresses were put to; others was by strangling, and the daughter of a priest was to be burnt; (see Leviticus 20:10 21:9), which shows that this sin was committed by her after her espousals, as Jarchi and Aben Ezra note; or otherwise it would have been only simple fornication, which was not punishable with death: *because she hath wrought folly in Israel*: a sin, as all sin is folly, and especially any notorious one, as this was; and which is aggravated by its being done in Israel, among a people professing the true religion, and whom God had chosen and separated from all others to be a holy people to himself: *to play the whore in her father's house*; where she continued after her espousals, until she was taken to the house of her husband, to consummate the: marriage; and between the one and the other was this sin committed, and which is another reason for her execution at the door of her father's house: *so shalt thou put evil away from among you*; deter others from it by such an example, and remove the guilt of it from them, which otherwise would lie upon them, if punishment was not inflicted; the Targum of Jonathan interprets it of the putting away of her that did the evil.

**DEUT. 22:22.** *If a man be found lying with a woman married to an husband*, . This law respects adultery, and is the same with that in (Leviticus 20:10) *then they shall both of them die*; with the strangling of a napkin, as the Targum of Jonathan, which is the death such persons were put to; and is always meant when death is simply spoken of, and it is not specified what death; (see Gill on "Leviticus 20:10"): 278 *both the man that lay with the woman, and the woman*; they were both to die, and to die the same death: *so shalt thou put away evil from Israel*; such that do it, as the above Targum; (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 22:21").

**DEUT. 22:23.** *If a damsel that is a virgin be betrothed unto an husband*, But not married, not as yet brought home to her husband's house, and the marriage consummated; for the Jews distinguish between being betrothed or espoused, and married; and generally there was some time between the one and the other. And a wife was obtained in this way by three things; by money, which was the most usual; and by writing, which was to be done before witnesses, and with her consent; and by copulation, which, though valid, was not so much approved of . There is a whole treatise in the Misnah, called Kiddushin, or Espousals, which largely treats of this matter: *and a man find her in the city, and lie with her*; with her consent, as might be presumed by her not crying out, when, had she, she might have been heard, being in a city; and her being there also makes against her, since, being betrothed to a man, she ought to have abode in her father's house till her husband fetched her home, and not to have gadded abroad in the city, where she was exposed to temptation.

**DEUT. 22:24.** *Then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of the city*, Where the fact was committed; the Targum of Jonathan is, "to the gate of the court of judicature, which is in that city:" *and ye shall stone them with stones, that they die*; a man that lay with a married woman, he and she were to be strangled; but this sort of adulterers and adulteresses were to be stoned, and it is thought that of this sort was the woman spoken of in (John 8:3-5), *the damsel because she cried not, being in the city, and the man because he hath humbled his neighbour's wife*; as she was by espousal, by contract, by promise, and so was guilty of adultery, which was punishable with death: *so thou shalt put away evil from among you*; (see Deuteronomy 22:21,22).

**DEUT. 22:25.** *But if a man find a betrothed damsel in the field*, Alone, and where she might cry out, and none hear, nor were any to help her: 279 *and a man force her, and lie with her*; or "take fast and strong hold on her" ; so that she is not able to get out of his hands, and make her escape, he being stronger than she,

and so commits a rape upon her: ***then the man only that lay with her shall die***; he being guilty of adultery, in lying with a woman espoused to another man, but not she, because she consented not to it.

**DEUT. 22:26. *But unto the damsel thou shalt do nothing***, Neither fine her, nor beat her, and much less punish her with death: ***there is in the damsel no sin worthy of death***; because what was done to her was done without her will and consent, and was what she was forced to submit unto; but the Targum of Jonathan adds, that the man to whom she was betrothed might dismiss her from himself by a bill of divorce: ***for as when a man riseth against his neighbour, and slayeth him, even so is this matter***; as when a man comes unawares upon another, and lays hold on him, and kills him, being stronger than he, and none to help; so is the case of a woman laid hold on by a man in a field, and ravished by him, where no help could be had; and depriving a woman of her chastity is like taking away a man's life; from this passage Maimonides concludes, that impurities, incests, and adulteries, are equal to murder, to capital cases relating to life and death.

**DEUT. 22:27. *For he found her in the field***, Which is a circumstance in her favour, from which it might be presumed that she was forced, and did not consent; for had the sin been committed by agreement, they would doubtless have betook themselves to another place: and the betrothed damsel cried as it might be concluded from the above circumstance she did, and as she herself declared, and which he could not gainsay, or however disprove: ***and there was none to save her***; to help her against him, and deliver her out of his hands.

**DEUT. 22:28. *If a man find a damsel that is a virgin, which is not betrothed***, That is, meets with one in a field, which is not espoused to a man; and the man is supposed to be an unmarried man, as appears by what follows: ***and lay hold on her, and lie with her***, she yielding to it, and so is not expressive of a rape, as (Deuteronomy 22:25) where a different word 280 from this is there used; which

signifies taking strong hold of her, and ravishing her by force; yet this, though owing to his first violent seizure of her, and so different from what was obtained by enticing words, professions of love, and promises of marriage, and the like, as in (Exodus 22:16,17) but not without her consent: ***and they be found***; in the field together, and in the fact; or however there are witnesses of it, or they themselves have confessed, it, and perhaps betrayed by her pregnancy.

**DEUT. 22:29. *Then the man that lay with her shall give unto the damsel's father fifty shekels of silver***, &.] For the abuse of his daughter; and besides this was obliged to give her her dowry also, as Philo says, which is commonly said to be fifty more: ***and she shall be his wife***; if her father and she agreed to it; and in such a case the man was not at his liberty to refuse, be she what she would, agreeable or not, handsome or ugly; he must, as the Jews express it, drink out of his pot, or marry her, if she is lame, or blind, or full of ulcers: ***because he hath humbled her he may not put her away all his days***: to all the other parts of his punishment, paying a fine of fifty shekels to the damsel's father, a dowry of the same sum to her, obligation to marry her whether he likes her or not, this is added, that he is not allowed to divorce her as long as he lives; which was permitted to other men, and this was wisely ordered to preserve chastity.

**DEUT. 22:30. *A man shall not take his father's wife***, Not marry her, whether his own mother, or a stepmother; or even, as Aben Ezra thinks, anyone that was deflowered by his father. Jarchi interprets it of his father's brother's wife, which he was obliged to marry by virtue of the law in (Deuteronomy 25:5) ***nor discover his father's skirt***; or lie with her his father had thrown his skirt over, or married; and which being the first, is mentioned here as a sample to all the rest forbidden (Leviticus 18:7) or, as Bishop Patrick expresses it, is a "short memorandum", to make them careful to observe all the other laws respecting incestuous marriages and copulations there delivered. 281



**Deuteronomy 23**

Orders are here given to restrain certain persons from entering into the congregation of the Lord, (Deuteronomy 23:1-8), and to take care that there be no unclean person in the camp, or any indecent thing done in it, (Deuteronomy 23:9-14), to protect fugitive servants, and not deliver them up to their masters, (Deuteronomy 23:15,16) not to suffer a filthy person to be among them, or any filthy thing to be brought into the house of God for a vow, (Deuteronomy 23:17,18), then follow some laws against usury, and for the payment of vows, (Deuteronomy 23:19-23), and the chapter is concluded with some directions how to behave in a neighbour's vineyard, or standing corn, (Deuteronomy 23:24,25).

**DEUT. 23:1. *He that is wounded in the stones,*** In any of them, not accidentally, but purposely; which are crushed and bruised by the hands of men, with a design to make him unfit for generation, or to make an eunuch of him: ***or that hath his privy member cut by himself or another,*** and is a thorough eunuch by the hands of men; for of such eunuchs that are made by men, and not born so, the law speaks; so Maimonides interprets it ; (see Gill on "Matthew 19:12") ***shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord;*** which is to be understood not of the sanctuary of the Lord, or of being refused admittance into the church of God, and to join in religious rites, and partake of sacred ordinances, which all Israelites, and strangers that were proselytes, had a right unto; such might bring their offerings, keep the passover, etc. (Exodus 12:48,49 Leviticus 22:18 Numbers 9:14 15:14,15) nor of the commonwealth of Israel, as if unfit to be members of civil society; it cannot be thought that such defects should abridge them of their civil rights and privileges: but by the congregation is to be understood the elders, judges, and representatives of the people, that met together in some one place to execute judgment; (see Numbers 35:12,24,25 Psalm 82:1), into which such persons were not to be admitted; either 282 because disgraceful and

dishonourable, or because of the influence such defects have on their minds, they thereby becoming effeminate, irresolute, and wanting courage, as well as in opposition to the customs and usages of the Heathens, with whom it was common to admit such persons to civil offices; hence the word eunuch is sometimes used for an officer, (Genesis 37:36) and elsewhere; the Jews restrain this law to marriage, but unnecessarily.

**DEUT. 23:2. *A bastard shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord,*** That is born of whoredom, as the Targum of Jonathan; and for the sake of avoiding whoredom and deterring from it was this law made, according to Maimonides , that adulterers might see, as he observes, that they affect their whole family with an irreparable stain, should they commit such an infamous action; though the Jews commonly interpret it of one that is born of any of those incestuous copulations forbidden in (Leviticus 18:1-30) which they gather from this following upon, and being near unto one of those incests mentioned in the last verse of the preceding chapter ; and it is a rule with them , that persons born of such copulations were reckoned bastards; now such an one, according to Jarchi, might not marry an Israelitish woman, or rather might not be admitted into the assembly of elders, or bear any public office. Jephthah may seem to be an objection to this, who was the son of an harlot, (Judges 11:1) which might be owing to the badness of the times, the laws of God being neglected, or to the providence of God so ordering it, who is not bound by his own laws, though men are; nor was he the son of a common harlot, nor of an incestuous person, but of his father's concubine; besides some think such only are intended who were born of strangers and not Israelites: ***even unto his tenth generation shall he not enter into the congregation of the Lord;*** which seems as if he might at the eleventh; but it is generally interpreted never, as is gathered from the following verse, and from the tenth number being an absolute and perfect one; yet according to the Jewish writers there were ways and means by which their

posterity became legitimate; so they say, bastards may be purified (or legitimated), how? if one marries a servant maid, the child is a servant, who if he becomes free, (his) son is a free man .

**DEUT. 23:3. *An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord,*** Or marry an Israelitish woman, as Jarchi, and so the Targum of Jonathan, 283 “the male Ammonites and Moabites are not fit to take a wife of the congregation of the Lord;” for the Jews restrain this to men, because it is, as Aben Ezra observes, an Ammonite, not an Ammonitess, a Moabite, not a Moabitess; they allow that females of those nations might be married to Israelites, that is, provided they were proselytesses, as Ruth was : ***even to their tenth generation, shall they not enter into the congregation of the Lord for ever;*** that is, not only to the tenth generation, but for ever; and this law was understood as in force in Nehemiah’s time, which was more than ten generations from the making of it; though now, as these nations are no more a distinct people, they suppose it is no longer binding .

**DEUT. 23:4. *Because they met you not with bread and with water,*** To supply them therewith, either as a gift, which was a piece of humanity to strangers and travellers, or rather to sell unto them, for on no other terms did the Israelites desire their bread and their water: ***in the way when ye came forth out of Egypt;*** not as soon as they came forth from thence, for it was near forty years after; but it was while they were in the way from thence, as they were journeying to the land of Canaan, and so were travellers, and should have had kindness shown them as such; for though they needed not bread and water, God providing both for them, yet this does not excuse the inhumanity of these people: the words are to be understood by way of distribution; this charge here only belongs to the Ammonites, for it appears that the Moabites did give them bread and water for money, (Deuteronomy 2:28,29) as what follows belongs peculiarly to the Moabites and not the Ammonites: ***and because they hired against thee Balaam the son of Pethor of***

***Mesopotamia, to curse thee;*** this the Moabites did in conjunction with the Midianites, but the Ammonites had no concern in it; (see Numbers 22:7), it was not therefore because the Moabites and Ammonites were born in incest that they were forbidden entrance into the congregation of the Lord; which might have been thought to have been the reason of it, these instances following upon the former, had not these reasons been assigned.

**DEUT. 23:5. *Nevertheless, the Lord thy God would not hearken unto Balaam,*** To his solicitations, and the methods he took to prevail on the Lord to 284 suffer him to curse Israel, which he gladly would have done for the sake of Balak’s reward: ***but the Lord thy God turned the curse into a blessing unto thee;*** in the very mouth of Balaam, as the Targum of Jonathan; for when he opened his mouth and Balak expected he would have cursed Israel, and he intended it, could he have been permitted, the Lord overruled his tongue, and put such words into his mouth, that instead of cursing Israel, he blessed him; (see Numbers 23:11), ***because the Lord thy God loved thee;*** and therefore would not suffer them to be cursed; for whom the Lord loves they are blessed, and shall be so in time and to eternity.

**DEUT. 23:6. *Thou shalt not seek their peace nor their prosperity all thy days for ever.***] Not that they were to retain malice towards them, or indulge a spirit of revenge, or not do them any good offices in a private way, which is contrary to the law of love; nor does this contradict any offices of kindness and friendship that might be performed in a personal way: so we find that David had a kindness for Hanun the Ammonite, and showed it, though ill rewarded for it, yet is not blamed for doing it; (2 Samuel 10:2) for these words respect not persons in a private capacity, but the people of Israel as a body politic, who, as such, were not to carry on trade and commerce with those people, nor intermarry with them, nor make leagues and enter into alliances with them; the reason of which was, because being very near neighbours to them, had there not been such a law, as a wall of partition between

them, they might have become very familiar, and so have learnt their evil ways and customs, which this was designed to prevent: the Jews restrain this to overtures and proclamations of peace, which they were not to make with these nations, as they were directed to do when they went out to war with others, (Deuteronomy 20:10).

**DEUT. 23:7. *Thou shall not abhor an Edomite,*** Or an Idumean, the descendants of Esau, whose name was Edom, (Genesis 25:30) the Targum of Jonathan adds, "that comes to be made a proselyte"; he was not to be rejected with abhorrence, because of the old grudge between Jacob and Esau, and which was become national in their posterity: ***for he is thy brother;*** the Israelites and the Edomites were nearest akin to each other of all the nations; for Jacob and Esau were own brothers by 285 father's and mother's side, yea, were twin brothers; the relation was very near: ***thou shall not abhor an Egyptian;*** that comes to be made a proselyte also, as the same Targum; though the Israelites were so ill used by them, their lives made bitter with hard bondage, and their male infants slain by them, and they for a long time refused their liberty to depart: ***because thou wast a stranger in his land:*** and at first received many favours and kindnesses from them, being supported and supplied with provisions during a long famine; and had one of the richest and most fruitful parts of the country assigned them to dwell in; and old favours were not to be forgotten, though they had been followed with great unkindness and cruelty.

**DEUT. 23:8. *The children that are begotten of them,*** Of such as became proselytes: ***shall enter into the congregation of the Lord in their third generation;*** not in the third generation from the time that this law was made, but from the time that any of them should embrace the true religion; their sons were the second generation, and their grandchildren the third; and such might be admitted into the congregation, and be reckoned as of them, both in their civil and church state, and be capable of serving even offices among them, and of marriage with them,

as the Targum of Jonathan; which some of the Jews interpret of males only, for females, according to them, might be married immediately as soon as made proselytes, in which way they account for the lawfulness of Solomon's marriage of Pharaoh's daughter .

**DEUT. 23:9. *When the host goeth forth against thine enemies,*** An army of soldiers march in order to meet the enemy and fight him: ***then keep thee from every wicked thing;*** the Targum of Jonathan adds, by way of explanation, "from strange worship, uncovering of nakedness, and from shedding innocent blood;" that is, from idolatry, uncleanness of every sort, and murder; and all other wickednesses ought to be abstained from at all times by all persons, but especially by soldiers in such a circumstance, just going to battle; since sin 286 committed weakens natural courage, as it loads the conscience with guilt; and since victory and success, which depend upon the blessing of God on arms, cannot be reasonably expected, where vices of all sorts are indulged and abound; and especially seeing such are about to expose their lives to the utmost danger, and know not but that in a few hours they must exchange this life for another, and appear before God, the Judge of all, against whom they sin; and yet how little are these things thought of by such in common! it was the wisdom of the Jewish legislature, which was of God, to inculcate such things into the minds of their soldiers.

**DEUT. 23:10. *If there be among you any man that is not clean,*** Any unclean person in the army, that was even ceremonially unclean in any of the instances the law makes so, one of which put for the rest is mentioned: ***by reason of uncleanness that chanceth him by night;*** through pollution by a nocturnal flux, as the Septuagint version, or a gonorrhoea, an involuntary one, occasioned by impure thoughts and imaginations in dreams; the same case as in (Leviticus 15:16) ***then shall he go abroad out of the camp;*** out of the army, lest others should be defiled by such; they not having houses to retire to, and chambers to keep themselves in separate from others, as

when at home: **he shall not come within the camp**; that is, not till he has done what is prescribed him in the next verse. Jarchi says, he might not come into the camp of the Levites, and much less into the camp of God.

**DEUT. 23:11. But it shall be, when evening cometh on**, When the day declines, and it is near sun setting: **he shall wash himself with water**; dip himself all over in water, not only wash his garments but his flesh: **and when the sun is down he shall come into the camp again**; and take his place and rank in the army. Now if all this was necessary on account of ceremonial uncleanness, which as much as possible was to be avoided, how much more careful were they to be of moral uncleanness, as fornication, adultery, and all sorts of debauchery and lewdness? and yet nothing more frequent among those that are of the military order; it would be well if there was no occasion for the reproach Maimonides casts upon the camps of the Heathens, among whom, no doubt, he means Christians, if not principally; when he observes that these orders were given, that this 287 might be deeply fixed in the mind of every one, that their camp ought to be holy as the sanctuary of God, and not like the camps of the Gentiles, in which abound corruptions of all kinds, transgressions, rapines, thefts, and other sins.

**DEUT. 23:12. Thou shalt have also a place without the camp**, A place prepared, as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan, provided on purpose for the use hereafter suggested; so Ben Melech: **whither thou shalt go forth abroad**; to do the necessities of nature, which they were to do without the camp, not in any place they thought fit and most convenient, but what was appointed for that purpose.

**DEUT. 23:13. And thou shalt have a paddle upon thy weapon**, A nail or spike, some kind of instrument to make a hole in the ground with, which was fastened to the sword upon their loins; which was to be instead of a spade or mattock to dig with: **and it shall be, when thou shalt ease thyself abroad**; without the camp, in the place appointed for that use, whenever nature required such an action to be

performed; **thou shalt dig therewith**; with, the paddle, an hole in the earth: the Essenes used, according to Josephus, to make it a foot deep with a spade or mattock, and to everyone that was newly admitted among them, a little pickaxe was given for that purpose: **and shalt turn back**; having eased nature: **and cover that which cometh from thee**; their dung, with the earth they dug out of the hole they made. This law was made to preserve modesty and decency becoming men, and not act like brute beasts, as well as cleanliness in the camp, and, the health of themselves and their fellow soldiers; and that, they might not be offensive to the smell, as well as pernicious to the health of one another; and especially for a reason that follows in (Deuteronomy 23:14); so Maimonides says, the intention of this law is especially cleanliness, and to avoid nastiness, filthiness, and impurities of every kind, that men might not be like the brute animals.

**DEUT. 23:14. For the Lord thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp**, In the tabernacle, which moved when the host marched after the camps of Judah and Reuben, and before those of Ephraim and Dan, in the midst of 288 them: this was the position of it while in the wilderness, and afterwards when they came into the land of Canaan, and went to war with their enemies, the ark sometimes went with them, the symbol of the divine Presence; and here it is made a reason why they should avoid all uncleanness, since the holy God, or that token of his, presence, was in the midst of them: **to deliver thee, and give up thine enemies before thee**: to save them from falling into the hands of their enemies, and to deliver their enemies into their hands, which depended not upon their numbers, strength, and skill, but on the Presence, providence, and power of God with them; wherefore, as the above writer observes, by these actions (of purity and cleanliness) God meant to confirm the faith of those that engaged in war, that the divine Majesty dwelt among them; for which reason such orders were strictly to be observed by them: **therefore shall thy camp be holy**; both in a moral and ceremonial sense: **that he see no unclean**

*thing in thee*; whether natural, moral, or ceremonial; the word here used signifies such nakedness as is forbidden to be uncovered, (Leviticus 18:6-19). Hence Maimonides applies it to whoredom; for he says, "by this phrase God meant to deter and dehort from whoredom, which is too usual and common among soldiers, as long as they are absent from their own houses; that therefore we may be delivered and abstain from those impure works, God has commanded such things to be done, which may bring to our remembrance that his glory dwells in the midst of us:" *and turn away from thee*; and so they fall into the hands of their enemies, and become an easy prey to them, their God having forsaken them; and that this might not be their case, care should be taken not to offend him, and cause him to depart from them.

**DEUT. 23:15.** *Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee.*] That is, one that has been used ill by a cruel and tyrannical master, and was in danger of his life with him, or of being lamed by him, and therefore obliged to make his escape from him on that account; such an one, when he fell into the hands of an Israelite, was not to be taken and bound, and sent back to his master again, but was to be retained till his master's anger subsided; or however until inquiry could be made into the cause of the difference between him and his master, and matters be made up between them to mutual satisfaction; or if it appeared that the flight of the servant was just, and it was not safe for him to return to his master, then he was to be used as hereafter directed; for it cannot be thought that this law was made to encourage and protect every idle, disobedient, and fugitive servant, which would be very sinful and unjust: the Jewish writers generally understand it of the servants of idolaters fleeing for the sake of religion; Onkelos renders it, "a servant of the people," of Heathen people; the Targum of Jonathan is, "thou shalt not deliver a stranger (i.e. a proselyte of righteousness, as Maimonides calls this servant) into the hands of those that worship idols, but he shall be delivered by you, that he may be under the

shadow of my Shechinah, because that he fled from the worship of his idol." Jarchi makes mention of another sense; that it may be understood of "a Canaanitish servant of an Israelite that flees (from his master) without the land, where he was not obliged to go with him, and serve him against his will; but I suppose a proselyte is meant;" and much more then will this hold good of an Hebrew servant in such circumstances. Aben Ezra interprets this of a servant not an Israelite, who, in time of war, flees from his master, not an Israelite also, unto the camp of Israel, and that for the glory of the divine name which is called upon Israel; such an one, though a servant, might not be delivered to his master.

**DEUT. 23:16.** *He shall dwell in thee, [even] among you,* This seems to confirm the sense of it, being a stranger, a: proselyte servant that is here spoken of, since the law provides for his dwelling among the Israelites: *in that place he shall choose, in one of thy gates, where it liketh him best*: he was not to be detained by the person that took him up in his own house, or be obliged to dwell in any certain place under, a restraint, but he might take up his abode in any of the cities of Israel, which would be most for his good, profit, and advantage: *thou shalt not oppress him*; by words, as the Targum of Jonathan adds, 290 "calling him a fugitive servant, or by any opprobrious name."

**DEUT. 23:17.** *There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel,* The word for "whore" is "kedeshah", which properly signifies an "holy" one; and here, by an antiphrasis, an unholy, an impure person, one that is defiled by man; (see Gill on "Genesis 38:18"). Jarchi interprets the word, one that makes herself common, that is sanctified, or set apart; that is, one that separates herself for such service, and prostitutes herself to everyone that passes by: but some understand this not of common harlots in the streets, but of sacred whores, or such as were consecrated to Heathen deities, as such there were to Venus. Strabo tells us that the temple of Venus at Corinth was so rich, that more than a thousand of those sacred harlots were kept, whom men and women had devoted

to that goddess; and so a multitude of the same sort were at Comana, which he calls little Corinth; now these of all harlots being the most abominable are forbidden to be among the daughters of Israel: ***nor a sodomite of the sons of Israel***: by the same rule that “kedeshah” is rendered “a whore” in the preceding clause, “kadesh” should be rendered “an whoremonger” here, as in the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions; though Aben Ezra interprets it passively, one that is lain with, and Jarchi one that is prepared to lie with a male, that prostitutes his body in this unnatural way; and it looks as if there were such sort of persons sacred to idols, since we read of the houses of the sodomites, which were by, or rather in the house of the Lord, (2 Kings 23:7). **DEUT. 23:18. *Thou shalt not bring the hire of a whore***, Which was given to her as a reward for the use of her body: ***or the price of a dog***; not of the firstborn of a dog, the price for the redemption of it, as some; nor for the loan of a hunting dog, or a shepherd’s dog for breed, as Josephus interprets this law. Abarbinel understands it figuratively of a sodomite, comparable to a dog, for his uncleanness and impudence; (see Revelation 22:15); and the price of such an one the gain he got by the prostitution of his body to unnatural lusts; and so as the hire of a whore answers to one in (Deuteronomy 23:17), the price of a dog to a sodomite here; and in this he is followed by some, nor is it a sense to be despised; though the Jews understand it literally of a dog, and of the exchange of another creature with that; so Onkelos renders it, 291 “the exchange of a dog;” now neither of these might a man bring ***into the house of the Lord thy God for any vow***; that is, when a man vowed to offer any sacrifice to the Lord, it was not to be anything that was given to a whore as her hire; as, for instance, as Jarchi, if he gave her for her hire a lamb, it was not fit to be offered; which agrees with the Jewish canons, “what is the hire of a whore? if one says to a whore, take this lamb for thy hire, though an hundred, they are all forbidden; and so if one says to his neighbour, lo, this lamb is thine, that thine handmaid may lie with my a

servant, Rabbi says it is not the hire of a whore, but the wise men say it is.--If he gives her money, lo, this is free; wines, oils, and fine flour, and the like, that are offered on the altar, are forbidden; (but the commentators say, wheat, olives, and grapes, out of which fine flour, oil, and wine are made, are free;) if he gives her consecrated things, lo, these are free, birds, they are forbidden.” Now this law seems to be made in opposition to the customs and practices of the Phoenicians and Canaanites, whose land the Israelites were going to inhabit; whose women, as we are told, used to prostitute themselves in the temples of their idols, and dedicate there the hire of their bodies to their gods, thinking thereby to appease their deities and obtain good things for themselves; and the like did the Babylonians and Assyrians; (see Gill on “Micah 1:7”); so it is asked, “what is the price of a dog? if a man says to his neighbour, take this lamb for that dog; so if two partners divide, one takes ten (lambs), and the other nine and a dog; what is in lieu of the dog is forbidden, but those that are taken with him are free:” a whore and a dog are fitly put together, because both are libidinous, impure, and impudent; perhaps the vileness and baseness of the creature is chiefly regarded in this law, to keep up the credit and veneration of sacrifices as sacred things; and it may be in reference to the worship of this creature, as by the Egyptians, who are said to worship a dog, their god Anubis, the image of which had a dog’s head on it; or to its being offered in sacrifice to idols, as it was by others; the Colophonians sacrificed 292 the whelps of dogs to their goddess Enodius, as others did to Enyalios or Mars: ***for even both these [are] an abomination to the Lord thy God***; both the hire of the whore and the price of the dog, when brought as a sacrifice to him; the one being a breach of the moral law, and the other tending to bring into contempt the sacrifices of the ceremonial law, if not a favouring idolatry, than which nothing is more abominable to God, who cannot endure anything evil, base, and impure. **DEUT. 23:19. *Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother***, One of the same nation and

religion, and who is in poor and necessitous circumstances, and wants either food for himself and family, or money to carry on his husbandry, till such times as the fruits of his ground will bring him in a sufficiency for his support, and the payment of what he borrows, and which is to be lent him without any interest: as the Jews were chiefly employed in husbandry, and not merchandise, they had but little occasion to borrow, and when they did could not afford to pay interest, as persons concerned in merchandise, whose gains are great, are able to do; and it is but reasonable that such persons should; but that the Israelites, when poor and in distress, might not be bowed down under their burdens, this law is made for their relief: **usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of anything that is lent upon usury**; this takes in all sorts of usury, whether what is lent be money or food, or anything else, no interest was to be taken for it; (see Gill on "Leviticus 25:36-37").

**DEUT. 23:20. Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury**, To any Gentile, though some Jewish writers except the Edomites and Ishmaelites, as being brethren, and restrain it to the seven nations of Canaan; but it seems to design one that was not an Israelite, or a proselyte of righteousness, and especially to regard such that traded and merchandised, as the Gentiles very much did, and especially their neighbours the Phoenicians; and of such it was lawful to take interest, as it was but reasonable, when they gained much by the money they lent them, and as it is but reasonable should be the case among Christians in such circumstances; this is to be regarded not as a precept, but as a permission: **but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury**; which is repeated, that it might be taken notice of, and carefully observed: 293 **that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand unto, in the land whither thou goest to possess it**; for their charity, humanity, and the kind usage of their poor brethren in distress, would not pass unnoticed by the Lord; but he would make the land they tilled fruitful, and their vineyards and oliveyards to produce abundance, and their

flocks and their herds to increase greatly, which would be sufficient and more than a recompence for all that they had freely lent unto their brethren, without taking any usury of them.

**DEUT. 23:21. When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God**, Which must be of things in a man's power to perform, and of what are lawful to be done, and according to the mind and will of God revealed in his word, and agreeably to the manner of worship prescribed by him; as that he will offer such a sacrifice, a freewill offering to him, and the like, besides what he was bound to do, or give such and such things for the repair of the sanctuary, or for the relief of the poor; (see Gill on "Numbers 30:2"). This law is thought by Aben Ezra to be repeated on the mention of the hire of a whore, etc. being forbidden to be brought for a vow, (Deuteronomy 23:18); **thou shalt not slack to pay it**; or delay the payment of it, but do it immediately; since zeal and affection might abate, and there might not be hereafter an ability to perform, or death might come and prevent it; the Targum of Jonathan adds, at the three feasts, that is, of the passover, pentecost, and tabernacles; and the Jewish writers say, that no man transgresses this precept respecting the delay of paying a vow, until the three feasts have passed: **for the Lord thy God will surely require it of thee**; exact the payment of it, and expect it, insist upon the performance of it, and punish for neglect: **and it would be sin in thee**; guilt of sin would be contracted, and punishment inflicted; Aben Ezra interprets it of the latter.

**DEUT. 23:22. But if thou shalt forbear to vow**, That a man might do, though there was ability; it was expected indeed that men should vow and bring freewill offerings in proportion to their ability; whether they were of the greater sort, of the herd and flock, or of fowls, or even of fine flour, these were acceptable to the Lord; but if they were not vowed and brought, 294 **it shall be no sin in thee**; no charge of guilt be brought or punishment laid; it should not be reckoned a crime, nor be punishable in any respect, and especially where there was a

willing mind and no ability; otherwise negligence, niggardliness, and ingratitude, are not well pleasing in the sight of God.

**DEUT. 23:23.** *That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt keep and perform*, Which were in their power to perform and lawful to do; and this is observed to make them watchful and cautious, and not be rash in making vows, since, when once they were made, an exact and rigid performance of them was expected; (see Ecclesiastes 5:4,5); *[even] a freewill offering, according as thou hast vowed unto the Lord thy God, which thou hast promised with thy mouth*; be it what it will, as to the matter of it, it was to be paid, and in the manner as it was vowed and promised. Aben Ezra observes, that every vow is a freewill offering, but not every freewill offering a vow; the Targum of Jonathan enumerates the several things to be performed, sin offerings, trespass offerings, burnt offerings, and oblations of holy things, and drink offerings, and gifts of the house of the sanctuary, and alms to the poor.

**DEUT. 23:24.** *When thou comest into thy neighbour's vineyard*, To take a walk in it for recreation, and to see how the vines flourish, and what sort of fruit and what quantity of it they bear; being invited thither by the owner, or occasionally passing that way stepped in, and even it may be on purpose to taste the fruits of the vine and quench thirst and satisfy appetite: *then thou mayest eat grapes thy fill, at thine own pleasure*; as many as they would, till nature was satisfied: *but thou shalt not put [any] in thy vessel*; to carry away, to be eaten by them or theirs at another time and place; they were to put none into their pockets or into their baskets, as the Targum of Jonathan, or whatsoever vessel they might have with them in the vineyard. Jarchi says, the Scripture speaks of a workman, and only at the time of gathering the grapes, when he was putting into his master's vessels, and might not put any into his own, and carry away; so the Jewish writers generally interpret it of a workman only, and of his eating those things in which he works, and not of such as pass by the way; so the Targums: and there are many traditions in the Misnah

concerning this affair; as that by this law a workman might eat while in his work, as the ox may while it is treading out the corn, and 295 when his work is perfect; and that he may eat of what he is employed about; only if he is at work upon figs, he may not eat of grapes, and if on grapes, he may not eat of figs; nor might he eat more than his hire came to; and that he might make a covenant for his son and daughter, servant and handmaid, adult (that they shall take money and not eat), and for his wife, because they are endowed with knowledge; but not for his son and daughter, servant and maidservant, minors, because they are not: but Josephus, their countryman, better interprets this law, who says, that travellers, of those that passed by the way, were not forbidden tasting ripe fruits, and even were permitted to fill themselves with them as if their own, whether they were of the country or strangers.

**DEUT. 23:25.** *When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbour*, Passeth through it to go to some other place, the road lying through it, as it often does through standing corn; so Christ and his disciples are said to go through the corn, (Matthew 12:1); but Jarchi says this Scripture speaks of a workman also, and so the Targum of Jonathan, "when thou goest in to take thine hire according to work in thy neighbour's standing corn;" but the other sense is best, and is confirmed and illustrated by the instance given, as well as best agrees with what follows: *then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand*; the ears of wheat, and rub them, to separate the grain from the husk or beard, and eat it, as did the disciples of Christ; (Luke 6:1); to satisfy hunger: but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbour's standing corn to cut it down and carry any of it off; which would have been an unjust thing. 296

#### Deuteronomy 24

This chapter contains various laws concerning divorces, (Deuteronomy 24:1-4); the discharge of a newly married man from war and business, (Deuteronomy 24:5); about taking pledges, (Deuteronomy 24:6,10-13); man stealing, (Deuteronomy 24:7); the plague of leprosy,



(Deuteronomy 24:8,9); and giving servants their hire in due time, (Deuteronomy 24:14,15); concerning doing justice in capital cases, and towards the stranger, fatherless, and widow, (Deuteronomy 24:16-18); and of charity to the poor, in allowing them the forgotten sheaf, and the gleanings of their oliveyards and vineyards, (Deuteronomy 24:19-22).

**DEUT. 24:1. *When a man hath taken a wife and married her,*** That is, when a man has made choice of a woman for his wife, and has obtained her consent, and the consent of her parents; and has not only betrothed her, but taken her home, and consummated the marriage: ***and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes;*** is not agreeable to him, he takes no delight in her person, nor pleasure in her company and conversation; but, on the contrary, his affections are alienated from her, and he cannot bear the sight of her; ***because he hath found some uncleanness in her;*** something that he disliked, and was disagreeable to him, and which made their continuance together in the marriage state very uncomfortable; which led him on to be very ill-natured, severe, and cruel to her; so that her life was exposed to danger, or at least become very uneasy; in which case a divorce was permitted, both for the badness of the man's heart, and in favour of the woman, that she might be freed from such rigorous usage. This word "uncleanness" does not signify adultery, or any of the uncleannesses forbidden in (Leviticus 18:6-19); because that was punishable with death, when it could be proved; and where there was only a suspicion of it, the husband might make use of the bitter water: though the house of Shammai seem to take it in this sense; for they say a man might not divorce his wife unless he found her in some unclean thing, something dishonest <sup>297</sup> and wicked, and which they ground upon these words; but the house of Hillell say, if she burnt his food, or spoiled it by over salting, or over roasting it; and Akiba says, even if he found another woman more beautiful than her or more agreeable to him. But neither his sense, nor that of the house of Shammai, are approved of by the Jews in general, but that of

the house of Hillell ; and they suppose a man might divorce his wife for any ill qualities of mind in her, or for any ill or impudent behaviour of hers; as if her husband saw her go abroad with her head uncovered, and spinning in the streets, and so showing her naked arms to men; or having her garments slit on both sides; or washing in a bath with men, or where men use to wash, and talking with every man, and joking with young men; or her voice is sonorous and noisy; or any disease of body, as the leprosy, and the like; or any blemishes, as warts, are upon her; or any disagreeable smell that might arise from any parts of the body, from sweat, or a stinking breath : ***then let him write her a bill of divorcement;*** Jarchi says, this is a command upon him to divorce her, because she finds not favour in his eyes; and so the Jews generally understand it, and so they did in the time of Christ, (Matthew 19:7); whereas it was no more than a permission, for reasons before given. A man might not dismiss his wife by word of mouth, which might be done hastily, in a passion, of which he might soon repent; but by writing, which was to be drawn up in form; and, as the Targum of Jonathan, before the sanhedrim, in a court of judicature, which required time, during which he might think more of it, and either recede from his purpose before the case was finished, or do it upon mature deliberation; and a firm resolution. The Jews say many things of the witnesses before whom it was to be written and sealed, and at what time, and upon what, and with what it was to be written, and who were proper persons to write it or not, in a treatise of theirs, called Gittin, or divorces. In the Hebrew text this bill is called "a bill of cutting off" ; because the marriage was rescinded, and man and wife were cut off and separated from one another for ever; of the form of such a bill, (see Gill on "Matthew 5:31"); ***and give [it] in her hand;*** which was to be done before witnesses, and which is one of the ten things requisite to a divorce ; though it made no difference whether it was delivered by himself, or by a messenger; or whether to her, or to her deputy, appointed by her before witnesses; or whether it was put

into her hand, or in her bosom, so be it that she was but possessed of it; with which agrees the Jewish canon, 298 “if he casts a bill to his wife, and she is within the house, or within the court, she is divorced; if he casts it into her bosom, or into her work basket, she is divorced :” **and send her out of his house**; which was a visible token and public declaration of her divorce; besides, were she to be continued in his house afterwards, it would give suspicion of cohabitation, which after a divorce was not lawful.

**DEUT. 24:2. And when she is departed out of his house**, With her bill of divorce, by which departure out of his house it is notified to all: **she may go and be other man’s [wife]**; it was permitted her to marry another man, she being by her divorce freed from the law of her former husband; and who indeed, in express words contained in the divorce, gave her leave so to do; which ran thus, “thou art in thine own hand, and hast power over thyself to go and marry any other man whom thou pleasest; and let no man hinder thee in my name, from this day forward and for ever; and, lo, thou art free to any man;” (see Gill on “Matthew 5:31”).

**DEUT. 24:3. And [if] the latter husband hate her**, Or less loves her than another woman, and she is disliked by him as she was by her former husband; **and write her a bill off divorcement, and giveth [it] into her hand, and sendeth her out of his house**: as he had by this law a permission, in like manner as her former husband had; (see Gill on “Deuteronomy 24:1”); **or if her latter husband die, which took her [to be] his wife**; and she survives him; as she is then by death loosed from the law of an husband, she may lawfully marry another man, but not her former husband, as follows.

**DEUT. 24:4. Her former husband which sent her away may not take her again to be his wife**, Though ever so desirous of it, and having heartily repented that he had put her away: this is the punishment of his fickleness and inconstancy, and was ordered to make men cautious how they put away their wives; since when they had so done, and they had been married to another, they could not enjoy them

again even on the death of the 299 second husband; yea, though she was only espoused to him, and he had never lain with her, as Ben Melech observes, it was forbidden the former husband to marry her; though if she had only played the whore, according to the same writer, and others, she might return to him: **after that she is defiled**; not by whoredom, for in that case she was not forbidden, as it is interpreted, but by her being married to another man; when she was defiled, not by him, or with respect to him, nor with regard to any other man, whom she might lawfully marry after the decease of her latter husband; but with respect to her first husband, being by her divorce from him, and by her marriage to another, entirely alienated and separated from him, and so prohibited to him; and thus R. Joseph Kimchi interprets this defilement of prohibition, things prohibited being reckoned unclean, or not lawful to be used: **for that [is] abomination before the Lord**; for a man to take his wife again, after she had been divorced by him, and married to another man; and yet, such is the grace and goodness of God to his backsliding people, that he receives them when they return unto him their first husband, and forsake other lovers, (Jeremiah 3:1 Hosea 2:7,19); **and thou shalt not cause the land to sin which the Lord thy God giveth thee [for] an inheritance**; since if this was allowed, that men might put away their wives, and take them again at pleasure, and change them as often as they thought fit, no order could be observed, and the utmost confusion in families introduced, and lewdness encouraged, and which would subject the land and the inhabitants of it to many evils and calamities, as the just punishment thereof.

**DEUT. 24:5. When a man hath taken a new wife**, A wife he has lately married, new to him, though a widow, as Jarchi observes; but the Targum of Jonathan says a virgin; however this is opposed to his old wife, and divorced; for this, as Jarchi and Ben Melech say, excepts the return of a divorced wife, who cannot be said to be a new one: **he shall not go out to war**; this is to be understood of a man that had not only betrothed, but married a wife; a man that had

betrothed a wife, and not married her, who went out to war, might return if he would, (Deuteronomy 20:7); but one that had married a wife was not to go out to war: 300 **neither shall be charged with any business**; as betrothed ones were; they, though they had a liberty of returning, yet they were to provide food and drink for the army, and to prepare or mend the highways, as Jarchi observes; but these were not obliged to such things, nor even to keep watch on the walls of the city, or to pay taxes, as Maimonides writes: **[but] he shall be free at home one year**; not only from all tributes and taxes, and everything relative to the affairs of war, but from public offices and employments, which might occasion absence from home. Jarchi remarks, that his house or home comprehends his vineyard; and so he thinks that this respects his house and his vineyard, that if he had built a house and dedicated it, or planted a vineyard and made it common, yet was not to remove from his house because of the necessities of war: **and shall cheer up his wife which he hath taken**; or rejoice with his wife which he hath taken, and solace themselves with love; and thereby not only endear himself to her, but settle his affections on her, and be so confirmed in conjugal love, that hereafter no jealousies may arise, or any cause of divorce, which this law seems to be made to guard against. So it is said, that Alexander after the battle of Granicus sent home to Macedonia his newly married soldiers, to winter with their wives, and return at spring; which his master Aristotle had taught him, and as he was taught by a Jew.

**DEUT. 24:6. No man shall take the nether or the upper millstone to pledge**, The first word being of the dual number takes in both stones, wherefore Vatablus renders the words, "ye shall not take for a pledge both the millstones, nor indeed the uppermost;" which is the least; so far should they be from taking both, that they were not allowed to take the uppermost, which was the shortest, meanest, and lightest; and indeed if anyone of them was taken, the other became useless, so that neither was to be taken: **for he taketh [a man's] life to pledge**; or

with which his life is supported, and the life of his family; for if he has corn to supply them with, yet if his mill or millstones are pawned, he cannot grind his corn, and so he and his family must starve: and in those times and countries they did, as the Arabs do to this day, as Dr. Shaw relates, 301 "most families grind their wheat and barley at home, having two portable millstones for that purpose; the uppermost whereof is turned round by a small handle of wood or iron, that is placed in the rim;" and these millstones being portable, might be the more easily taken for pledges, which is here forbidden, for the above reason; and this takes in any other thing whatever, on which a man's living depends, or by which he gets his bread .

**DEUT. 24:7. If a man be found stealing any of his brethren of the children of Israel**,

Whether grown up or little, male or female, an Israelite or a proselyte, or a freed servant; all, as Maimonides says, are included in this general word "brethren"; though Aben Ezra observes, that it is added, "of the children of Israel", for explanation, since an Edomite is called a "brother". Now, a man must be "found" committing this fact; that is, it must plainly appear, there must be full proof of it by witnesses, as Jarchi explains this word: **and maketh merchandise of him**; or rather uses him as a servant, and employs him in any service to the least profit and advantage by him, even to the value of a farthing; yea, if he does but lean upon him, and he supports him, though he is an old man that is stolen; this is serving a man's self by him, as Maimonides , which is what is forbidden as distinct from selling him, as follows: **or selleth him**: to others; and both these, according to the above writer , using him for service, and selling him, are necessary to make him guilty of death; not the one without the other; but reading them disjunctively, as we do, gives the better sense of the words: **then that thief shall die**; by strangling with a napkin, as the Targum of Jonathan; and so Maimonides says, his death is by strangling: **and thou shalt put evil away from among you**; both him that does evil, as the Targum of Jonathan, and the guilt of it by inflicting due

punishment for it; and so deter from such practices, and prevent evil coming upon the body of the people, should such a sin be connived at; (see Exodus 21:16).

**DEUT. 24:8. *Take heed, in the plague of leprosy,*** Whether in the bodies of men, or in houses, or in garments, not to hide and conceal it; or, as Jarchi, 302 weaken the signs of it, or cut out the bright spot; so the Targum of Jonathan: ***that thou observe diligently, and do according to all the priests the Levites shall teach you:*** according to the laws and rules given in such cases, whether they order to shut up persons, houses, or clothes, or pronounce unclean or clean; in all things they were to do as they directed, which appeared to be agreeably to the said rules; for the judgment, management, and ordering of these things, belonged to the priests: of which (see Leviticus 13:1-14:57); ***as I commanded them, [so] shall ye observe to do:*** which shows the they were not to comply with their orders, and conform to them, any further than they agreed with the commands of God, and the instructions he had given them in the places referred to.

**DEUT. 24:9. *Remember what the Lord thy God did unto Miriam,*** Who was stricken with leprosy for speaking against Moses, and was shut up seven days; and they are reminded of this instance, partly to warn them against entertaining evil suspicions, and surmises of persons in power and authority, and speaking evil of them; and partly to expect that punishment would certainly be inflicted on them, should they be guilty of the same crime; nor should they think it hard, either to be smitten with leprosy, or to be shut up for it; since Miriam, a prophetess, and the sister of Moses, was so used; and that when ***by the way, after that ye were come out of Egypt:*** when upon their journey, and were retarded in it, and obliged to stay at least seven days before they could proceed on in it; (see Numbers 12:14-16).

**DEUT. 24:10. *When thou dost lend thy brother anything,*** Any sum of money he stands in need of, or demanded a debt of him, as Jarchi; money he is indebted to thee, which is the sense of the Septuagint version; and he is

not able to pay it, but offers something: in pawn till he can pay it: ***thou shall not go into his house to fetch his pledge;*** which would be an exercise of too much power and authority, to go into a neighbour's house, and take what was liked; and besides, as no doubt he would take the best, so he might take that which the poor man could not spare: and indeed, according to the Jewish canons, he could not take any pledge at all, but with the knowledge, and by the leave, of the sanhedrim, or court of judicature. 303

**DEUT. 24:11. *Thou shall stand abroad,*** Without doors, in the street, as the Targum of Jonathan, while the borrower or debtor looks out, and brings forth what he can best spare as a pledge: ***and the man to whom thou dost lend shall bring out the pledge abroad unto thee;*** now as, on the one hand, if the lender or creditor had been allowed to go in and take what he pleased for a pledge, he would choose the best; so, on the other hand, the borrower or debtor would be apt to bring the worst, what was of the least value and use; wherefore the Jews made it a rule that it should be of a middling sort, between both, lest it should be a discouragement and hinderance to lend upon pledges.

**DEUT. 24:12. *And if the man [be] poor,*** Which may be thought to be the case of everyone that gives pledges for a debt he owes, or a sum of money he borrows; yet there might be a difference: some might be so very destitute of goods and raiment in their houses, that whatever they parted with was distressing to them, and they could not well do without it: ***thou shalt not sleep with his pledge;*** nor keep it a night; but deliver it to him, before he went to bed, and laid himself down to sleep.

**DEUT. 24:13. *In any case thou shalt deliver him the pledge again, when the sun goeth down,*** If it was a night covering, as Jarchi remarks; but if it was his day clothes, he was to return it in the morning, when the sun arose; and this was to be done every day, which resist occasion a great deal of trouble, and the pledge of little use; so that it seems as though they might as well be without it as have it, and lend

freely; but the Jews say, that there was an advantage by it; for it is said in answer to such a question, “of what profit is the pledge? by this means the debt is not released on the seventh year, (when all other debts were released, (Deuteronomy 15:1,2)) nor could the borrower dispose of his goods to his children, but payment was made from the pledge after his death :” now this delivery of the pledge at sun setting was ordered, **that he may sleep in his own raiment**; have his night covering to sleep in, his pillow, and bolster, and bedding to lie on, and bed clothes to cover him; and indeed the clothes they wore were made in such form, as would serve for covering to sleep in at night, as well as to wear in the day; and such is the clothing of the Arabs now, which they call “hykes”. 304 “The usual size of them (Dr. Shaw says ), is six yards long, and five or six feet broad, serving the Arab for a complete dress in the day; and as they “sleep in their raiment”, it serves likewise for his bed and covering by night:” **and bless thee**: for using him so mercifully and kindly, as to return him his pledge, which is so necessary to his comfortable repose in the night; and not only will he praise him, and speak well of him for it, and give him thanks; but will pray to God to bless him in soul, body, and estate, for such kindness shown him: **and it shall be righteousness unto thee before the Lord thy God**; not his justifying righteousness before God, for by the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified in his sight; but it shall be owned and approved of as a good and righteous action, and answerable to the intention of this law, which is, that mercy should be shown to persons in distress; in which sense the word “righteousness” is sometimes used, even for a merciful action, (Psalm 112:9 Daniel 4:27); so alms is called **dikaiousunh**, “righteousness”, (Matthew 6:1), in some copies.

**DEUT. 24:14. Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant**, That is hired by the day, as appears by (Deuteronomy 24:15); though the law may include such as are hired by the week, or month, or year; neither of whom are to be oppressed by any means, and chiefly by

detaining their wages; so the Jerusalem Targum explains the phrase, “ye shall not detain by force the hire of the hired servant;” nor by fraud, as in (James 5:4); **[that is] poor and needy**; and so cannot bear the lest oppression of this kind, nor to have his wages detained from him any time, and much less wholly to be defrauded of them: **[whether he be] of thy brethren**; an Israelite, and so a brother both by nation and religion: **or of thy strangers that [are] in thy land, within thy gates**; Jarchi interprets this, both of proselytes of righteousness, and of proselytes of the gate; which latter are plainly described by this clause, and the former must be included; for, if proselytes of the gate are not to be oppressed, much less proselytes of righteousness, who were in all respects as Israelites, the same 305 law was to them both. Jarchi says, the phrase “in thy land” is intended to comprehend the hire of beasts, and of vessels; and these in the Misnah are said to be comprehended in this precept, as well as the hire of man.

**DEUT. 24:15. At his day thou shalt give [him] his hire**, At the close of the day, when his work is done, the hire agreed for must be paid him; and, by the same rule, all such that were hired by the week, month, or year, were to have their wages paid them at the day their time was up: **neither shall the sun go down upon it**; it was to be paid before sun setting, or at it; (see Leviticus 19:13); **for he [is] poor, and setteth his heart upon it**; being poor, he cannot wait any longer for the payment of it; his personal and family wants are such as require immediate payment; and besides, he has been eagerly expecting it, and earnestly desiring it, that he may satisfy the craving necessities of himself and family; and therefore it would be a great balk and disappointment to him to have his wages detained: **lest he cry against thee to the Lord**; having none to apply unto but him, who is the patron of the poor and needy, not being able to help himself, nor having interest in any to interpose on his behalf; and his cry, and the cry of his hire too, enter into the ears of the Lord of hosts, and is regarded by him, (James 5:4); **and it be sin unto thee**: be imputed to

him, the guilt charged on him, and punishment inflicted for it.

**DEUT. 24:16.** *The fathers shall not be put to death for the children*, By the civil magistrates, for sins committed by them of a capital nature, and which are worthy of death: *neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers*; for sins committed by them that deserve it: *every man shall be put to death for his own sin*: which is but just and reasonable; (see Ezekiel 18:4); which is no contradiction to (Exodus 20:5); that respects what God himself would do, this what Israel, or the civil magistrates in it, should do; this is a command on Israel, as Aben Ezra observes; that the declaration of the sovereign Being, who is not bound by any law. Jarchi interprets these words differently, as that the one should not be put to death by the testimony of the other; and it is a rule with the Jews, "that an oath of witness is taken of men, and not of women; of those that are not akin, and not of those that are nearly related:" on which one of the commentators observes that such that are near akin are not fit to bear testimony, because it is written, "the father shall not be put to death for the children"; that is, for the testimony of the children. Jarchi indeed mentions the other sense, for the sins of the children, which has been given, and is undoubtedly the true sense of the text. The Targum of Jonathan gives both; "fathers should not be put to death, neither by the testimony, nor for the sins of the children; and children shall not be put to death, neither by the testimony, nor for the sins of fathers; but every man shall be put to death for his own sin by proper witnesses."

**DEUT. 24:17.** *Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger, [nor] of the fatherless*, Who are unable to defend themselves, and have but few, if any, to take their part; and therefore particular care should be taken by judges and civil magistrates to do them justice, or God will require it of them: *nor take a widow's raiment to pledge*; nor anything else, as her ox or cow, (Job 24:3); according to the Jewish canons, of a widow, whether she is poor or rich, a pledge is not

taken; the reason given for which is, that it would raise an ill suspicion, and cause an evil report of her among her neighbours; and which is suggested by the Targum of Jonathan "neither shall any of you take for a pledge the raiment of a widow, lest wicked neighbours should arise, and bring an evil report upon her, when ye return the pledge unto her." But no doubt a poor widow is meant, and the design of the law is mercy to her, and that she might not be distressed by taking that from her she needed.

**DEUT. 24:18.** *But thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt*, The remembrance of which may cause sympathy with persons in distress; particularly the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow: *and the Lord thy God redeemed thee thence*; the Targum of Jonathan, 307 "the Word of the Lord thy God;" which, as it was an act of great kindness and mercy in God to them, taught them, and laid them under obligation to show favour to their fellow creatures in distress: *therefore I command thee to do this thing*: not to pervert the judgment of the stranger and fatherless, nor take a widow's raiment for a pledge; and it may be carried further into the context, and respect the laws about the pledge of the poor man, and giving the hired servant his wages in due time.

**DEUT. 24:19.** *When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field*, Whether barley harvest or wheat harvest, when either of them are ripe for cutting, mowing, or reaping, and are cutting down: *and hast forgot a sheaf in the field*; Jarchi says the phrase "in the field" is to include standing corn, some of which is forgotten in cutting down, and so is subject to this law as well as a sheaf; and a sheaf claimed by this name is one that is forgotten both by the workman and the owner; if by the one and not by the other, it could not be so called. The canon runs thus, "a sheaf which the workmen forget, and not the owner, or the owner forgets, and not the workman, before which the poor stand, or is covered with straw or stubble, is not a forgotten sheaf." And about this they have various other rules; "a sheaf that is near the

gate (of a field), or to an heap (of sheaves), or to oxen, or to instruments, and left, the house of Shammai say it is not to be reckoned a forgotten sheaf; but the house of Hillel say it is;--two sheaves are reckoned forgotten, three are not; a sheaf in which there are two sheaves (about a peck and a half), and they leave it, it is not reckoned forgotten :” **thou shalt not go again to fetch it**; which supposes a remembrance of it, or some intelligence about it when at home, and after the field has been cleared, and all carried in but this sheaf; then the owner might not go nor send to fetch it: the beginnings of the rows, they say, show when a sheaf is forgotten, or not; particularly the adverse sheaf, or that over against it, shows it; so Jarchi: **it shall be for the stranger**; or proselyte; the proselyte of righteousness; of this there is no doubt, but it seems to be for the proselyte of the gate also: 308 **for the fatherless and for the widow**; which of them soever should first find it: **that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands**; in the culture of their ground the next year, and give them large and fruitful crops; they either purposely leaving the sheaf for the poor, or however suffer them to take it unmolested when found by them. The Targum of Jonathan is, “that the word of the Lord thy God may bless thee”, etc.

**DEUT. 24:20. When thou beatest thine olive tree**, With sticks and staves, to get off the olives when ripe: **thou shalt not go over the boughs again**; to beat off some few that may remain; they were not nicely to examine the boughs over again, whether there were any left or not: **it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow**; who might come into their oliveyards after the trees had been beaten, and gather what were left.

**DEUT. 24:21. When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard**, Which was done much about the same time that the olives were gathered, and both after wheat harvest, about the latter end of June, or beginning of July; for they were more forward in those hot countries: **thou shalt not glean [it] afterwards**; go over the vines a second time, to pick off every berry

or bunch that escaped them at first gathering: **it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow**; as the forgotten sheaf, and the olive berries left; these are all supposed to be poor persons, otherwise no doubt there were strangers, and fatherless persons, and widows, in good circumstances; who, as they needed not, so neither would give themselves the trouble, but think it beneath them to go into fields, oliveyards, and vineyards, to gather what was left by the owners. These laws were made in favour of the poor, that mercy and kindness might be showed to them, and that they might have a taste of all the fruits of the earth.

**DEUT. 24:22. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt**, When they would have been glad to have enjoyed the like favours, as small as they might seem to be, even to glean in their fields, vineyards, and oliveyards; 309 **therefore I command thee to do this thing**; to suffer the poor to take the forgotten sheaf, and to come into their oliveyards and vineyards, and gather what olives and grapes remained after the first beating of the one, and the ingathering of the other. 310

## Deuteronomy 25

Several laws are contained in this chapter, as concerning beating such whose crimes required it, (Deuteronomy 25:1-3); of not muzzling the ox in treading out the corn, (Deuteronomy 25:4); of marrying a deceased brother’s wife, when there was no issue, and of the disgrace of such that refused it, (Deuteronomy 25:5-10); of the punishment of an immodest woman, (Deuteronomy 25:11,12); and against bad weights and measures, (Deuteronomy 25:13-16); and for the utter destruction of Amalek, (Deuteronomy 25:17-19).

**DEUT. 25:1. If there be a controversy between men**, Between two or more: **and they come unto judgment**; into a court of judicature, bring their cause thither: **that [the judges] may judge them**; who were never less than three; the great sanhedrim at Jerusalem consisted of seventy one, the lesser court was of twenty

three, and the least of all three only: **then they shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked**: acquit the one, whose cause is good, and condemn the other to punishment, who is guilty of a crime, and as that deserves; which is to do righteous judgment; the contrary to this is an abomination to the Lord, (Proverbs 17:15).

**DEUT. 25:2. And it shall be, if the wicked man be worthy to be beaten**, There were four kinds of death criminals were put to by the Jews, stoning, strangling, burning, and slaying with the sword; and such crimes not as severe as these were punished with beating or scourging; and who they were that were worthy to be beaten is at large set forth in the Misnic treatise called Maccoth , or “stripes”, which are too many to be transcribed. Maimonides says , that all negative precepts in the law, for the breach of which men are guilty of cutting off, but not of death by the sanhedrim, are to be beaten. They are in all twenty one, and so all deserving of death by the hand of heaven; and they are eighteen, and all negative precepts of the law broken, for which there is neither cutting off nor death by a court of judicature, for these men are to be beaten, and they are one hundred and sixty eight; and all that are to be beaten are found to be two hundred and seven; **that the judge shall cause him to lie down**; which seems to be on the floor of the court, since it was to be done immediately, and in the presence of the judge; and the Jews gather from hence, that he was to be beaten neither standing, nor sitting, but bowed; that is, ye shall command or order him to lie down, or to fall upon the ground with his face towards it: **and to be beaten before his face**; in the presence of the judge, that the sentence might be properly executed, neither exceeded nor diminished; and indeed all the judges were to be present, especially the bench of three; while he was beating, the chief of the judges read the passage in (Deuteronomy 28:58); and he that was next to him counted the strokes, and the third at every blow said Smite : of the manner of beating or scourging, (see Gill on “Matthew 10:17”); **according to his fault, by a certain number**; as his crime and wickedness was

more or less heinous, more or fewer stripes were to be laid on him; as ten or twenty, fewer or more, according to the nature of his offence, as Aben Ezra observes, only he might not add above forty; though he says there are some who say that according to his fault the stripes are larger or lesser, but all of them in number forty.

**DEUT. 25:3. Forty stripes he may give him, and not exceed**, And that this number might not be exceeded, it is ordered by the Jewish canons that only thirty nine should be given; for it is asked , “with how many stripes do they beat him? with forty, save one, as it is said, in number “forty” that is, in the number which is next to forty;” this they make out by joining the last word of (Deuteronomy 25:2) with the first of this; and that this was an ancient sense of the law, and custom upon it, appears by the execution of it on the Apostle Paul; who was not indulged, but suffered the extremity of it as it was then understood, (see Gill on “2 Corinthians 11:24”); moreover, that they might not exceed this number, they used to make a scourge of three lashes, so that every strike they fetched with it was reckoned for three stripes, and thirteen of them made thirty nine; wherefore if they added another stroke, it would have exceeded the number of stripes by two: 312 **lest [if] he should exceed, and beat him above these with many stripes**; they might diminish them, if a man was weak, and not able to bear them; but they might not exceed them, if a man was as strong as Samson, as Maimonides says: **then thy brother should seem vile unto thee**; as if he was a beast, and not a man, and much less a brother. The Targum of Jonathan is, “lest he be in danger, and thy brother be vile;” lest he be in danger of his life, and become vile, as a dead carcass; so the apostle calls dead bodies “vile bodies”, (Philippians 3:21); or in danger of being maimed, and becoming lame or deformed, and so be contemptible: and this punishment of beating with the Jews was not reckoned, according to their writers, reproachful, and as fixing a brand of infamy upon a person; but they were still reckoned brethren, and restored to their former dignities, whatsoever they



possessed; so Maimonides says, “whoever commits a crime, and is beaten, he returns to his dignity, as it is said, “lest thy brother be vile in thine eyes”; when he is beaten, lo, he is thy brother; an high priest, that commits a crime, is beaten by three (i.e. a bench of three judges, by their order), as the rest of all the people, and he returns to his grandeur; but the head of the session (or court of judicature), that commits a crime, they beat him, but he does not return to his principality, nor even return to be as one of the rest of the sanhedrim; for they ascend in holiness, but do not descend.” And yet Josephus represents it as a most infamous and scandalous punishment, as one would think indeed it should be; his words are, speaking of the laws concerning travellers being allowed to gather grapes, and pluck ears of corn as they passed; “he that does contrary to these laws receives forty stripes, save one, with a public scourge; a free man undergoes this most filthy (or disgraceful) punishment, because for the sake of gain he reproaches his dignity.”

**DEUT. 25:4. *Thou shall not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out [the corn].*** As oxen are used in ploughing, so likewise in treading or beating out the corn; of the manner of which, (see Gill on “1 Corinthians 9:9”); now while it was thus employed, it might not be restrained by any means from eating the <sup>313</sup> corn as it had an opportunity, either by a muzzle put over its mouth, or other ways. The Gentiles had several ways of restraining their cattle from eating, while they thus made use of them, to which this law is opposed. Maimonides has collected several or them together, as prohibited by it; as putting a thorn into its mouth, causing a lion to lie down by it, or causing its calf to lie down without, or spreading a skin on the top of the corn, that so it may not eat. Aelianus relates a very particular way of hindering oxen from eating at such times, used some countries, which was this; that oxen might not eat of the ears of corn, in a floor where they were trod out, they used to besmear their nostrils with cows’ dung, which was so disagreeable to the creature, that it would not taste anything though pressed with famine. This law is not to

be limited to the ox only, or to this peculiar work assigned it; but, as Jarchi says, respects any sort of cattle, and whatsoever work that has food in it, none of them being to be restrained from eating while at work: and this law was not made for the creatures only, but for men also; and especially for the sake of ministers of the word; who for their strength, labour, and industry, are compared to oxen, and ought to be comfortably supported and maintained on account of their work; for the illustration and confirmation of which this passage is twice produced, (see Gill on “1 Corinthians 9:9-10”); (see Gill on “1 Timothy 5:17-18”).

**DEUT. 25:5. *If brethren dwell together,*** Not only in the same country, province, town, or city, but in the same house; such who had been from their youth brought up together in their father’s house, and now one of them being married, as the case put supposes, they that were unmarried might live with him, and especially if the father was dead; and so may except such as were abroad, and in foreign countries, or at such a distance that this law coals not well be observed by them; though the Targum of Jonathan, and so Jarchi, interpret it of their being united in an inheritance, all by virtue of relation having a claim to their father’s inheritance; so that it mattered not where they dwelt, it is the relation that is regarded, and their right of inheritance; and the above Targum describes them as brethren on the father’s side, and so Jarchi says excepts his brother on the mother’s side; for brethren by the mother’s side, in case of inheritance, and the marrying of a brother’s wife, were not reckoned brethren, as Maimonides observes; who adds, that there is no brotherhood but on the father’s side. Some think that when there were no brethren in a strict and proper sense, the near kinsmen, sometimes called brethren, were to do the office <sup>314</sup> here enjoined, and which they conclude from the case of Boaz and Ruth; but Aben Ezra contradicts this, and says that instance is no proof of it, it respecting another affair, not marriage, but redemption; and says that brethren, absolutely and strictly

speaking are here meant; which is agreeably to their tradition : **and one of them die, and have no child**: son, or daughter, son's son, or daughter's son, or daughter's daughter, as Jarchi notes; if there were either of these, children or grandchildren, of either sex, there was no obligation to marry a brother's wife; so, in the case put to Christ, there was no issue, the person was childless, (Matthew 22:24,25 Luke 20:28); **the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger**; by whom is meant not a Gentile, or a proselyte of the gate, or of righteousness, but any Israelite whatever, that was not of her husband's family; she might not marry out of the family; that is, she was refused by all, the design of the law being to secure inheritances, and continue them in families to which they belonged: **her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife**; that is, supposing him to be unmarried, and this is indeed supposed in the first clause of the text, by dwelling with his brother; for had he been married, he would have dwelt with his wife and family apart; besides, if this law obliged a married man to marry his brother's wife, polygamy would be required and established by a law of God, which was never otherwise than permitted. This is to be understood of the eldest brother, as Jarchi, who is in an unmarried state; so it is said in the Misnah , "the command is upon the eldest to marry his brother's wife; if he will not, they go to all the brethren; if they will not, they return to the eldest; and say to him, upon thee is the commandment, either allow the shoe to be plucked off, or marry;" and such a course we find was taken among the Jews in our Lord's time, (Matthew 22:25,26); **and perform the duty of an husband's brother to her**; cohabit together as man and wife, in order to raise up seed to his brother, and perform all the offices and duties of an husband to a wife; but the marriage solemnity was not to take place when it was agreed to, until three months or ninety days had passed from the death of the brother, that it might be known whether she was with child or no by her husband, and in such a case this law had no force; so runs the Jewish

canon "a brother's wife may not pluck off the shoe, nor be married, until three months;" that is, after her husband's death.

**DEUT. 25:6. And it shall be [that] the firstborn that she beareth**, To her husband's brother, now married to her: **shall succeed in the name of his brother [which is] dead**; the meaning is, as the Targum of Jonathan, "he shall rise up in the inheritance in the name of his brother;" or, as Jarchi expresses it, "he shall take the inheritance of the deceased in the goods of his father;" that is, he shall have his part and share in the inheritance that the deceased brother would have had if he had lived, which would come to him by his father: **that his name be not put out of Israel**; that the family be not lost in Israel, and the inheritance belonging to it pass to another. This law was designed to keep families distinct, and inheritances in them, until the Messiah came, and that it might appear from what family he came; as he did from one in whom, as it is generally thought, this law took place: and it might have still a more special respect to him, as Ainsworth suggests; for Christ in the mystical sense may be signified by the deceased brother; he stands in the relation of a brother to his people, and has all the love, friendship, compassion, and condescension of one; he and they are of one and the same father, of the same family, and of the same nature, and have the same inheritance they being co-heirs with him; nor is he ashamed to own the relation. This brother of theirs is deceased; his death was according to the will of God, what he himself agreed to, and was foretold by the prophets; for which purpose he came into the world, and did die as to the flesh, and that for the sins of his people. Now the Jewish church was his wife, by whom he had no children through the law; that church was espoused to him, he stood in the relation of an husband to her, and she in the relation of a wife to him. Very few children were brought forth by her to him, see, 316 (Isaiah 54:1,5 Jeremiah 2:2 3:1 31:32); and none by the law, by which there is no regeneration, but by the Gospel; it is through that, and not the law, the Spirit and his graces

come; or souls are born again to Christ, renewed and sanctified. The apostles that survived Christ, and the ministers of the Gospel, are his brethren, (John 20:17); and who are instruments in begetting souls to Christ; and these are a seed raised up unto him, and are called not after the name of the apostles and ministers of the word, through whose ministry they are begotten, (1 Corinthians 1:12,13 3:4,5 4:15); but after Christ; and have the name of Christians, or anointed ones, from him, and by which means his name is, and will be continued as long as the sun endures, (Acts 11:26 Psalm 72:17).

**DEUT. 25:7. *And the man like not to take his brother's wife,*** The provision here made by this law, when this was the case, is such as did not take place before it became a law; for then Onan would have taken the advantage of it, and refused marrying his brother's wife, which it is plain was not agreeable to him, (Genesis 38:9); as many do now on one account or another. Leo of Modena says, "it was anciently accounted the more laudable thing to take her, than to release her; but now the corruption of the times, and the hardness of men's hearts, are such, as that they only look after worldly ends, either of riches, or of the beauty of the woman; so that there are very few that in this case will marry a brother's widow, especially among the Dutch and Italian Jews, but they always release her:" ***then let his brother's wife go up to the gate;*** to the gate of the city, where the judges sit for public affairs; to the gate of the sanhedrim, or court of judicature, as the Targum of Jonathan; and this affair was cognizable by the bench of three judges, and might be dispatched by them; for so it is said, "the plucking off the shoe, and the refusal of marriage, are by three:" i.e. three judges, which was the lowest court of judicature with the Jews: ***unto the elders, and say;*** which according to the above Targum were to be five wise men, of which three were to be judges, and two witnesses; and she was to say in the Hebrew language, in which, according to the Misnah, she was to pronounce what follows: ***317 my husband's brother refuseth to raise up unto his brother a name in Israel, he***

***will not perform the duty of my husband's brother;*** that is, in a few words, he will not marry her.

**DEUT. 25:8. *Then the elders of his city shall call him,*** Require him to come, before them, and declare his resolution, and the reasons for it; recite this law to him, and explain the nature of it, and exhort him to comply with it, or show reason why he does not, at least to have his final resolution upon it: ***and speak unto him;*** talk with him upon this subject, and give him their best advice; and what that was Maimonides more particularly informs us; if it is good and advisable to marry, they advise him to marry; but if it is better advice to pluck off the shoe, they give it; as when she is young and he is old, or she is old and he young, they advise him to allow the shoe to be plucked off: ***and [if] he stand [to it]: and say, I like not to take her;*** if, after all the conversation, debate, and counsel between them, he is resolute, and abides by his first determination, that he will not marry her, then the following method was to be taken.

**DEUT. 25:9. *Then shall his brother's wife come unto him in the presence of the elders,*** The time and place being appointed the evening before by three Rabbins, and two witnesses, as Leo of Modena says; of which she was apprized, and ordered to come tasting: ***and loose his shoe from off his foot;*** his right foot, which was thus done; "they bring him a leather shoe, which has a heel, but not sewed with linen (linen thread), and he puts it on the right foot, and binds the latchet on his foot, and stands, he and she, in the court; he fixes his foot on the ground, and she sits and stretches out her hand in the court, and looses the latchet of his shoe from off his foot, and pulls off his shoe, and casts it to the ground:" this he suffered to be done to show that he gave up his right to her; and he was so used by way of reproach, to signify that he deserved not to be reckoned among freemen, but among servants and slaves, that went barefooted, having no shoes on: and in the mystical sense of it, as Ainsworth observes, it spiritually signified, that such as would not beget children unto Christ (or preach

his Gospel for that purpose), it should be 318 declared of them that their feet are not shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Christ, (Ephesians 6:15); **and spit in his face**; in a way of contempt, as a token of shame and disgrace; but the Jewish writers generally interpret this in a softer manner, as if it was not in his face, but in his presence, upon the floor, and seen by the judges : **and shall answer and say, so shall it be done unto the man that will not build up his brother's house**; that is, in this contemptuous and shameful manner shall he be used.

**DEUT. 25:10. And his name shall be called in Israel**, Not his particular and personal name, but his family; for it seems that not only a mark of infamy was set upon him for refusing to marry his brother's widow, but upon his family also; **the house of him that hath his shoe loosed**; which, as Leo of Modena says , was repeated by her three times; and at every time the people with a loud voice answer and call him, one that had his shoe loosed; and then the Rabbin tells the man that he is at liberty now to marry whom he pleases; and if he desires a certificate from them of this setting free his kinswoman, they presently give him one; and she also had a writing given to her by the judges, certifying the same, that she was free also to marry another; of which the following is a short form or copy . "In such or such a session (or court), such an one, the daughter of such an one, plucked off the shoe of such an one, the son of such an one, before us; she brought him before us, and she loosed the shoe of his right foot, and spit before him spittle, which was seen by us upon the ground; and said, so shall it be done to the man that would not build up his brother's house." A larger form may be seen in Maimonides , as well as a type and copy of the matrimonial contract. From this law an high priest was free, (Leviticus 21:14); and so a king, according to the Jewish canon .

**DEUT. 25:11. When men strive together, one with another**, Quarrel with one another, and come to blows, and strive for mastery, which shall beat, and be the best man: 319 **and the wife of the one draweth near for to deliver**

**her husband out of the hand of him that smiteth him**; perceiving that his antagonist has more skill or strength, or both, for fighting, and is an more than a match for her husband, who is like to be much bruised and hurt; wherefore, to save him out of the hands of the smiter, she goes up to them to part them, or take her husband's side: **and putteth forth her hand, and taketh him by the secrets**; or privy parts; in Hebrew his "shameful" parts , which through shame are hidden, and modesty forbids to express in proper terms; and such is the purity of the Hebrew language, that no obscene words are used in it; for which reason, among others, it is called the holy tongue. This immodest action was done partly out of affection to her husband, to oblige his antagonist to let go his hold of him; and partly out of malice and revenge to him, to spoil him, and make him unfit for generation, and therefore was to be severely punished, as follows.

**DEUT. 25:12. Then thou shall cut off her hand**, Which was to be done not by the man that strove with her husband, or by any bystander, but by the civil magistrate or his order. This severity was used to deter women from such an immodest as well as injurious action, who on such an occasion are very passionate and inconsiderate. Our Lord is thought to refer to this law, (Matthew 5:30); though the Jewish writers interpret this not of actual cutting off the hand, but of paying a valuable consideration, a price put upon it; so Jarchi; and Aben Ezra compares it with the law of retaliation, "eye for eye", (Exodus 21:24 Leviticus 24:20) (Deuteronomy 19:21); which they commonly understand of paying a price for the both, etc. lost; and who adds, if she does not redeem her hand (i.e. by a price) it must be cut off: **thine eye shall not pity [her]**; on account of the tenderness of her sex, or because of the plausible excuse that might be made for her action, being done hastily and in a passion, and out of affection to her husband; but these considerations were to have no place with the magistrate, who was to order the punishment inflicted, either in the strict literal sense, or by paying a sum of money.

**DEUT. 25:13.** *Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights*, Or, “a stone and a stone” ; it being usual, in those times and countries, to have their weights of stone, as it was formerly with us here; we still say, that such a 320 commodity is worth so much per stone, a stone being of such a weight; now these were not to be different: *a great and a small*; great weights, to buy with them, and small weights, to sell with them, as the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases it.

**DEUT. 25:14.** *Thou shalt not have in thine house divers measures*, Or, “an ephah and an ephah”; which was one sort of measure in use with the Jews, and held above a bushel; and is put for all others, which should be alike, and not *a great and a small*; one to buy with, and another to sell by, as before observed; which would be to cheat both seller and buyer in their turns; (see Amos 8:5).

**DEUT. 25:15.** *[But] thou shall have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure shall thou have*, That is, full weights, and full measures; and such as are alike, and everywhere used, according to the standard of the country; (see Gill on “Leviticus 19:36”); *that thy days may be lengthened in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee*; long life was always reckoned a blessing, and is frequently promised to, obedience, and particularly long life in the land of Canaan; which was a most delightful and fruitful land, and which a man might wish to live long in; deceitful men, are threatened with not living half their days, and such may they be said to be that use false weights and measures, (Psalm 55:23).

**DEUT. 25:16.** *For all that do such things*, Keep, different weights and measures, and make use of them to defraud their neighbours in buying and selling: *[and] all that do unrighteously*; what is not just and right between man and man, in any other instance whatever: *[are] an abomination unto the Lord thy God*; both they and their actions; he is a righteous God, and loves righteousness, and hates injustice of every kind.

**DEUT. 25:17.** *Remember what Amalek did unto thee*, The Amalekites, how they came out against them, and fought with them at Rephidim, (Exodus 17:8); 321 *by the way, when ye were come forth out of Egypt*; which was an aggravation of their cruel and inhuman action, that they not only came out against them unprovoked, were the aggressors, and fell upon them as they were travelling on the road, but when they were just come out of Egypt, where they had been in hard bondage, and their spirits broken, and they not used to war; and so took them at all these disadvantages, a people that had not in the least injured them.

**DEUT. 25:18.** *How he met thee by the way*, Not with necessary provisions, food and drink, which would have been but a piece of kindness and humanity to travellers; but met them sword in hand, in order to stop their journey, and make them captives, at least to harass and distress them: *and smote the hindmost of thee*; came upon them in a sly cowardly manner, and attacked their rear: *[even] all [that were] feeble behind thee*: women and children, and such men as were weak, sickly, labouring under some disorder, and so lagged behind, and could not keep up with the rest; on these Amalek first fell, and began his attack here: *when thou [wast] faint and weary*; with travelling, and the more so for want of water, which was their case at Rephidim, when Amalek came out against them; which is another aggravation of their unkind usage of them they were not to forget: *and he feared not God*; who was then in the pillar of cloud and fire with Israel, which phenomenon Amalek might see, and yet did not fear; and who had done such wonders for Israel in Egypt, and had brought them from thence, and had drowned Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea, of which doubtless Amalek had heard, and yet feared not the Lord, who had done such great things.

**DEUT. 25:19.** *Therefore it shall be, when the Lord thy God hath given thee rest from all thine enemies round about*, Not only when they had subdued the Canaanites, and got possession of their land, but when they were clear and free from all their neighbouring

nations, Moabites, Midianites, Edomites, Ammonites, and Philistines; wherefore it may be observed, that this did not take place, as not immediately after the conquest of Canaan, so neither in the times of the judges, when they were harassed frequently by their neighbours, and not until the times of Saul, the first king of Israel: 322 *in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee [for] an inheritance to possess it*; the sense is, when they were in the full possession of the land given them by the Lord, as an inheritance to be enjoyed by them and theirs; and were at an entire rest from all enemies, and so had their hands at liberty to employ against Amalek: *[that] thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven*: that is, utterly destroy them, so that there should be none left of them any where, to put in mind that there ever were such a people on earth; men, women, children, cattle of all sorts, were to be destroyed, and nothing left that belonged unto them; that it might not be said this beast was Amalek's, as Jarchi, and to the same purpose Aben Ezra; see the order for this renewed, and the accomplishment of it, at least in part, (1 Samuel 15:2,3), etc. *thou shall not forget [it]*; neither the unkindness of Amalek, nor this order to destroy him. The Targum of Jonathan adds, "and even in the days of the King Messiah it shall not be forgotten." 323

## Deuteronomy 26

This chapter treats of the basket of firstfruits to be brought and presented to the Lord, and the confession to be made along with it, (Deuteronomy 26:1-11); and of the declaration to be made on the third year, the year of tithing, and the prayer annexed to it, (Deuteronomy 26:12-15); and of the covenant made in a solemn manner between God and the people of Israel, (Deuteronomy 26:16-19).

**DEUT. 26:1.** *And it shall be, when thou [art] come in unto the land*, The land of Canaan, which they were now on the borders of, and just entering into: *which the Lord thy God giveth thee [for] an inheritance*; which is often mentioned, to observe that it was not through

their merits, but his gift, that they should enjoy the land; and the rather here to enforce the following law concerning the basket of firstfruits: *and possessest it, and dwellest therein*; not only had entered into it, but got the possession of it, and settled there. This shows as Jarchi observes, that they were not bound to the firstfruits till they had subdued the land and divided it; not as soon as they were in it.

**DEUT. 26:2.** *That thou shalt take of the first of all the fruit of the earth*, This oblation of firstfruits was different front the sheaf of the firstfruits brought at barley harvest in the time of the passover, and from the two wave loaves of wheaten flour, at wheat harvest, at Pentecost; and from the cake of the first of their dough; (see Leviticus 23:10,17 Numbers 15:21). They were of one sort only, these of various kinds; though, as Jarchi observes, not all firstfruits, or the first of all sorts of fruits, were to be brought; for all were not bound to firstfruits, but the seven kinds only, called here the fruit of the earth, and are particularly mentioned in (Deuteronomy 8:8); and their manner of observing, selecting, and gathering their firstfruits, as the same writer notes, was this; 324 "a man goes into his field, and sees a mature fig, he binds a rush about it for a sign, and says, lo, this is firstfruits: and so, if he sees a bunch of grapes, or a pomegranate, more mature than the rest, he does the same," as is observed in the Misnah : *which thou shalt bring of thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee*; and the land being given them, and such a fruitful one as it was, they needed not to grudge bringing the firstfruits of it to the Lord. The quantity they were to bring is not fixed; this was left to their generosity; but, according to tradition, they were to bring the sixtieth part; so says Maimonides , "the firstfruits have no measure (no fixed measure) from the law; but from the words of the wise men, a man ought to separate one out of sixty:" *and shalt put [it] in a basket*; for the more convenient carriage of them and for the more decent oblation and waving of them together, The rich brought their firstfruits in baskets of silver and of gold, the poor in wicker baskets of willows barked . The

firstfruits of the seven several kinds were all put together in one basket, not into separate ones, or into as many as there were kinds; but then, as the last mentioned writer observes, "they did not bring them mixed, but the barley (was put) beneath, or lowermost, and the wheat over that; and the olives above that, and the dates over them, and the pomegranates over them, and the figs uppermost in the vessel; and there was some one thing which separated between every kind, as leaves, and the like; and they put about the figs clusters of grapes without:" **and shalt go unto the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place his name there;** which, as the event showed, was the city of Jerusalem; hither from all parts of the country were the firstfruits to be brought. All which may teach us, that we are to honour God with the firstfruits of our increase; that we are to be thankful in every thing, and for everything we have; and that our mercies should be acknowledged publicly in the place of public worship; and that all our sacrifices of praise should be offered in faith, which may be signified by the basket in which the firstfruits were brought, without which we cannot please God; and this being bore on the shoulder all the while, may denote reverence of God, and a sense of former state and condition, as this might put the Israelites in mind of their carrying loads in Egypt.

**DEUT. 26:3. And thou shalt go unto the priest that shall be in those days,** Whose course and turn it would be to minister before the Lord; though, according to the Targum of Jonathan, it was the high priest they were to apply to on this occasion; and so Aben Ezra observes, that this law is obligatory all the time there is an high priest, as if it was not binding when there was none, and all depended on him; who in this case was typical of Christ our high priest, to whom we must bring, and by him offer up, the sacrifice of praise, even the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to God for all his mercies: **and say unto him;** what follows, and the basket of firstfruits all the while on his shoulder, even if a king: **I profess this day;** it being done once in a year, and not twice, as Jarchi notes: **unto the**

**Lord thy God;** directing his speech to the priest: **that I am come into the country which the Lord sware unto our fathers for to give us;** and not only come into it, but was in the possession of it, and in the enjoyment of the fruits of it; of which the basket of firstfruits he had brought on his shoulder was a token. The natural and moral use of these firstfruits to the Israelites, and the bringing of them, was hereby to own and acknowledge that God was the proprietor of the land of Canaan; that they had it by gift from him, and that they held it of him, the firstfruits being a sort of a small rent they brought him; and that he was faithful to his oath and promise he had made to their fathers, and which they professed with great humility and thankfulness. The typical use of them was to direct to Christ himself, the firstfruits of them that sleep in him, the first begotten from the dead, the pledge and earnest of the resurrection of his people; to the Spirit of God and his grace, which are the earnest of glory; and to the first converts among Jews and Gentiles, in the first times of the Gospel; to Christians in general, who are the firstfruits of God and of the Lamb, and to their sacrifices of praise and thankfulness they are to offer up to God through Christ, which are acceptable to him through him; and whereby they glorify him as the author of all their mercies, to whom they are to bring their best, and in the first place; (see 1 Corinthians 15:20,23 Romans 8:23 11:16 16:5 Revelation 14:4 Hebrews 13:15). 326

Ver. 4. **And the priest shall take the basket out of thine hand,** To wave it, as Jarchi says, putting his hand under the hand of the owner, and so waving it; and this being waved to and fro towards the several corners of the earth, was an acknowledgment of the Lord being the proprietor of it: **and set it down before the altar of the Lord thy God;** that it might have some appearance of a sacrifice, and be a fit emblem of the spiritual sacrifice of praise, which is accepted upon the altar Christ, which sanctifies every gift.

**DEUT. 26:5. And thou shalt speak and say before the Lord thy God,** Speak with a loud voice, lifting up the voice, as Jarchi interprets it;

or “answer” , to the question the priest will ask, saying, what is this thou hast brought? as Aben Ezra remarks; and this being said in the tabernacle, and before the priest of the Lord, and as in the presence of the Lord, is represented as said before him, which is as follows: **a Syrian ready to perish [was] my father**; meaning Jacob, who though born in Canaan, his mother was a Syrian, and his grandfather Abraham was of Chaldea, a part of Syria; and Jacob married two wives in Syria, and all his children were born there but Benjamin, and where he lived twenty years; and sometimes persons are denominated, as from the place of their birth, so from the place of their dwelling, as Christ was called a Nazarene from Nazareth, where he dwelt, though he was born at Bethlehem, (Matthew 2:23); and Jether, though an Israelite, as Aben Ezra observes, is called an Ishmaelite, perhaps because he dwelt some time among that people, (1 Chronicles 2:17). Now Jacob might be said to be ready to perish when he fled for his life from his brother Esau, and was poor and penniless when he came to Laban; so the last mentioned writer interprets this phrase; to which may be added, that when in his service he was exposed to cold and heat, and had his wages frequently changed, and afterwards, when obliged to flee from Laban, was pursued by him with an intention to do him mischief, had not the Lord prevented him. The reason of this part of the confession was to show that it was not owing to the greatness of their ancestors from whence they sprung, whose condition was mean, but to the gift of God, and his goodness, that they enjoyed the land of Canaan. So every sensible soul, when he brings his sacrifice of praise to God for his mercies, especially spiritual ones, frankly acknowledges his lost perishing condition by nature, of which he is sensible; and that in order to magnify the riches of the grace of God in his 327 salvation, to endear Christ as a Saviour the more, and to keep humble, and make thankful: **and he went down into Egypt**; not directly, but some years after his former afflicted circumstances; so the Targum of Jonathan expresses it, “after these

things he went down into Egypt;” after he had been in perishing circumstances in Syria, and when he was sore pressed with famine in Canaan: **and sojourned there with a few**; with seventy souls, as Jarchi: **and became there a great nation, mighty and populous**; insomuch that the king of Egypt was jealous of them, lest through their strength and numbers they should get away from them, when any favourable incident happened; they being when they came out from thence six hundred thousand men able to bear arms, besides women and children.

**DEUT. 26:6. And the Egyptians evil entreated us**, Ordered their male children to be killed by the midwives, and by another edict to be drowned by the people: **and afflicted us**; by setting taskmasters over them, who put heavy burdens upon them: **and laid upon us hard bondage**; in mortar and brick, and all manner of field service, in which they made them serve with rigour, and whereby their lives were made bitter; (see Exodus 1:9-22).

**DEUT. 26:7. And when we cried unto the Lord our God**, As they did by reason of their hard bondage, (Exodus 2:23); **and the Lord heard our voice, and looked upon our affliction, and our labour, and our oppression**; with a look of pity and compassion, heard their cries, answered their petitions, and sent them a deliverer, (Exodus 2:25 3:7,8).

**DEUT. 26:8. And the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt**, After some time: **with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm**; by his almighty power, of which full proof was given by what he then did, (Deuteronomy 5:15); **328 and with great terribleness**: to Pharaoh and his people, through the plagues that were inflicted on them, especially the last, the slaying of their firstborn; (see Deuteronomy 4:34); **and with signs and with wonders**; wrought by the hands of Moses and Aaron, meaning the ten plagues, often so called.

**DEUT. 26:9. And he hath brought us unto this place**, After forty years travel through the wilderness: **and hath given us this land, [even] a land that floweth with milk and**



*honey*; an usual description of the land of Canaan, because of the great fertility of it, and the abundance of good things in it; (see Exodus 3:8).

**DEUT. 26:10.** *And now, behold, I have brought the firstfruits of the land, which thou, O Lord, hast given me*, Directing his speech not to the priest, but to the Lord himself; owning that the part of the land he had, and the fruits he enjoyed, were the gifts of God to him, and therefore, as in gratitude bound, brought him the firstfruits: *and thou shalt set it before the Lord thy God*; these are the words of Moses, or of the law, directing the man what further he had to do; and this, as Jarchi thinks, shows that he took it after the priest waved it, and laid hold on it with his hand while he was reading (his confession), turning and waving: *and worship before the Lord thy God*; bow before him in a reverend and humble manner, sensible of his obligations to him, and dependence on him.

**DEUT. 26:11.** *And thou shalt rejoice in every good [thing]*, In all the blessings of goodness and mercies of life, which God in his kind providence had favoured them with: *which the Lord thy God hath given unto thee, and unto thine house*; to them and their families, by which they were comfortably provided for: *thou and the Levite, and the stranger that [is] among you*; by which it seems that not only a basket of firstfruits was brought and presented to the Lord, which is the perquisite of the priest, but there were others also brought, or bought with their money at Jerusalem, and a sort of a kept, which the Levite, and stranger or proselyte, of along with the owner; (see Deuteronomy 12:11,12 16:10,11); though Jarchi understands it of the Levite and stranger being obliged to bring the firstfruits: the Levite, he 329 says, is bound to the firstfruits of the plants in the midst of his cities, though he had no part in the division of the land; and the same writer says, the stranger brings the firstfruits, but does not proclaim, because he cannot say, "which he sware to our fathers", (Deuteronomy 26:3); but it is said, if his mother was an Israelitess he might proclaim; yea, Maimonides

says, on account of what is said of Abraham, (Genesis 17:5); who is the father of the whole world; (see Romans 4:10,13); because mention is made of rejoicing; hence it is concluded, as Jarchi says, that the proclamation of the firstfruits was only made in the time of joy, from Pentecost unto the feast that a man gathers in his increase, and his fruits, and his wine, and his oil; though from that feast and onward he may bring, but not proclaim; to the same purpose, says the Misnah, from Pentecost to the feast of tabernacles a man may bring the firstfruits, and proclaim; and even from the feast of tabernacles to the dedication of the temple, he may bring, but not proclaim; the reason given in Siphri is, because proclamation is only to be performed in time of joy--and the joy of the year is finished at the end of the feast of tabernacles, as in (Leviticus 23:40).

**DEUT. 26:12.** *When thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithes of thine increase*, Which, according to Maimonides, is to be understood of the feast, in which all tithes are finished, which is the feast of the passover: *the third year, [which is] the year of tithing*; that is, the third from every seventh, when the land lay fallow. Every year a tithe was paid to the Levites; and besides that a second tithe, which was carried to Jerusalem and eaten there; and every third year it was eaten at home, in their towns and cities in the country instead of it, with the Levite, poor and stranger, and was called the poor's tithe; and hence the Targum of Jonathan here calls this year the year of the poor's tithe, as was also the sixth year, and was reckoned not complete till the passover in the following year, as the Jewish writers say: *and hath given it unto the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow*; that is, the poor's tithe of the third year, which these were to eat of with the owner, (Deuteronomy 14:28,29); though the Jews commonly distinguish the Levite from the rest, and suppose that both first and second tithes are meant, the one to be given to the former, and the other to the latter; so the Targum of Jonathan and Jarchi: *that they may eat within thy gates, and be filled*: for this was a considerable entertainment, a sort of

a feast, a full meal, however; hence it 330 is concluded, as Jarchi says, that they did not give less of corn to a poor man than half a kab of wheat, which was above three pints.

**DEUT. 26:13.** *Then thou shalt say before the Lord thy God*, Make the following declaration as in his presence; for this was not made in the tabernacle or temple at Jerusalem, since the tithe was to be eaten with the poor in the gates of the owner, as in (Deuteronomy 26:12): ***I have brought away the hallowed things out of [mine] house***: which Aben Ezra and Onkelos interpret of the tithe; but it seems, besides that, to take in everything devoted to all holy uses, be they what they will, which were at this time to be separated from a man's own common goods, and applied to the purposes for which they were designed and devoted, and particularly what was to be given to the poor: ***and also have, given them unto the Levite, and unto the stranger, to the fatherless, and to the widow, according to all thy commandments which thou hast commanded me***; giving to each according as the law directs; which the Targum of Jonathan and Jarchi interpret as before, giving the first tithe to the Levites, and the second tithe to the rest: ***I have not transgressed thy commandments, neither have I forgotten [them]***: neither broken them wilfully, nor omitted them through carelessness, negligence, and forgetfulness, but was mindful to observe them punctually and exactly.

**DEUT. 26:14.** ***I have not eaten thereof in my mourning***, When in grief and sorrow on account of any afflictive circumstance, for these were to be eaten with joy, (Deuteronomy 16:11 26:11); and especially of the loss of relations by death, when holy things were not to be eaten by such persons; (see Leviticus 10:19); and particularly tithes, though it is said, "What is doubtful of tithing (whether it has been tithed or no) might be eaten by a mourner;" and a man was reckoned such an one until his dead was buried. So Maimonides observes, "a mourner may not eat holy things, as it is written, (Deuteronomy 26:14); he is one whose relation is dead, when he is obliged to mourn; for he is

called by the law a mourner as long as 331 the dead lies upon the face of the earth (above ground), or as long as he is not yet buried he is called a mourner; and so likewise on the day of burial:" ***neither have I taken away [ought] thereof for [any] unclean [use]***; or common use, or any other use than it was designed for, and devoted to; or for any unclean person, who by the law might not eat thereof; or, as Jarchi interprets it, that he had not removed it, or taken it away from being eaten, on account of any unclean person, because I am unclean and he pure, or he pure and I unclean: ***nor given ought thereof for the dead***; for the necessities of the dead, as Aben Ezra; more particularly Jarchi, to make for him a coffin and grave clothes; and so the Targum of Jonathan interprets it of grave clothes for the dead; though that of Jerusalem of clothes for those that are polluted by the dead. It may have respect also to the parentalia, or funeral feasts made at the interment of the dead; though Aben Ezra says, there are some that say it was for idolatry, and so the person here speaking denies that he had made use of any of the holy things in honour of idols, of dead men deified; and some are of opinion that all the above things may have some respect to idolatrous practices: ***[but] I have hearkened to the voice of the Lord my God, [and] have done according to all that thou hast commanded me***; observed his word, and kept close to it, and not swerved from it, but acted according to it in all things before referred to.

**DEUT. 26:15.** ***Look down from thy holy habitation, from heaven***, This is a prayer of the person that makes the above declaration annexed to it, desiring that God would vouchsafe to look with an eye of love, complacency, and delight, upon him and upon all his people, from heaven his holy habitation, though they were on earth, and unholy persons in themselves, and especially if compared with him; (see Isaiah 57:15 63:15); ***and bless thy people Israel***; with blessings temporal and spiritual: ***and the land which thou hast given us***; with fertility and plenty of all good things, that it might be ***as thou swarest to our fathers***,

*a land flowing with milk and honey*; (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 26:9"). 332

**DEUT. 26:16.** *This day the Lord thy God hath commanded thee to do these statutes and judgments*, These are the words of Moses, as Aben Ezra rightly observes, and refer not only to the laws last mentioned, but to all others which he had repeated, or the Lord by him had ordered to be observed, recorded in this book: and though it is very probable Moses had been several days repeating former laws, and acquainting them with new ones; yet this being the last day, in which the whole account was finished, they are said to be commanded that day, and though commanded that day were to be observed and done every day; for, as Jarchi says, every day was to be considered and reckoned as new, as if on that day they were commanded them: *thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thy heart, and with all thy soul*; cordially, readily, willingly, sincerely, constantly, and to the utmost of their abilities.

**DEUT. 26:17.** *Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God*, Said, affirmed, protested, and in the most solemn manner declared, that the Lord was their God, and him only; and that they would have no other God, nor worship, serve, or obey any other. The Lord is the God of all mankind, as he is the Creator and Preserver of them, and was of the people of Israel in a peculiar manner, they being chosen, redeemed, and privileged by him above all others; and especially is of his elect in Christ among all nations, whom he has loved and set apart for himself, and determined to save; whom he has adopted and regenerated; he provides for them, protects and preserves them, gives them grace here and glory hereafter: he is their God in Christ, and by virtue of the covenant of his grace made with them in him; and is known by them to be so in the effectual calling by the application of covenant blessings to them; and which is certified to them by the Spirit of God, upon which they claim their interest in him, and make profession of him as their God: *and to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes and his commandments, and his judgments, and*

*to hearken unto his voice*; that is, this was then their resolution and determination, their protestation and declaration, to walk in all the ways of God, both in private and in public, he directed unto; and to observe all his laws, ceremonial, moral, and judicial, which he had given them as the rule of their walk and behaviour; and to regard whatsoever he should reveal by his prophets and ministers as his will; and a view of covenant interest in God lays all good men under the strongest obligation in the strength of divine grace to attend to his will; nor can there be a greater motive to them than covenant love, grace, and mercy.

**DEUT. 26:18.** *And the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people*, Affirmed and declared them to be his special people, above all people on the face of the earth, and that they were looked upon and considered by him as his jewels, his peculiar treasure: *as he hath promised thee*; on condition of their obedience to him, as he did in (Exodus 19:5); *and that [thou] shouldest keep all his commandments*; at the same time declared this as his will, that they should observe all his precepts, to which they were laid under obligation by the special favour and peculiar privileges he bestowed upon them, (Deuteronomy 7:6,7). The Targums interpret both these verses of the people of Israel choosing and making the Lord their King, and of his being made King over them; and so it respects their peculiar form of civil government, being a theocracy. The Lord's people in Christ are a peculiar people; they are distinct from all people, and are peculiarly regarded by him; they are the objects of his peculiar love, and receive peculiar favours from him; and whom having chosen and redeemed, he calls by his special grace, and witnesses their special relation to him by his Spirit; which grace obliges and excites them to a cheerful obedience to his commands.

**DEUT. 26:19.** *To make thee high above all nations*, None of them having the Lord to be their God and King in such sense as Israel, nor they his people in such a peculiar sense as they were; nor having such laws and statutes as he

had given to them; these things gave them a superiority over all other nations: **which he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour**; that is, which nations he made praiseworthy, famous, and honourable, for their extent, wealth, riches, and number; and yet on the above accounts Israel was advanced higher than they: **and that thou mayest be an holy people unto the Lord thy God, as he hath spoken**; the end of the Lord in being their God, and making them his people, was not only to make them high above all others, but to make them more holy than others; to set them apart for himself, as a people sacred to his worship and service, as he had both determined and declared, (Deuteronomy 7:6,7). 334

### Deuteronomy 27

In this chapter the people of Israel are ordered to write the law on plastered stones, and set them on Mount Ebal, (Deuteronomy 27:1-4); where they are bid to erect an altar, and offer sacrifices on it, (Deuteronomy 27:5-8); and are charged by Moses and the priests to obey the Lord, and keep his commandments, (Deuteronomy 27:9,10); and a direction is given to each tribes which should stand and bless, and which curse, and where, (Deuteronomy 27:11-13); and the curses which the Levites should pronounce with a loud voice, and the people should say Amen to, are recited, (Deuteronomy 27:14-25); and the whole is concluded with a curse on all who in general do not perform the whole law, (Deuteronomy 27:26).

**DEUT. 27:1. And Moses, with the elders of Israel, commanded the people, saying,** The seventy elders, at the head of whom was Moses, which made the great sanhedrim, or council of the nation; Moses having recited all the laws of God to the people, these joined with him in an exhortation to them to observe and obey them: **keep all the commandments which I command you this day**; not in his own name, as being the supreme legislator, but in the name of the Lord, whom they had avouched to be their God and King, from whom he had received them.

**DEUT. 27:2. And it shall be, on the day when you shall pass over Jordan,** Not the precise day exactly, but about that time, a little after they passed that river, as soon as they conveniently could; for it was not till after Ai was destroyed that the following order was put in execution; indeed as soon as they passed over Jordan, they were ordered to take twelve stones, and did; but then they were set up in a different place, and for a different purpose; (see Joshua 4:3,8,9 8:31); **unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, that thou shalt set thee up great stones**; not in Jordan, as Jarchi, but on Mount Ebal, 335 (Deuteronomy 27:4); nor had the stones set up in Jordan any such inscription as what is here ordered to be set on these: **and plaster them with plaster**: that so words might be written upon them, and be more conspicuous, and more easily read.

**DEUT. 27:3. And thou shall write upon them all the words of this law,** Not the whole book of Deuteronomy, as some think, at least not the historical part of it, only what concerns the laws of God; and it may be only a summary or abstract of them, and perhaps only the ten commandments. Josephus is of opinion that the blessings and the curses after recited were what were written on them: **when thou art passed over**; that is, the river Jordan: **that thou mayest go in unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, a land flowing with milk and honey**; this account of the land of Canaan is so frequently observed, to imprint upon their minds a sense of the great goodness of God in giving them such a fruitful country, and to point out to them the obligation they lay under to observe the laws of God ordered to be written on plastered stones, as soon as they came into it: **as the Lord God of thy fathers hath promised thee**; (Exodus 3:8).

**DEUT. 27:4. And therefore it shall be, when ye be gone over Jordan,** Some time after they had passed that river: **[that] ye shall set up these stones, which I command you this day, in Mount Ebal**; a mountain near Shechem in Samaria, and was, as Benjamin of Tudela says, dry as stones and rocks itself, and perhaps had its name, as some think, from the root in the

Arabic language which signifies to strip a tree of its leaves, and a derivative from it, white stones and a mountain in which such are found. Hither the stones commanded to be set up were to be brought, and fixed here; from whence it is not certain; it may be from some part of the mountain. Here the Samaritan version has Gerizim instead of Ebal, which is generally thought to be a wilful corruption of the Samaritans, in favour of their temple built at Gerizim: **and thou shalt plaster them with plaster**; as before directed, (Deuteronomy 27:2).

**DEUT. 27:5. And there shall thou build an altar to the Lord thy God**, On the same mountain, though not of the same stones. Jarchi's note is, 336 "after that (the setting up of the plastered stones) thou shalt bring from thence (from Jordan) others, and build of them an altar on Mount Ebal;" but Josephus places this altar not on Mount Ebal, but between that and Gerizim. This altar, he says, was ordered to be built towards the rising sun, not far from the city of Shechem, between two mountains, Gerizim and Ebal; but the text is express, that it was to be built where the stones were set up, which was on Mount Ebal, and there it was built, (Joshua 8:30); an altar of stones; of whole stones, as in (Deuteronomy 27:6), not broken, nor hewed, but rough as they were when taken out of the quarry: **thou shalt not lift up [any] iron [tool] upon them**; to hew them, and make them smooth; (see Gill on "Exodus 20:25");

**DEUT. 27:6. Thou shalt build the altar of the Lord thy God of whole stones**, And of such Joshua did build it, (Joshua 8:31); **and thou shalt offer burnt offerings thereon unto the Lord thy God**; and very likely sin offerings too; for these frequently went together, the one to make atonement for sin, and the other as a gift, and by way of thankfulness for the acceptance of the former; and both typical of Christ, the true sacrifice, and the antitype of all the legal sacrifices.

**DEUT. 27:7. And thou shalt offer peace offerings**, Part of which belonged to God, which was burnt on the altar, and another part to the priest that offered them; and the rest to

the owner that brought them, which he eat of with his friends; so it follows: **and shall eat there, and rejoice before the Lord thy God**: now this altar, where these sacrifices were offered, was on the very spot where the stones were on which the law was written; and may point at the gracious provision God has made for the redemption of his people from the curse of it by Christ, who became a substitute for them in their legal place and stead. The altar being of rough unhewn stones was a type of him in his human nature, who is the stone in the vision cut out of the mountain without hands; and being unpolished may denote the meanness of his outward appearance, on account of which he was rejected by the Jewish builders; and no iron tool being to be lifted up on them, may signify that nothing of man's is to be added to the sacrifice and satisfaction of Christ, and salvation by him; and this being in Ebal, where the curses were pronounced, shows that Christ, by the offering up of himself for the sins of 337 his people, has made atonement for them, and thereby has delivered them from the curse of the law, being made a curse for them; all which is matter of joy and gladness to them.

**DEUT. 27:8. And thou shalt write upon the stones all the words of this law**, Not upon the stones of the altar, but upon the first stones brought to Mount Ebal, and set up there before, and on which the words were inscribed before the altar was erected; though according to the Misnah the altar was built of these stones, and on that the law written; for it is said, "they shall bring the stones ((Deuteronomy 27:2,4)) and build the altar, and plaster it with plaster, and write upon it all the words of the law:" with which Josephus agrees, who says, "that when Moses was about to die, he ordered the blessings and the curses to be written on the altar, on both sides of it:" could this be made clearly to appear, it would be easy to observe the accomplishment of it in Christ, who was made under the law, became subject to it, had it written on his heart, obeyed the precepts and bore the penalty of it, and had all the curses of it laid on him, and thereby redeemed his people

from them. However, be it on which it may that the words of the law were written, they were written *very plainly*; so that they might be easily read; in seventy languages, according to the Jewish writers; which they say was done, that whoever would learn the law might learn it, and so the Gentiles had no excuse ; for it is a prevailing notion with them, that there were so many nations and languages. The law being written on stones denotes the duration of it, which continued not only during the times of the Old Testament dispensation, and to the times of John, and had its fulfilment in Christ, but still continues; for though Christ has redeemed his people from the curse and condemnation of it, yet it is in his hands as a rule of direction to them as to their walk and conversation: nor is it made void by any doctrine of the Gospel, and nothing more strongly enforces obedience to it than the Gospel. The moral law is immutable, invariable, and eternal in its nature, and in the matter of it. This may also point at the hardness of men's hearts, their non-subjection to the law, and disobedience of it; and these stones being covered with plaster may be an emblem of formalists and hypocrites, who are like whited walls and sepulchres, (Matthew 23:27), have a 338 form of the law in their heads, but not in their hearts; are Jews outwardly, but not inwardly, ( Romans 2:28); externally righteous before men, as if they were strict observers of the law, but internally very wicked; and have hard, blind, and impenitent hearts, under the cover of the law, and a profession of strict regard to it; and this being done on the same mount where the curses were pronounced, shows that they were on account of the breach of this law.

**DEUT. 27:9. *And Moses and the priests the Levites spake unto all Israel,*** The priests who were Levites, as all the priests that were lawful ones were; and there were none but such at this time, who were. Eleazar and Ithamar, and their sons; these joined with Moses in the following exhortations to the people of Israel, as being particularly concerned in instructing them in the knowledge of the laws, and in seeing them

put in execution: *saying, take heed, and hearken, O Israel*; to what was about to be said unto them, as well as to what had: been said: *this day thou art become the people of the Lord thy God*; they were his people before; he had chosen them to be his special people above all others; he had redeemed them out of Egypt; he had led them through the wilderness, and provided for them and protected them there, and had given them laws and statutes to observe to walk in; all which showed them to be his peculiar people: but now in a very formal and solemn manner they were avouched and declared by him to be his people, and they had solemnly avouched and declared that he was their God and King; and every day, according to Jarchi, was to be considered as this day, as if it was the day of entering into covenant with him.

**DEUT. 27:10. *Thou shalt therefore obey the voice of the Lord thy God,*** In whatsoever he directs in his word, and by his prophets, and especially by his Son, eminently called the Word of the Lord: *and do his commandments and his statutes, which I command thee this day*; (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 27:1").

**DEUT. 27:11. *And Moses charged the people the same,*** That he gave the above orders to set up stones, and plaster them, and write the law on them, and build an altar in the same place, and offer sacrifices when come into the land of Canaan: *saying*; as follows. 339

**DEUT. 27:12. *These shall stand upon Mount Gerizim to bless the people, widen ye are come over Jordan,*** Which was a mountain in Samaria opposite to Mount Ebal, a valley of a furlong broad lay between them ; and, according to Hillerus , had its name from being broken off from that, they being, as it should seem, originally one mountain, and now two tops of the same; so Burchard; but others think it signifies the mountain of the mowers or cutters down ; that is, of grass or corn, being a very fruitful one; and Benjamin of Tudela says , that in his time, on Mount Gerizim were fountains and orchards; and being such a fertile mountain, it was very proper to bless upon. Mr. Maundrel , a late traveller in those parts, says, "though neither of the mountains have much to

boast of as to their pleasantness, yet as one passes between them, Gerizim seems to discover a somewhat more verdant fruitful aspect than Ebal; the reason of which may be, because fronting towards the north it is sheltered from the heat of the sun by its own shade; whereas Ebal looking southward, and receiving the sun that comes directly upon it, must by consequence be rendered more scorched and unfruitful." Josephus says, that Gerizim was on the right hand, and Ebal on the left; which may serve to strengthen the observation of Ainsworth, in allusion hereunto, that in the last judgment those on the right hand will be pronounced blessed, and those on the left hand cursed: **Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Joseph, and Benjamin**: these appointed for blessing were children of the mistress, or free woman, as Aben Ezra and many others have observed; the four first were the sons of Leah, and the two last the sons of Rachel, and therefore employed in the most honourable and desirable service: and who so proper to pronounce or receive the blessing as the children of the free woman, of Jerusalem above, which is free, the mother of us all that are born again, and are made free by the Son of God, and are free indeed, and are entitled to all the blessings of grace and glory?

**DEUT. 27:13. And these shall stand upon Mount Ebal curse**, Which was dry and rocky, barren and fruitful, and like the earth, that bears briars and thorns, is rejected and nigh unto cursing, and so a proper place to curse, and a fit emblem of those to be cursed; (see Hebrews 6:8); **Reuben, Gad, and Asher, and Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali**; four of these appointed for cursing were the children of the handmaids, Gad, Asher, 340 Dan, and Naphtali; and since two were wanting, as Aben Ezra observes, and the sons of Leah were many, the oldest and the youngest were taken; Reuben, who had defiled his father's bed, and exposed himself to the curse of the law, and Zebulun, the last and youngest of Leah's sons; (see Galatians 3:10 4:24,30).

**DEUT. 27:14. And the Levites shall speak, and say unto all the men of Israel**, Rather, "answer

and say"; not the whole tribe of Levi, for that stood on Mount Gerizim to bless, (Deuteronomy 27:12); but the priests of that tribe who were placed in the valley, between the two mountains, and pronounced both the blessings and the curses in the hearing of all the tribes of Israel, to which they were to answer Amen; and that they might plainly hear, they expressed their words **with a loud voice**, clearly and distinctly, as follow.

**DEUT. 27:15. Cursed [be] the man that maketh [any] graven or molten image**, The blessings and the form of them are not recorded, because they were not to be had from the law, and through obedience to it; and therefore there is a profound silence about them, to put men upon seeking for them elsewhere, and which are only to be had in Christ, especially spiritual ones; but we may suppose they were delivered in the same form, and respecting the same things as the curses, only just the reverse of them; as, "blessed is the man that maketh not any graven image", etc. The order of both is given in the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem; (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 11:29"). This curse respects the breach of the first table of the law, and everything included in it relating to the nature and being of God, the worship of him, and the honour of his name; to do anything contrary to which, particularly to make an image, whether graven or molten, to worship, is **an abomination to the Lord**; and therefore subjects a man to the curse of his law, it being **the work of the hands of the craftsman**; and therefore it must be a most stupid thing to ascribe deity to it, and worship it as such: **and putteth [it] in [a] secret [place]**; though it is not set in a place of public worship, or the house, so as to be seen by everyone; but in some retired place, in a secret chamber, and there worshipped, or kept to look at with pleasure; which would be a temptation, and lead on to idolatry, and therefore is forbidden, and to be guarded against: now one that committed 341 idolatry, or anything like it, in the most secret manner, was liable to this curse; for the omniscient God, the legislator,

knows what is done in the most private manner, and will resent and revenge every affront and injury to his honour and glory. And Aben Ezra observes, that all that follow respect things done in a secret way, and which were not cognizable by the civil magistrate, and therefore to deter persons from them these curses were pronounced: **and all the people shall answer and say Amen**; even those on the one mountain as on the other, thereby approving of, and assenting to, the justice of the sentence pronounced.

**DEUT. 27:16. Cursed [be] he that setteth light by his father, or his mother**, That secretly despises them in his heart, and by looks and gestures mocks at them in a private manner, unseen by others, (Proverbs 30:17); for if he publicly cursed them, that was cognizable by the civil magistrate, and he was to be put to death, (Leviticus 20:9). This follows next, as in the order of the ten commands, to that which respects the fear and worship of God; honouring parents being next to the glorifying of God, the Father of all: **and all the people shall say Amen**; applaud the righteous sentence, saying, "so let it be".

**DEUT. 27:17. Cursed [be] he that removeth his neighbour's landmark**, Removes it backward, and steals ground, as Jarchi explains it; this is commonly done secretly; (see Deuteronomy 19:14); **and all the people shall say Amen**; (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 27:15-16").

**DEUT. 27:18. Cursed [be] he that maketh the blind to wander out of the way**, By directing him wrong knowingly, or laying a stumbling block in his way, (Leviticus 19:14). The Targum of Jonathan is, "that maketh a traveller wander out of the way, who like a blind man;" who knows his way no more than a blind man does. Jarchi interprets it, "that blinds in anything, and gives evil counsel;" 342 which leads men to take wrong steps, whether in things civil, or moral, or religious; all which are usually done privately: **and all the people shall say Amen**; (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 27:15-16").

**DEUT. 27:19. Cursed [be] he that perverteth the judgment of the stranger, fatherless, and widow**, Who have none to assist them, and take their part, and therefore judges may be tempted to do an unjust thing; but God is the patron of them, and takes notice of every injury done them, and is the avenger of all such: **and all the people shall say Amen**; (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 27:15-16").

**DEUT. 27:20. Cursed [be] he that lieth with his father's wife**, As Reuben did, and which is forbidden (Leviticus 18:8); **because he uncovereth his father's skirt**; (see Deuteronomy 22:30); **and all the people shall say Amen**; the tribe of Reuben said this as well as the rest.

**DEUT. 27:21. Cursed [be] he that lieth with any manner of beast**, (see Leviticus 18:23); **and all the people shall say Amen**; as being shocking and abhorrent to human nature.

**DEUT. 27:22. Cursed [be] he that lieth with his sister**, Which is forbid, (Leviticus 18:9); **the daughter of his father, or the daughter of his mother**; whether his sister by father or mother's side: **and all the people shall say Amen**; detesting such uncleanness.

**DEUT. 27:23. Cursed [be] he that lieth with his mother in law**, (see Leviticus 18:7,8). All these incestuous or brutal copulations may well be supposed to be done in secret: **and all the people shall say Amen**; as abhorring such incest.

**DEUT. 27:24. Cursed [be] he that smiteth his neighbour secretly**, And kills him, and the murder is not known; the curse of God follows such, and 343 overtakes them sooner or later. Some interpret this of smiting with the tongue, of secret backbiting and slander; so the Targum of Jonathan, "that smiteth with the third tongue;" or false accusation: **and all the people shall say Amen**; as disapproving of and condemning such a practice, even slander, and especially murder.

**DEUT. 27:25. Cursed [be] he that taketh reward to slay an innocent person**, As an assassin, to murder him privately; or as a judge, that takes a bribe to condemn to death an



innocent person: so Aben Ezra observes, that according to the sense of some a judge is meant; but, says he, in my opinion a false witness; one that swears a man's life away for the sake of a reward given him: **and all the people shall say Amen**; at so detestable a crime.

**DEUT. 27:26. Cursed [be] he that confirmeth not [all] the words of this law to do them**, That is, who does not perfectly perform all that the law requires, and continues to do so; for the law requires obedience, and that perfect and constant, and in failure thereof curses, in proof of which the apostle produces this passage, (see Gill on "Galatians 3:10"), for the reconciliation of these Scriptures, as to what seeming difference there is between them; **and all the people shall say, Amen**; (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 27:15- 16"). 344

## Deuteronomy 28

In this chapter Moses enlarges on the blessings and the curses which belong, the one to the doers, the other to the transgressors of the law; the blessings, (Deuteronomy 28:1-14); the curses, some of which concern individual persons, others the whole nation and body of people, and that both under the former and present dispensations, and which had their fulfilment in their former captivities, and more especially in their present dispersion, (Deuteronomy 28:15-68).

**DEUT. 28:1. And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God**, In his law, and by his prophets: **to observe [and] to do all his commandments, which I command thee this day**; for without observing them to do them, hearing them would be to little purpose, and they were all of them to be observed and done, the lesser and weightier matters of the law as they were commanded by Moses in the name of the Lord, and as they would be taught, explained, and enforced by the prophets: **that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth**: as they were in the times of David and Solomon; (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 26:19").

**DEUT. 28:2. And all these blessings shall come on thee and overtake thee**, After mentioned, which should come upon them from God from heaven, by the direction of his providence, and that freely and plentifully, and beyond their expectations and deserts, and continue with them: **if thou shalt hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God**; obedience to the law being the condition of their coming and continuance; for only temporal blessings in the land of Canaan are here intended, as follow.

**DEUT. 28:3. Blessed [shalt] thou [be] in the city**, Not only in the city of Jerusalem, where the temple would be built, and there be blessed with the service, worship, and ordinances of God, but in all other cities of the land; 345 where they should dwell in title, large, and spacious houses, and their cities should be walled and fenced, and be very populous; yet should enjoy health, and have plenty of all sorts of provisions brought unto them, as well as prosper in all kinds of merchandise there, as Aben Ezra notes: **and blessed [shalt] thou [be] in the field**; in the country villages, and in all rural employments, in sowing and planting, as the same writer observes; in all kinds of husbandry, in the culture of the fields for corn, and of vineyards and oliveyards; all should prosper and succeed, and bring forth fruit abundantly.

**DEUT. 28:4. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body**, Their children, of which they should have many, and these live; be healthful, thrive, and arrive to manhood, and increase and perpetuate their families. Grotius thinks this was eminently fulfilled in Mary, the mother of our Lord; (see Luke 1:42); **and the fruit of thy ground**; of their gardens, orchards, and fields; grass for the cattle, and the wheat, barley, vines, figs, pomegranates, olives, and dates for the use of men: **and the fruit of thy cattle**; which being distinguished from oxen and sheep in the following clause, must be understood of camels and asses, which were used for the carriage both of persons and burdens, and were very serviceable, and were a considerable part of their substance in those countries; (see Job 1:3); **the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep**; of their cows and oxen, and of their

sheep and goats, which were very increasing creatures, and in the increase of which much of their outward happiness lay; (see Psalm 144:13,14).

**DEUT. 28:5. *Blessed [shall be] thy basket,*** Which the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem restrain to the basket of firstfruits, and the cake of the first of their dough; but it intends any and every vessel in which they put their provisions for present use, and that that should never be empty of them, and that they should always have a sufficiency: ***and thy store;*** what remained, and was laid up in their barns, cellars, and storehouses, for future use, or in proper places for seed. 346

**DEUT. 28:6. *Blessed [shalt] thou [be] when thou comest in, and blessed [shalt] thou [be] when thou goest out.*** In all their business and employments of life whether within doors or without; in the administration of every office, whether more public or private; and in all their journeys going out and coming home; and particularly when they went out to war, and returned, all should be attended with success.

**DEUT. 28:7. *The Lord shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face,*** As the Philistines, Moabites, Syrians, Edomites, and Ammonites were, especially in the times of David: ***they shall come out against thee one way:*** in a body, all together, in large numbers, marching in great order, to give them battle: ***and flee before thee seven ways;*** be entirely routed, and flee some one way, and some another, even every way they could take to make their escape. The phrase is expressive of an entire victory, and of a complete rout and dispersion of an enemy.

**DEUT. 28:8. *The Lord shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses,*** Barns, granaries, and cellar, where their corn, wine, and oil, were laid up; by preserving the corn from being devoured by vermin, and the casks of wine and oil from bursting and running out: ***and in all thou settest thine hand unto;*** in all their manufactures, occupations, and trades, in which they were employed, and in the culture

of their vines, olives, and other fruit trees: ***and he shall bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee;*** with health and long life in it, and with an abundance of all good things, it being a land flowing with milk and honey.

**DEUT. 28:9. *And the Lord shall establish thee an holy people unto himself,*** Having separated them from all others, for his service, honour, and glory, should continue them as such, and settle them in the land, and confirm all their privileges, natural, civil, and religious. The Targum of Jonathan is, "the Word of the Lord shall establish thee, etc." he that brought them out of Egypt, through the Red sea and wilderness, to the land of Canaan: 347 ***as he hath sworn unto thee:*** and to their fathers; (see Deuteronomy 7:12,13); ***if thou shall keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, and walk in his ways;*** by which tenure they held the land of Canaan, and their settlement and continuance in it, and enjoyment of all the good things thereof; (see Isaiah 1:19,20).

**DEUT. 28:10. *And all the people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord,*** Called his children, his people, his portion, and his inheritance; and that they are his, and he is theirs, by the care he takes of them, the provision he makes for them, and the protection they have from him: ***and they shall be afraid of thee;*** as not only the Canaanites were, but all other nations; (see Deuteronomy 11:25).

**DEUT. 28:11. *And the Lord shall make thee plenteous in goods,*** In all temporal good things, give them an affluence of them, even all things richly to enjoy; the Targum of Jonathan is, "the Word of the Lord shall, etc." ***in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground:*** increase their children, cattle, and substance, as before, (Deuteronomy 28:4); ***in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers to give thee;*** the land of Canaan, often thus described.

**DEUT. 28:12. *The Lord shall open unto thee his good treasure,*** The Lord has his treasures of snow and of hail, and of wind, (Job 38:22) (Psalm 135:7); but here his good treasure, as

appears by what follows, is his treasure of rain. In the Targum of Jonathan it is said, "there are four keys in the hand of the Lord of the whole world, which he does not deliver into the hands of any prince; the keys of life, and of the grave, and of food, and of rain:" **the heaven, to give the rain unto thy land in its season**; that is, he will open the heaven, where his good treasure of rain is laid up, and bring it forth or, the land of Canaan for the enriching of it; or will open the windows thereof, and pour down the blessing; (see Malachi 3:10); and that at the 348 proper time, both in autumn and spring, the one is called the former, and the other the latter rain; the one was in Marchesvan, or October, and the other in Nisan, or March, as the Targum of Jonathan; the former rain for the fitting the earth for seed, or for watering it when sown, and the latter for the plumping of it before harvest: **and to bless all the work of thine hand**; in agriculture, for without the blessing of rain, all the labour of the husbandman would be to little purpose: **and thou shall lend unto many nations, and thou shall not borrow**; (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 15:16"). The connection of these words with what goes before may lead to observe this sense of them, that they should furnish other countries with corn, and not need any of theirs; (see Ezekiel 27:17).

**DEUT. 28:13. And the Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail**, Give them dominion over others, and not make them subject to them; the head signifies rulers and governors, and the tail the common people that are subjects; or the one such that are honourable and in high esteem, and the other such that are mean and base; (see Isaiah 9:14,15); the Targum of Jonathan is, "the Word of the Lord shall make thee, etc." **and thou shalt be above only, and thou shall not be beneath**; which explains what is meant by head and tail, being uppermost and lowermost, as the head is the upper part, and the tail the lower part of a creature; the one is more honourable, the other vile: the sense is, that they should be superior to other people in honour and dignity, and not below them, or

vassals to them: **if that thou hearken to the commandments of the Lord thy God, which I command thee this day to observe and to do [them]**; which is the condition on which all this happiness depended.

**DEUT. 28:14. And thou shall not go aside from any of the words which I command thee this day**, Depart from them as a rule to walk by, turn out from them as a path to walk in, neglect and disobey them, and go into practices contrary to them: turning 349 **[to] the right hand or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them**; which to do was to break the first and principal table of the law, than which nothing was more abominable and provoking to God.

**DEUT. 28:15. But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God**, As directed, exhorted, and encouraged to, (Deuteronomy 28:1), etc. **to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes, which I command thee this day**; both moral and ceremonial: **that all these curses shall come upon thee**; from the hand of God, certainly, suddenly, and unawares: **and overtake thee**; pursuing after thee, will come up to thee, and seize upon thee, though they may seem to move slowly; (see Zechariah 5:3,4); namely, the curses which follow. Manasseh Ben Israel divides them into two parts, the first from hence to (Deuteronomy 28:45); which respects the destruction of the first temple, and the things that went before or related to that; and the second from thence to the end of the chapter, which he thinks refers to the destruction of the second temple, and their present case and circumstances; and it must be owned that for the most part the distinction may seem to hold good; what is prophesied of that should befall the Jews for their disobedience being more remarkably and distinctly fulfilled in the one than in the other; yet there are things in the whole which respect both, or that were fulfilled, some under one dispensation, and some under another, and some that were fulfilled in both; but chiefly and more manifestly at and since their dispersion by the Romans.

**DEUT. 28:16.** *Cursed [shalt] thou [be] in the city, and cursed [shalt] thou [be] in the field.]*

In (Deuteronomy 28:16-19) the curses are delivered out in form, as the reverse of the blessings in (Deuteronomy 28:3-6); and by observing what the blessings mean, the sense of the curses may easily be understood, the one being directly opposite to the other. (See Gill on "Deuteronomy 28:3").

**DEUT. 28:17.** *Cursed [shall be] thy basket and thy store.]* (See Gill on "Deuteronomy 28:5, 16"). 350

**DEUT. 28:18.** *Cursed [shall be] the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.]* (See Gill on "Deuteronomy 28:4, 16").

**DEUT. 28:19.** *Cursed [shalt] thou [be] when thou comest in, and cursed [shalt] thou [be] when thou goest out.]* (See Gill on "Deuteronomy 28:6, 16").

**DEUT. 28:20.** *The Lord shall send upon thee cursing,* Which is either a general word for all that follows, or rather, since that had been expressed before in various instances, this may denote some particular judgment. Jarchi interprets it of penury, of want of all good things, extreme poverty, so as to be reduced to the utmost necessity, and as to stand in need of the common comforts and supports of life, and even to have their blessings and mercies turned into curses; the consequence of which must needs be *vexation*; trouble, distress, and anguish of spirit: *and rebuke*; this may well be considered as a rebuke and correction in Providence for sins committed, to awaken to a sense and acknowledgment of them, and to repentance for them: *in all that thou settest thine hand to do*; nothing done should prosper, to relieve them under their pressing wants, a curse attending all their efforts, and so sad disappointment follows; and all as a just rebuke for their many sins: and this would be their case more or less, *until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly*; through famine, and want of the common necessaries of life; as at the sieges of Samaria and Jerusalem, by the kings of Syria, Assyria, and Babylon: *because of*

*the wickedness of thy doings, because thou hast forsaken me*; their several immoralities and impieties, and particularly their idolatry, which was a forsaking the worship of the true God, and following idols; an iniquity to be punished by the judge, and of all things the most provoking to the Lord.

**DEUT. 28:21.** *The Lord shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee,* Not only to come upon them; but to continue with them: *until he have consumed thee from off the land whither thou goest to possess it*; which shows that this respects not some particular seasons, when the pestilence came and continued awhile, and then ceased, as in the times of David; but when it became more general, and issued with other 351 judgments in the utter consumption of them, as at the destruction of Jerusalem, both by the Babylonians and the Romans; at what times the pestilence raged and remained, until by that and other sore judgments the land was wholly depopulated.

**DEUT. 28:22.** *The Lord shall smite thee with a consumption,* An emaciation of their bodies, either through famine or wasting diseases, whereby the fluids are washed off, and men are reduced to skin and bones: *and with a fever*; a hot burning disease, which dries up the radical moisture, consumes it, and so threatens with death; of which there are various sorts, and some very pestilential and mortal Jarchi and Aben Ezra interpret it of a fire in the face, by which they seem to mean what is called St. Anthony's fire: *and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning*; either in the inward parts, as an inflammation of the lungs; or in the outward parts, as carbuncles, burning ulcers, and the like: *and with the sword*; in the margin it is, "with drought"; so Aben Ezra interprets the word, which seems better to suit with what it is in company with; and designs either drought in human bodies, occasioned by fevers, inflammations, and extreme burnings; or in the earth, through the force of the sun, and want of rain, which render the earth barren and unfruitful, and so cause a famine: *and with blasting and with mildew*; whereby the corn that is sown, and springs up, comes to nothing,

being blasted by east winds, or turns pale and yellow by the mildew, and so withers away; the consequence of which is want of food, and so destruction and ruin; (see Amos 4:9); **and they shall pursue thee until thou perish**; follow hard after them, and come so close one after another upon them, until they are utterly destroyed.

**DEUT. 28:23. And the heaven that [is] over thy head shall be brass**, Or like brass, not for its clearness, brightness, and splendour, or for its being spread out like a molten looking glass which was of brass, (Job 37:18); but for its dryness and hardness, no moisture being in it, or passing through it; no showers of rain nor dew being let down from it: 352 **and the earth that is under thee [shall be] iron**; or like iron, hard and impenetrable, into which the plough and spade will not enter; nor anything spring out of it, for want of rain and dew to moisten and soften it. The same is said in (Leviticus 26:19); only there is an inversion of the figures; there the heaven is said to be as iron, and the earth like brass, but signify the same thing.

**DEUT. 28:24. The Lord shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust**, That is, instead of showers of rain in their season, to water, refresh, and enrich the earth, and make it fruitful; and for want of them, and through the heat of the sun, being dried and parched, and its clods crumbled into dust, this should be raised up into the air by the force of winds, and let down again in showers of dust; whereby the few herbs, plants, or green trees on it would be utterly destroyed: and so the Targum of Jonathan interprets it of the Lord's sending a wind that should raise the dust and earth upon the herbs of their fields. Such ploughing winds, that cast up the earth and sand, and dust, into the air, whereby men and cattle are sometimes covered, are frequent in the eastern countries; of which (see Gill on "Jonah 4:8"); **from heaven shall it come down upon thee until thou be destroyed**; that is, from the air, up to which the dust is carried by the wind, and then let fall in vast quantities, like showers, which are very destructive.

**DEUT. 28:25. The Lord shall cause thee to be smitten fore thine enemies**, And by them, as they sometimes were by the Philistines and others, before their utter destruction, when they sinned against the Lord; and by the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Romans: **thou shall go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them**; march out against them in a body, promising themselves victory, but be utterly routed; so that they shall flee every way they can for their safety; (see Deuteronomy 28:7); **and shall be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth**; this shows that Manasseh's case (2 Kings 21:1-18), observed (Deuteronomy 28:15); will not strictly and entirely hold good, nor is there any necessity to adhere closely to it; it is enough that the things threatened and prophesied of were at one time or another fulfilled in these people; for neither the ten tribes, when taken captive by Shalmaneser, were carried into all the kingdoms of the earth, only to some particular places mentioned in (2 Kings 17:6); nor the two tribes by Nebuchadnezzar, who were carried by him to 353 Babylon, and returned from thence again at the end of seventy years; but this was exactly fulfilled at their last destruction by the Romans, when they were sent by them into various countries, and have been ever since scattered about in each of the nations of the world. And yet it must be owned that Strabo, who wrote before the last destruction of them, affirms, that it was not easy to find any place in the world which had not received them, and was not occupied by them.

**DEUT. 28:26. And thy carcass shall be meat unto all fowls of the air, and unto the beasts of the earth**, Which was always reckoned a very grievous calamity, have no other burial than in the bowels of beasts and birds; and was the case of many of the Jews in the Antiochian persecution, (Psalm 79:2); and in a treatise of theirs, which relates their many afflictions and sufferings in their present captivity, speaking of a persecution of them in Spain, in the Jewish year 5172, it is reported, how that those that fled to avoid punishment were killed in the

fields, where their carcasses lying unburied became a prey to beasts: **and no man shall fray [them] away**; the fowls and the beasts; none of their friends being left to do it, and their enemies would not show so much respect to them, and care of them.

**DEUT. 28:27. The Lord will smite thee with the botch of Egypt**, Which some understand of the leprosy, Of that sort of it called "elephantiasis", frequent among the Egyptians; (see Gill on "Leviticus 13:2"). Thevenot relates, that when the time of the increase of the Nile expires, the Egyptians are attended with sharp prickings in their skin like needles. So Vansleb says, "the waters of the Nile cause an itch in the skin, which troubles such as drink of them when the river increases. This itch is very small, and appears first about the arms, next upon the stomach, and spreads all about the body, which causes a grievous pain; and not only the river water, but that out of the cisterns drank of, brings it, and it lasts about six weeks." Though some take this botch to be the botch and blain which the Egyptians were plagued with for refusing to let Israel go, (Exodus 9:9,10); **and with the emerods**; or haemorrhoids, the piles, a disease of the fundament, attended sometimes with ulcers there; (see 1 Samuel 5:9); 354 **and with the scab and with the itch**: the one moist, the other dry, and both very distressing: **whereof thou canst not be healed**; by any art of men; which shows these to be uncommon ones, and from the immediate hand of God.

**DEUT. 28:28. The Lord shall smite thee with madness**, At the calamities befallen them, and through the force of diseases on them: **and blindness**; not of body, but of mind; with judicial blindness and hardness of heart: **and astonishment of heart**; at the miserable condition they and their families should be in.

**DEUT. 28:29. And thou shalt grope at noon day as the blind gropeth in darkness**, That is, being in darkness through the loss of their sight; otherwise the darkness and the light are alike to them, and they grope in the one as well as in the other. This comparison shows that the darkness and blindness of the Jews, threatened them, is to be understood not of the darkness of

their bodily eyes, but of their minds; not being able to understand, or form a judgment of things that are as clear as noon day; and being at the utmost loss what methods to take and pursue, when they are plain and manifest before them; but being infatuated and besotted, follow the lusts and counsels of their own hearts, which lead them wrong: **and thou shall not prosper in thy ways**; in any steps they may take to extricate themselves out of their difficulties, distresses, and calamities, or to bring themselves into easy and comfortable circumstances; to get wealth and riches, and honour and esteem with men; but, on the contrary, become forlorn and miserable, poor and wretched, mean and despicable: **and thou shalt be only oppressed and spoiled evermore**; continually, every day, all the days of their lives, oppressed with taxes and tributes, with mulcts and fines, and spoiled of their goods and substance under one pretence or another; which has been generally their case in Popish countries; for this seems not to refer to the Babylonish captivity, where they built houses, and dwelt in them, and planted gardens, and ate the fruit of them; and in the peace of cities had peace themselves, (Jeremiah 29:5-7); 355 **and no man shall save [thee]**; from the oppressions, exactions, and spoils of their enemies, nor deliver them out of their hands; whereas in process of time they had deliverance and salvation from the Babylonish captivity, by the means of Cyrus king of Persia.

**DEUT. 28:30. Thou shalt betroth a wife, and another man shall lie with her**, Espouse a woman in order to make her his wife, and before he can take her home, and consummate the marriage, through some calamity or another coming upon them, they should be set at a distance from each other, and she should fall into the hands of another man, who either should ravish her, or gain her consent to lie with her, or become his wife; which, when the marriage was so near being consummated, must be a grievous disappointment, and a great vexation: **thou shall build an house, and thou shall not dwell therein**; being, before it is quite finished, or however before he is got into it,

carried captive, or obliged to flee to a distant place: ***thou shall plant a vineyard, and shall not gather the grapes thereof***; or make it common, on the fourth year to eat the fruits of it, as Jarchi; which might not be done until sanctified and redeemed according to the law in (Leviticus 19:23-25); (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 20:6").

**DEUT. 28:31. *Thine ox [shall be] slain before thine eyes, and thou shalt not eat thereof***, Shall be taken from the herd, and out of the field or stall, by the enemy, and killed for the soldiers to feed on, and not the least part of it given to them: ***thine ass [shall be] violently taken away from before thy face, and shall not be restored unto thee***; no leave shall be asked to take it, but without their consent, and against their will, it should be taken away by the soldiers to carry them and their burdens, and it may be the booty and spoil of them, and never returned more: ***thy sheep [shall be] given unto thine enemies, and thou shall have none to rescue [them]***; not given them by themselves, but they should be suffered to fall into their hands, and they should never be able to get them out again, nor any for them. These, strictly and literally taken, suppose them to be in their own land, when those things would be done, where they were possessed of farms, and fields, cattle, being much employed in husbandry; but they may be put for any kind of substance they would be possessed of, which they should be stripped of under one pretence or another; which has 356 been frequently their case in their present dispersion in several countries, and in ours; when Popish princes have wanted money, they have made very exorbitant demands on the Jews in their countries, and sadly squeezed and oppressed them, and who were not able to resist them, and never had any restoration made to them.

**DEUT. 28:32. *Thy sons and thy daughters [shall be] given unto another people***, This also was not true in the Babylonish captivity; for then their sons and daughters went with them, and continued with them, and returned again; but has been oftentimes verified since their captivity by the Romans; frequently their

sons and daughters have been taken from them by force, to be brought up in another religion, by the edicts of kings and popes, and by the canons of councils, and particularly of the fourth council of Toledo: ***and thine eyes shall look and fail***; with longing: ***for them all the day long***; expecting every day their children would be returned to them, at least wishing and hoping they would; their hearts yearning after them, but all in vain: ***and [there shall be] no might in thy hand***; to recover them out of the hands of those who had the possession of them, or fetch them back from distant countries, whither they were carried. By an edict of the Portuguese, the children of the Jews were ordered to be carried to the uninhabited islands; and when, by the king's command, they were had to the ships in which they were to be transported, it is incredible, the Jewish historian says, what howlings and lamentations were made by the women; and there wore none pitied them and comforted them, or could help them.

**DEUT. 28:33. *The fruit of thy land, and all thy labour, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up***, The same was prophesied of by Jeremiah, concerning the Babylonish captivity, and was fulfilled in it, (Jeremiah 5:17); and has been also verified in the frequent pillage and spoil of this people, in their present state; for though they have no land to till, from whence to gather fruit, yet they are employed in manufactures and merchandise, the fruit and benefit of which they have been frequently stripped of: ***and thou shall be only oppressed and crushed always***; this seems best to agree with their present case; for in their former captivities they were not always oppressed and crushed, but had respite and deliverance; (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 28:29"). 357

**DEUT. 28:34. *So that thou shalt be mad, for the sight of thine eyes that thou shall see.***] On account of the shocking things seen by them, their dreadful calamities, oppressions, and persecutions, such as before related; not only violent diseases on their bodies, which were grievous to behold, as well as their pains were intolerable, and made them mad; but to be

deprived of a betrothed wife, a newly built house, and a newly planted vineyard; to have an ox slain, and an ass taken away by their enemies, and their sheep given to them before their eyes; to have their sons and daughters taken from them, and brought up in another religion, and to be stripped of their substance; these have made them stark mad, insomuch that they have sometimes destroyed themselves and their families. In Germany, in their rage and madness, they burnt a city and themselves in it; and, in the same country, being summoned by an edict to change their religion, or to be burnt, they agreed to meet together in a certain house, and destroy one another; and first parents killed their children, and husbands their wives, and then killed themselves; leaving only one person to be their doorkeeper, who finished the tragedy by destroying himself, as their own historian relates. Other stories of the like kind are reported of them, and some such facts as done in our own nation.

**DEUT. 28:35. *The Lord shall smite thee in the knees, and in the legs, with a sore botch, that cannot be healed,*** Which in those parts as it is very painful, so is not easily cured; and this which is threatened was incurable by the art of man, as others in (Deuteronomy 28:27); and which should not stop there in the lower parts of the body, but proceed and spread: ***from the sole of thy foot unto the top of thy head;*** and so be filled with them, as Job was with his boils and ulcers.

**DEUT. 28:36. *And the Lord shall bring thee, and thy king which thou shall set over thee,*** This was fulfilled both in Jehoiachin and in Zedekiah, kings of Judah, who were carried captive to Babylon, by Nebuchadnezzar, (2 Kings 24:15 25:6,7); ***unto a nation which neither thou nor thy fathers have known;*** the land of Babylon, which was at a distance from them, and is represented in Scripture as afar off, (Jeremiah 5:15); and which the Jews, not being a trading people, or dealing in merchandise in foreign parts, were unacquainted with: 358 ***and there shall thou serve other gods, wood and stone;*** which they

were obliged to do in Babylon, of which it seems best to understand it; for though it may be interpreted of their compliance with the image worship of the Papists in their present condition, as the former clause may be of their rulers and governors, included in the name of king, carried captive by the Romans; who were a nation as little, if not less known than the Babylonians: but the former sense seems to suit best here, as this does with (Deuteronomy 28:64); where the language is somewhat different, and very appropriate. The Targum of Jonathan is, "shall pay tribute to those that worship idols of wood and stone."

**DEUT. 28:37. *And thou shall become an astonishment,*** To neighbouring nations, that shall hear of their overthrow and captivity, and that shall see the miserable condition they are brought into: ***a proverb and a byword among all nations whither the Lord shall lead thee;*** both for the wickedness committed by them, and for the ill usage of them by the nations among whom they should be, as they were in the Babylonish captivity; (see Jeremiah 24:9); and now are, it being common to say, "do you think I am a Jew?" or, "none but a Jew would have done such a thing."

**DEUT. 28:38. *Thou shall carry much seed into the field,*** And sow it plentifully; this and what is said in some following verses plainly refer to them while in their own land, before carried captive, and not to their present case and circumstances: ***and shall gather [but] little in at harvest;*** little springing up, or not coming to perfection, being blighted and blasted, and so yielded but a small crop; (see Haggai 1:9); and chiefly for the following reason: ***for the locust shall consume it;*** which is a great destroyer of the fruits of the earth; (see Joel 1:4).

**DEUT. 28:39. *Thou shalt plant vineyards, and dress [them],*** Plant them and prune them, in expectation of much fruit from them: 359 ***but shall neither drink [of] the wine nor gather [the grapes];*** so far from drinking of the wine of them, that they should not be able to gather any grapes from them: ***for the worms shall eat them;*** a sort of worms pernicious to vines,



which the Greeks call “ipes”, or “ikes” ; and the Latins “convolvuli” and “volvoces”, as Pliny .

**DEUT. 28:40.** *Thou shalt have olive trees throughout thy coasts*, In the several parts of the land of Canaan, which is therefore called a land of olive oil, (Deuteronomy 8:8); *but thou shalt not anoint [thyself] with the oil*; nor any other relations, friends, guests, as was usual at entertainments; (see Psalm 23:5 Luke 7:38,46); for the phrase “thyself” is not in the text. The reason why they should not anoint is, because they would have no oil to anoint with: *for thine olive shall cast [his fruit]*; before it is ripe, by one means or another, as by winds, or blasting and mildew; (see Amos 4:9 Habakkuk 3:17).

**DEUT. 28:41.** *Thou shalt beget sons and daughters, but thou shalt not enjoy them*, Or, “they shall not be thine” ; being taken from them, and given to others, (see Deuteronomy 28:32); and for the following reason: *for they shall go into captivity*; as when the ten tribes were carried captive by Shalmaneser, and the two tribes by Nebuchadnezzar, and all the people of the Jews by the Romans.

**DEUT. 28:42.** *All thy trees and fruit of thy land shall the locust consume.*] Which is a creature that not only consumes grass, and herbs, and the corn of the field, but all green trees; (see Exodus 10:15). This sort here has its name from the shade they make, hiding the light of the sun, and darkening the face of the earth at no on day; or from the noise they make with their wings in flying; (see Joel 2:5).

**DEUT. 28:43.** *The stranger that [is] within thee shall get up above thee very high*, In wealth and riches, in power and authority, in honour and dignity. This Manasseh Ben Israel interprets of the Samaritans, whom the king of Assyria drove out of Samaria, and the neighbouring places; but the design of the expression is to show how mean and abject they should be in another country; that even one who had been a stranger or proselyte of the gate, when in their own country, should now be vastly above them: *and thou shall come down, very low*; into a very mean condition, to be in great subjection, a vassal and

a slave; (see Psalm 106:41,42); and much more when reduced by the Romans, and sent to the mines in Egypt.

**DEUT. 28:44.** *He shall lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him*, The stranger, or one of another nation, shall be in a capacity of lending to the Jew, when the Jew would not be able to lend to the Gentile, his circumstances being so low and mean; to show which is the design of the expression, and not the kindness or unkindness of either; (see Deuteronomy 28:12); *he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail*; he shall be ruler and governor, and thou shalt be subject to him; (see Deuteronomy 28:13).

**DEUT. 28:45.** *Moreover, all these curses shall come upon thee*, Before related, as well as what follow: *and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee till thou be destroyed*; which though they would endeavour to flee from and escape, should not be able, since they would follow them so closely and swiftly, and overtake them, and seize upon them; (see Deuteronomy 28:15); *because thou hearkenedst not unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which he commanded thee*; to which disobedience all the curses are to be imputed that go before or follow after.

**DEUT. 28:46.** *And they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder*, That is, those curses before pronounced, (Deuteronomy 27:15-26 28:16-19), and what follow, should rest and remain upon them, continue with them, and be very visible on them; so as to be observed by others, as a sign of the wrath and displeasure of God, and of the fulfilment of prophecy, and of the truth of divine revelation: and so “for a wonder”: as it is most astonishing to observe how exactly all the curses threatened them have fallen upon them and have abode with them, as they did in their former captivities, and more especially do in the present one: and, what is the greater wonder, that notwithstanding these dreadful calamities, and so long continued, enough to have crushed any people from being a people, yet they have continued, and still do continue, a distinct

people; which is a standing miracle, and one would think sufficient to convince the most 361 hardened and obstinate deist of the truth and authority of the sacred Scriptures; in which stand so many glaring prophecies that have been fulfilled, and are continually fulfilling in this people: **and upon thy seed for ever**; this shows that these curses, said to be upon them, not only refer to those that came upon them at and in the Babylonish captivity, but to those that came upon them at their destruction by the Romans, and which have continued on them nineteen hundred years; and how much longer they will continue none can say: it will be their case, until new heavens and a new earth are created, or there will be a new state of things, at least with them; when they shall be converted to the Lord, and all Israel saved; (see Isaiah 65:17,18 Romans 11:25,26); and it may be observed, that the ten tribes carried captive never returned.

**DEUT. 28:47. *Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God***, By attending his worship, and keeping his commandments: ***with joyfulness and gladness of heart, for the abundance of all [things]***; which they enjoyed in the land of Canaan, a land that abounded with all good things; which laid them under great obligations to serve the Lord: and yet, as they were wanting in a ready attendance on his worship, and in a cheerful obedience to his laws, so in their sacrifices, of praise and thanksgivings for their manifold mercies; and, because of all this, the curses written in this book came upon them.

**DEUT. 28:48. *Therefore shall thou serve thine enemies, which the Lord shall send against thee***, Since they would not serve the Lord their God, who was so good a master to them, and supplied them with all good things, and with plenty of them, they should serve other lords, their enemies, whom God would raise up and send against them; not only, the Assyrians, Chaldeans, and Babylonians, but the Romans, after described, whom they should find hard masters, and from whom they; should have very severe usage, and should be ***in hunger and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all [good things]***; being destitute of food,

and drink and raiment, and the common necessities of life, and so in famishing and starving circumstances: ***and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck***; bring them into a state of subjection to their enemies, which would be intolerable to them, and from which they would not be able to free themselves, any more than to break an iron yoke; which, as it agrees with the Babylonish captivity, and their 362 subjection in that state, (see Jeremiah 28:13,14); so more especially with their bondage under the Romans, who are the legs of iron in Nebuchadnezzar's image, and the fourth beast with great iron teeth in Daniel's vision, (Daniel 2:33,40 7:7), and this yoke was to continue ***until he have destroyed thee***; the Jews were under the Roman yoke, Roman governors being set over them, and Judea made a Roman province many years before the destruction of their nation, city, and temple, by them.

**DEUT. 28:49. *The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth***, Now though Babylon is represented as a country distant from Judea, and said to be a nation "from far", (Jeremiah 5:15); yet not "from the end of the earth"; as here; and though the Roman nation, strictly speaking, was not at so great a distance from Jerusalem, yet the Roman emperors, and great part of their armies brought against it, were fetched from our island of Great Britain, which in former times was reckoned the end of the earth, and the uttermost parts of the world; and so Manasseh Ben Israel interprets this nation of Rome, and observes, that Vespasian brought for his assistance many nations (or soldiers) out of England, France, Spain, and other parts of the world: and not only Vespasian was sent for from Britain to make war with the Jews, but when they rebelled, in the times of Adrian, Julius Severus, a very eminent general, was sent for from thence to quell them. And it appears to be a very ancient opinion of the Jews, that this passage is to be understood of the Romans, from what is related in one of their Talmuds: they say, that "Trajan, being sent for by his wife to subdue the Jews, determined to come in ten

days, and came in five; he came and found them (the Jews) busy in the law on that verse, "the Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far", etc. he said unto them, what are ye busy in? they answered him, so and so; he replied to them, this is the man (meaning himself) who thought to come in ten days, and came in five; and he surrounded them with his legions, and slew them:" **[as swift] as the eagle flieth;** which may respect not so much the swiftness of this creature, the words which convey the idea being a supplement of the text, as the force with which it flies when in sight of its prey, and hastes unto it and falls upon it, which is irresistible; and this is the sense of the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions, and is what is ascribed to the eagle by other writers . Now though this figure is used of the Chaldeans and 363 Babylonians, (Jeremiah 4:13 Lamentations 4:19 Habakkuk 1:8); it agrees full as well or better with the Romans, because of their swiftness in coming from distant parts, and because of the force and impetus with which they invaded Judea, besieged Jerusalem, and attacked the Jews everywhere; and besides, the eagle was borne on the standard in the Roman army : **a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand;** which, though it is also said of the language of the Chaldean nation, (Jeremiah 5:15); yet as the Chaldee and Hebrew languages were only dialects of one and the same language, common to the eastern nations, the Chaldee language, though on account of termination of words, pronunciation, and other things, might be difficult, and hard to be understood by the Jews, yet must be much more easy to understand than the Roman language, so widely different from theirs.

**DEUT. 28:50. A nation of fierce countenance,** Or, "strong of face" ; which aptly describes the old Romans, who are always represented as such; and whereas it is said of the Chaldeans, that they were a nation dreadful and terrible, (Habakkuk 1:7); the same is said of the fourth beast, or Roman empire, (Daniel 7:7); who were a terror to all the world: **which shall not regard the person of the old, nor show favour to the young:** cruel, unmerciful, and

uncompassionate, to persons of whatsoever age or sex; which, as it was the character of the Chaldeans, (2 Chronicles 36:17); so of the Romans, who especially showed no mercy to the Jews, as Josephus , who was an eyewitness, testifies. "The Romans (says he) showed no mercy to any age, out of hatred to the nation (of the Jews), and in remembrance of the injuries done to Cestius;" one of their governors, when among them. And in another place he says , "the Romans, remembering what they suffered in the siege, spared none, and showed no mercy."

**DEUT. 28:51. And he shall eat the fruit of thy cattle,** Larger and lesser, oxen and sheep, as their calves and lambs, and kids of the goat: **364 and the fruit of thy land;** their wheat, barley, figs, grapes, pomegranates, olives, and dates: **until thou be destroyed;** the land of Judea, and all the increase of it: this being before said, (Deuteronomy 28:31,33); and here repeated, shows that the same should be fulfilled at different times, as by the Chaldeans, so by the Romans; whose nation, or army, with their general at the head of them, may be more especially here intended by "he", that should eat up their fruit until utter destruction was brought upon them: **which [also] shall not leave thee [either] corn, wine, or oil, [or] the increase of thy kine, or flocks of thy sheep, until he have destroyed thee;** all being consumed by the Roman army. There is a promise and prophecy, that though this would be the case, as it has been, there shall be a time when it shall be so no more; (see Isaiah 62:8,9).

**DEUT. 28:52. And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates,** That is, in all their cities and walled towns, which had gates and bars for security: **until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land;** the Jews had several cities well fenced and strongly fortified, besides Jerusalem, which was fortified both by art and nature, and in which they greatly put their trust and confidence; but these were broken down, particularly by the battering rams of the Romans: **and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, throughout all thy land, which the Lord thy God hath given thee;** this is repeated for

the certainty of it, and that it might be taken notice of, and abate their trust and confidence in their outward strength. Now all this was fulfilled, partly in the siege of Samaria by the king of Assyria, who went through all the land of the ten tribes, (2 Kings 17:5 18:9,10); and in Sennacherib's taking the fenced cities of Judah, (2 Kings 18:13); and in the siege of Jerusalem, and breaking down the walls of it by Nebuchadnezzar, (2 Kings 25:10); and, last of all, in the siege of Jerusalem, and battering down the walls of it, by the Romans; at which time also all their strong and fenced cities throughout the land were taken and demolished.

**DEUT. 28:53.** *And thou shall eat the fruit of thine body*, Than which nothing can be more shocking and unnatural, which is explained as follows: *the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the Lord thy God hath given thee*; which is an aggravation of the cruel and inhuman fact: 365 *in the siege, and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee*; this shows the cause of it, a famine by reason of the closeness of the siege, so that no provisions could be brought in for their relief; and all within being eaten up, and everything that was eatable, even the most nauseous and disagreeable, they would be led on to this strange, unheard of, and barbarous action, eating their own children. This was fulfilled in the siege of Samaria, (2 Kings 6:25,28,29); and in the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, (Lamentations 2:10 4:10) and again in the Apocrypha: "Moreover he hath delivered them to be in subjection to all the kingdoms that are round about us, to be as a reproach and desolation among all the people round about, where the Lord hath scattered them." (Baruch 2:4) and in the siege of the same city by the Romans; of which an instance will be hereafter given.

**DEUT. 28:54.** *[So that] the man [that is] tender among you, and very delicate*, Not only the rustic that has been brought up meanly, and used to hard living; but one that has been bred very tenderly, and lived in a delicate manner, like the rich man in (Luke

16:19); that fared sumptuously every day: *his eye shall be evil towards his brother, and towards the wife of his bosom, and towards the remnant of his children which he shall leave*; that is, he shall begrudge his brother, who is so nearly related to him, the least bit of food; yea, his wife, he dearly loved, and is one flesh with him, his other self, and even his children, which are parts of himself, such of them as were left not eaten by him; or his eye should be evil upon them, he should look with an evil eye on them, determining within himself to kill and eat them next. Though the particular instance in which his eye would be evil to them follows, yet no doubt there are other instances in which his eye would be evil towards them, as there were at the siege of Jerusalem, and have been since. Josephus says, "that in every house where there was any appearance of food (or anything that looked like it, that had the shadow of it) there was a battle; and the dearest friends fought with one another, snatching away from each other, the miserable supports of life;" 366 as the husband from his wife and children, and the wife from her husband and children; see more in (Deuteronomy 28:56); and, in later times, we told by the Jewish historian, that wrote an account of their sufferings and distresses since their dispersion, that at Fez the Jews sold their children for slaves for bread.

**DEUT. 28:55.** *So that he will not give to any of them of the flesh of his children whom he shall eat*, Neither give to a brother, nor to a wife, nor to any of his remaining children, the least bit of the flesh of a child he has killed and dressed for his own food; which adds to the barbarity of his action: *because he hath nothing left him in the siege, and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in all thy gates*; every creature being eaten up, dogs, cats, etc. and whatsoever else could be any ways made food of; as the dung of beasts, belts, shoes, the leather on shields, etc. as Josephus says they did eat; and this being the case, nothing eatable remaining, therefore his heart would be hardened against his nearest relations, and not allow them the

least part with him, even of what was so shocking and unnatural.

**DEUT. 28:56.** *And the tender and delicate woman amongst you*, Who is instanced in because of her sex, which is more pitiful and compassionate, and especially one that has been brought up genteelly, and has always lived deliciously, on the most delicate fare, and nicest dainties, and used to all the delights of nature: *which would not venture to set her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness*; for fear of taking cold, or defiling her feet: *her eye shall be evil towards the husband of her bosom, and towards her son, and towards her daughter*; begrudge them every bit they eat, and restrain food from them as much as in her lies, and even snatch it out of their mouths; so Josephus relates, that “women snatched the food out of the mouths of their husbands, and sons out of the mouths of their fathers; and, what is most miserable, mothers out of the mouths of their infants.”

**DEUT. 28:57.** *And toward her young one that cometh out from between her feet*, Or her secundine, “her afterbirth”, as in the margin of our Bibles; so the Targum of Jonathan and Aben Ezra interpret it. The latter describes it, 367 “the place of the fetus, while it abides in the womb of its mother;” the membrane in which the child is wrapped; and it is suggested that, as nauseous as that is, the delicate woman should eat it, and then the newborn child that was wrapped in it; so Jarchi interprets it, little children; though it seems to be distinguished from the children she bears or brings forth in the next clause: *and towards her children which she shall bear*; that is, have an evil eye towards them, to eat them as follows: *for she shall eat them for want of all [things] secretly in the siege and straitness wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates*; that is, eat her children, being reduced to the utmost extremity, being in want of all things, having nothing at all to abate her sharp hunger; which, and nothing else, could incline her, and prevail upon her to do an action so monstrously horrid: and which she would do in the most private and secret manner; both lest others should partake

with her, as well as being conscious of the foulness and blackness of the crime, that would not by any means bear the light; and all this owing to the closeness of the siege, and the unspeakable distress they should be in through it. For the illustration of this, take the following story as related by Josephus ; “a woman, whose name was Mary, that lived beyond Jordan, illustrious for her descent and riches fled with the multitude to Jerusalem when besieged carrying with her her substance, and what food she could get that were left to her by the spoilers; where being pressed with famine, she took her sucking child, killed it boiled it, and ate half of it, and then laid up the rest, and covered it; and when the seditious party entered the house, they smelt it, and demanded her food, threatening to kill her if she did not deliver it; which when she brought forth, declaring what she had done, they were struck with horror; to whom she said, this is my son, and this my own deed; eat, for I have eaten; be not more tender or softer than a woman, and more sympathizing or more pitiful than a mother.” All the ideas that this prophecy of Moses conveys are to be met with in this account; as of a woman well bred and delicate, reduced to the utmost distress, and wanting all the necessaries of life, killing her tender infant, a sucking babe, eating it secretly, and laying up the rest covered for another 368 time. If Moses had lived to have known the fact committed, as Josephus did, he could not have expressed it well in stronger and clearer terms than he has done. This is a most amazing instance of a prophecy delivered out two thousand years or more before the fact was done, and of the exact accomplishment of it; and if the observation of a learned critic can be established, that the first word of this verse should be *hlçbw*, and so be rendered, “and she shall boil that which cometh out from between her feet, even her children which she shall bear”, the fulfilment of the prophecy will appear still more exact, both at the siege of Samaria, (2 Kings 6:20); and of Jerusalem, as in the above relation of Josephus.

**DEUT. 28:58.** *If thou wilt not observe to do all the words this law, that are written in this*

*book*, Of Deuteronomy, in which there is a repetition of the laws before delivered, and an addition of some new ones; all which were to be so observed as to be done, to this end, **that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name of the Lord thy God**; or that it might appear that the fear of God was before their eyes, and in their hearts, by their obedience to his law; that they had a proper awe and reverence of him, who is glorious in his titles and attributes, and whose name Jehovah is holy and reverend; and who, as the covenant God of his people, is to, be feared for his goodness sake.

**DEUT. 28:59.** *Then the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful*, Visible, remarkable, distinguishable, and astonishing to all that see them: **and the plagues of thy seed**; for they were to continue, as they have done, With their posterity, age after age: **[even] great plagues, and of long continuance**; great as to quality and quantity, and firm, sure, lasting, and durable; the word used is rendered "sure" in (Isaiah 55:3); sure by prophecy and in the event; and which when inflicted remained, as they have 1700 years; all which might be believed as certain, or what would certainly come to pass, and be depended on: **and sore sicknesses, and of long continuance**; besides those diseases mentioned (Deuteronomy 28:27,35); or however others including them.

**DEUT. 28:60.** *Moreover, he will bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt*, All that in a way of judgment were brought upon the Egyptians for refusing 369 to let Israel go; or all such diseases as were peculiar to them, and common among them, as the leprosy, the itch, ulcers, etc. **which thou wast afraid of**; when living among them, lest they should catch them of them, or they should be inflicted on them by the hand of God: **and they shall cleave unto thee**; not only should come upon them, but continue with them; they should not easily get rid of them, or be cured of them.

**DEUT. 28:61.** *Also every sickness and every plague which [is] not written in the book of this law*, Which is not here mentioned or threatened; and it suggests, that whatsoever

sickness or disease that could be thought of or named, or were at any time in any place among men, might be expected to come upon them for their disobedience: **them will the Lord bring upon thee until thou be destroyed**; the Jews themselves own this has been fulfilled on them.

**DEUT. 28:62.** *And ye shall be left few in number*, There were but very few left in the land of Judea by Nebuchadnezzar's general when Jerusalem was taken by him; and these were of the poorer sort, and were left for vinedressers and husbandmen, (Jeremiah 39:10 52:16); and how much they were reduced by the Romans will appear by the accounts Josephus gives of those that were slain, and made prisoners by them: he says, "there were 1,100,000 slain at the siege of Jerusalem and by the war, and 97,000 made prisoners;" and it is computed that 1,240,490 were destroyed in Jerusalem and other parts of the nation; and it is also said by their historian, that of those that were transported from Jerusalem and other parts of Palestine into Spain, scarce a thousandth part remained and that an infinite number were slain in France and Germany; and though their number equalled those that came out of Egypt, yet scarce five thousand of them were left: **whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude**; and, as it is sometimes said, as the sand of the sea, as was promised to Abraham, (Genesis 15:5 22:18); and was fulfilled in the days of Solomon (1 Kings 4:20); **because thou wouldest not obey the voice of the Lord thy God**; in his law, and by his prophets; and especially by the voice of the true Messiah, in his 370 everlasting Gospel; of whom it is said, "today if ye will hear his voice"; etc. (Hebrews 3:7).

**DEUT. 28:63.** *And it shall come to pass, [that] as the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good*, The Word of the Lord, as the Targum of Jonathan; who with great delight and pleasure in them brought them out of Egypt, conducted them through the wilderness, protecting them and providing all good things for them; and brought them into the land of Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey, and settled them there; and gave them judges and kings, priests

and prophets, for a long series of time, with other innumerable blessings he bestowed upon them: **and to multiply you**; so that they became as the stars of heaven, and the sand of the sea, as before observed: **so the Lord will rejoice over you to destroy you and to bring you to nought**; take as much pleasure in their ruin and destruction, whereby his justice would be glorified, and the honour of his laws preserved, as before in bestowing good things on them, in which mercy and kindness were displayed: **and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it**; in a violent manner, by their enemies, and against their wills, they being loath to leave it. The Emperor Adrian, to prevent their insurrections and rebellions, which had given him a great deal of trouble, ordered by an edict that no Jew should come into Jerusalem, nor into the land of Judea, or be seen in it, which is observed by several writers; by which means the country was cleared of them. In later times some of them did get thither again, but they were but few. Benjamin of Tudela, a Jew of the twelfth century, travelled into several parts of the world in quest of his countrymen, and particularly into Judea, and his view was to magnify his people; and yet owns he found at Jerusalem only two hundred persons, whose employment was dyeing wool, and dwelt in a corner of the town under the tower of David; and but twelve at Bethlehem, three at Maresha, at Shunem indeed three hundred, none at Gilead, two at Nob, who were dyers, three at Ramah, one at Joppa, none at Jafne, where had been a famous academy, none at Ashdod, and at Tiberias about fifty. And our countryman Sandys, who travelled into Judea in the seventeenth century, says, 371 "here be some Jews, yet inherit they no part of the land, but in their own country do live as aliens."

**DEUT. 28:64. And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even to the other**, Which refers to their present dispersion, being now, more or fewer, in all parts of the world, east, west, north, and south: **and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, [even] wood and stone**: it may be

observed, that the phrase, "which either thou nor fathers have known", is fitly added here, which is not used of them, (Deuteronomy 28:36); and well agrees with the idols of the Papists, their images of the Virgin Mary, and saints departed, made of wood and stone, which were such the fathers of the Jews never knew; just as it is said of the host, the consecrated wafer, the breaden god honoured by antichrist, that it is "a god who his fathers knew not", (Daniel 11:38); the apostles and ancient fathers of the church. Now in Popish countries the Jews have often been prevailed upon to change, or at least dissemble their religion, and embrace Popery: and have worshipped images of wood and stone. The author of the history of their calamities and sufferings owns this; "multitudes (he says) in Spain and Portugal forsook the law of Moses, and joined the Papists, pretending at least to be of their religion." He makes mention of sixteen thousand at one time, and some, he say, "that were driven out of Spain, came into Italy, where the young men pressed with famine could not bear it, and changed their religion, and began to worship images that they might have to satisfy their hunger; and the Papists used to go about with a crucifix in one hand, and a piece of bread in the other, promising the bread to those that would worship the crucifix; and so many famishing persons forsook the law of Moses, and mixed with them:" and to this day the convents of monks and nuns in Spain are full of them; and most of their canons, inquisitors, and bishops, are Jews. The Targum of Jonathan indeed, to clear them from idolatry itself, gives another sense of these words, paraphrasing them, "ye shall pay tribute to the worshippers of idols." 372

**DEUT. 28:65. And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest**, No quiet settlement, nor certain dwelling, being obliged to move from place to place through cruel edicts, heavy fines and mulcts, exorbitant taxes and impositions, and diligent search made after them by the courts of the inquisition, especially where any substance was to be gotten. The Jews themselves own

that this passage is now fulfilled in them: **but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart**; being always in fear lest their persons should be seized on, their children taken from them, and their goods confiscated; hence the poet gives them the epithet of “trembling”: **and failing of eyes**: in looking for a vainly expected Messiah, to deliver them from all their fears and troubles: **and sorrow of mind**; under their present afflictions and calamities.

**DEUT. 28:66. And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee**, Whether it shall be spared or not by the enemy: **and thou shalt fear day and night**; being in continual dread of being killed: **and shalt have none assurance of thy life**; of its being continued a moment scarcely, but live in constant fear and expectation of its being taken away.

**DEUT. 28:67. In the morning thou shalt say, would God it were even**, Wishing they might get through the day well, fearing their life would be taken away before night, or some sad calamity befall them before the day was past: **and at even thou shalt say, would God it were morning**; dreading what would happen to them in the night, that some messenger of death would be sent to dispatch them, or they should be haled out of bed to a court of inquisition, and cast into a dungeon: **for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which, thou shalt see**; often beholding such dreadful sights, as their countrymen put upon the rack, and cruelly tortured, and then burnt alive; and so their hearts would fear and tremble, lest they should be the next that would be taken up and used in this manner; besides other severities and hard usages, with which their brethren were treated, and they in continual fear of. 373

**DEUT. 28:68. And the Lord shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships**, Either into a state of hard bondage and slavery, like that their fathers were in, in Egypt; or rather, strictly and literally, should be brought into Egypt again, since it is said to be “with” or “in ships”. This does not respect the going of those Jews into Egypt who were left in the land of Judea, after the destruction of Jerusalem by

Nebuchadnezzar; for that was against the express command of God, (Jeremiah 42:13-22 43:4-7). There were several movings of them into Egypt after that time; an Heathen historian tells us, that not a few thousands of Jews went into Egypt and Phoenicia, because of the sedition in Syria after the death of Alexander; and where, it seems, in process of time, they became slaves: for we are told by Josephus, that 120,000 slaves were set free by Ptolemy Philadelphus; but what is chiefly respected here is their case in the times of the Romans, and by their means. Now when Jerusalem was taken by Titus, those above seventeen years of age were sent by him to the works, or mines, in Egypt, as the same historian relates; and after their last overthrow by Adrian many thousands were sold, and what could not be sold were transported into Egypt, and perished by “shipwreck”, or famine, or were slaughtered by the people whereby this prophecy was literally and exactly fulfilled, and which is owned by the Jews themselves. Manasseh Ben Israel observes, that though Vespasian banished the Jews into various countries, Egypt is only mentioned by way of reproach, as if it had been said, ye shall go captives into the land from which ye went out triumphant: **by the way whereof I spake unto thee, thou shalt see it no more again**; the Targum of Jonathan is, “the Word of the Lord shall bring thee into Egypt again in ships;” even the same divine Word, the Son of God, that brought them out of it, and went before them in a pillar of cloud and fire, now provoked by their rejection of him, would lead them back again thither; the paraphrast adds, “through the midst of the Red sea, in the path in which ye passed;” as if they were carried over into Egypt in ships, just in that part of the sea in which they had passed before; but that was an unknown and unseen path, after the waters were closed up, and never to be seen more, and which is here meant; for not Egypt, but the way in which they passed, was to be seen no more: 374 **and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and for bondwomen, and no man shall buy [you]**; that is, there in Egypt they would be offered to sale,



and so many would be sold until the market was glutted with them, and there would be no buyers. The Targum of Jonathan is, "ye shall be sold there at first to your enemies, at a dear price, as artificers, and afterwards at a mean price as servants and handmaids, until ye become despised, and be brought to serve for nothing, and there be none to take you in." Jarchi interprets it of they themselves being desirous, and seeking to be sold, to avoid cruelties and death; which agrees with the sense of the word, which may be rendered, "ye shall offer yourselves for sale"; but there will be no buyer, because their enemies will determine upon the slaughter and consumption of them; and to the same purpose Aben Ezra. There were such numbers of them to be sold both at Egypt and at Rome, that the sellers of them had but a poor market for them; and it seems not only because of their number, but the ill opinion had of them as servants. Hegeppus says, "there were many to be sold, but there were few buyers; for the Romans despised the Jews for service, nor were there Jews left to redeem their own." It is said, that thirty were sold for a penny; a just retaliation to them, who had sold their Messiah for thirty pieces of silver. 375

### Deuteronomy 29

This chapter begins with an intimation of another covenant the Lord was about to make with the people of Israel, (Deuteronomy 29:1); and, to prepare their minds to an attention to it, various things which the Lord had done for them are recited, (Deuteronomy 29:2-9); the persons are particularly mentioned with whom the covenant would now be made, the substance of which is, that they should be his people, and he their God, (Deuteronomy 29:10-15); and since they had seen the idols in Egypt and other countries, with which they might have been ensnared, they are cautioned against idolatry and idolaters, as being most provoking to the Lord, (Deuteronomy 29:16-21); which would bring destruction not only on particular persons, but upon their whole land, to the amazement of posterity; who, inquiring the reason of it, will be told, it was because they

forsook the covenant of God, and particularly were guilty of idolatry, which, whether privately or openly committed, would be always punished, (Deuteronomy 29:22-29).

**DEUT. 29:1. *These [are] the words of the covenant,*** Not what go before, but follow after, in the next chapters, to the end of the book; in which are various promises of grace, and promises of good things, both with respect to Jews and Gentiles, intermixed with other things: ***which the Lord commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab;*** or to declare unto them, and acquaint them with, they being now in the plains of Moab, ready to enter into the land of, Canaan: ***besides the covenant which he made with them at Horeb:*** or Sinai; which Jarchi interprets, besides the curses in Leviticus, delivered on Sinai; he seems to have respect to (Leviticus 26:14-46). This covenant was different from that at Sinai, spoken of (Exodus 24:8); being made not only at a different time, at near forty years' distance, and at a different place, nor Sinai; but when Israel were come nearer Mount Sion, and were actually possessed of part of their inheritance, the land of promise, that part of the land of Moab which the two kings of the Amorites had seized and 376 dwelt in, whom Israel had dispossessed; and with different persons, that generation being dead, excepting a very few, which were at Sinai: but it was different as to the substance and matter of it, it not only including that, and being a renewal of it, as is generally thought, but containing such declarations of grace which had not been made before, not only respecting the repenting and returning Israelites, but the Gentiles also; for this covenant was made with the stranger, as well as with Israel, (Deuteronomy 29:11); and relates to the times of the Messiah, the call of the Gentiles, the conversion of the Jews, and their return to their own land in the latter day.

**DEUT. 29:2. *Moses called unto all Israel,*** He had been speaking before to the heads of them, and delivered at different times what is before recorded; but now he summoned the whole body of the people together, a solemn covenant

being to be made between God and them; or such things being to be made known unto them as were of universal concernment: **and said unto them**; what is in this chapter; which is only a preparation or introduction to what he had to declare unto them in the following: **ye have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt**; the Targum of Jonathan is, "what the Word of the Lord did;" for all the wonderful things there done in Egypt were done by the essential Word of God, Christ, the Son of God; who appeared to Moses in the bush, and sent him to Egypt, and by him and Aaron wrought the miracles there; which many now present had seen, and were then old enough to take notice of, and could remember, though their fathers then in being were now dead: **unto Pharaoh and unto all his servants, and unto all his land**; the plagues he inflicted on the person of Pharaoh, and on all his courtiers, and on all the people in Egypt, for they reached the whole land.

**DEUT. 29:3. The great temptations which thine eyes have seen**, Or trials, the ten plagues which tried the Egyptians, whether they would let Israel go; and tried the Israelites, whether they would believe in the Lord, and trust in his almighty power to deliver them: **377 the signs and those great miracles**: as the said plagues were such as were beyond the power of nature to produce, and which only Omnipotence could really effect.

**DEUT. 29:4. Yet the Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive**, They had some of them seen the above miracles with their bodily eyes, but had not discerned with the eyes of their understanding the power of God displayed in them, the goodness of God to them on whose behalf they were wrought, in order to obtain their deliverance, and the vengeance of God on the Egyptians for detaining them; so Jarchi interprets it of an heart to know the mercies of the Lord, and to cleave unto him: **and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day**; to see and observe the gracious dealings of God with them, and to hearken to his voice and obey it: so the understanding heart, the seeing eye, and hearing ear, in things spiritual, are from the

Lord, are special gifts of his grace, which he bestows on some, and not on others; (see Proverbs 20:12). The Targum of Jonathan is, "the Word of the Lord did not give you an heart, etc."

**DEUT. 29:5. And I have led you forty years in the wilderness**, From the time of their coming out of Egypt unto that day, which though not quite complete, is given as a round number. Eupolemus, an Heathen writer, confirms this date of the ministry of Moses among the Israelites; he says, Moses performed the office of a prophet forty years: **your clothes are not waxen old upon you**: were not worn out; all those forty years they had been in the wilderness, they had never wanted clothes fitting for them, according to their age and stature, and which decayed not; (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 8:4"); **and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot**; which were necessary to wear in travelling, and especially in a rugged wilderness; and yet, thought they had been always in use during so long a time, were not worn out, which was really miraculous; (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 8:4").

**DEUT. 29:6. Ye have not eaten bread**, Bread made of corn, common bread, of their own preparing, made by the labour of their own hands; but manna, the food of angels, the bread of heaven: **378 neither have you drunk wine, nor strong drink**; only water out of the rock, at least chiefly, and for constancy; though it may be, when they were on the borders of other countries, as of the Edomites, they might obtain some wine for their money: **that ye might know that I [am] the Lord your God**; who was both able and willing to provide food, drink, and raiment for them, and supply them with all good things, and support them without the use of the common necessaries of life; which were abundant proofs of his power and goodness.

**DEUT. 29:7. And when ye came unto this place**, The borders of Moab, the wilderness before it, to which joined the plains they were now in; (see Numbers 21:13,20 Deuteronomy 2:26); **Sihon king of Heshbon, and Og king of Bashan, came out against us unto battle**; not together, but one after the other, and that very

quickly; as soon almost as they had fought with the one, and conquered him, the other came out against them: **and we smote them**; killed them and their armies, and the inhabitants of their countries; the history of which see in (Numbers 21:23-35).

**DEUT. 29:8. And we took their land**, Which belonged to the two kings, the lands of Jazer, Gilead, and Bashan, fine countries for pasturage: **and gave it for an inheritances unto the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to the half tribe of Manasseh**; who requested it, and to whom it was granted on certain conditions, and they were now in possession of it; (see Numbers 32:1-42).

**DEUT. 29:9. Keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do them**, To do which they were laid under great obligations, through the goodness of God to them, in giving them victory over the two kings, and delivering their countries into their hands, as well as by all the favours bestowed on them in the wilderness, where they were sufficiently supplied with food, drink, and raiment; all which is made use of as a motive and argument to engage them to observe and keep the covenant the Lord made with them: **that ye may prosper in all that ye do**: in all their occupations and businesses of life, in their manufactures and commerce, in the culture of their fields and vineyards, and in whatsoever they were employed in a lawful way; the word used has sometimes, the signification of acting wisely <sup>379</sup> and prudently, as in (Isaiah 52:13); hence the Septuagint version is, "that ye may understand all that ye do"; and so the Jerusalem Targum.

**DEUT. 29:10. Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God**, Being gathered together at the door of the tabernacle, at the summons of Moses. Aben Ezra interprets it round about the ark, which was the symbol of the divine Presence: **your captains of your tribes**; the heads and rulers of them: **your elders and your officers, [with] all the men of Israel**; not the seventy elders only, but their elders in their several tribes, cities, and families, men of gravity and prudence, as well as of age, and who were in some place of power

and authority or another: and the "officers" may design such who attended the judges, and executed their orders; (see Deuteronomy 16:18); and with them were the common people, the males, who were grown persons. Aben Ezra thinks they stood in the order in which they here are mentioned, which is not improbable; next to Moses the princes, then the elders, and after them the officers, and next every man of Israel, the males; and then the little ones with the males; after them the women, and last of all the proselytes.

**DEUT. 29:11. Your little ones, your wives**, Who are scarce ever mentioned in any special law or solemn transaction: **and thy stranger that [is] in thy camp**; not only the proselyte of righteousness, who embraced the Jewish religion entirely, but the proselyte of the gate, who was admitted to dwell among them, having renounced idolatry. These standing with the Israelites, when this covenant was made, has respect to the Gentiles, who as well as the Jews have an interest in the covenant of grace made with Christ; in whom there is, neither Jew nor Gentile, any difference between them: **from the hewer of thy wood to the drawer of thy water**; that hewed wood for firing and other uses, and drew water for the camp; who were generally mean persons, and perhaps some that came out of Egypt with them are here intended; however, mean and abject persons are meant, and signifies that none should be excluded from a concern in this solemn affair on account of their meanness.

**DEUT. 29:12. That thou shouldest enter into covenant with the Lord thy God**, That is, they were all to appear and stand in this order before the Lord, that they might solemnly avouch him to be their God, and hear him declaring them to be his people, and the many promises and prophecies of good things he should deliver to them, as well as threatenings of wrath and vengeance in case of disobedience to him: or "that thou shouldest pass" : which some think is an allusion to the manner of making covenants, by slaying a creature, and cutting it in pieces, and passing between them, as in (Jeremiah 34:18); so Jarchi and Aben Ezra:

*and into his oath*; annexed to his covenant and promise, to show the immutability and certain fulfilment of it on his part; and may signify not only the oath he swore that they should be his people, but the oath he gave them, and they took, that he should be their God: *which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day*; which refers both to the covenant and the oath, or the covenant confirmed by an oath, even the covenant now made in the plains of Moab, distinct from that at Horeb or Sinai.

**DEUT. 29:13.** *That he may establish thee this day for a people unto himself, and [that] he may be unto thee a God*, Which contains the sum and substance of the covenant; (see Jeremiah 32:38); *as he hath said unto thee, and as he had sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob*; (Deuteronomy 26:17,18 28:9).

**DEUT. 29:14.** *Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath.*] That is, Moses; for he was ordered to make this covenant with them in the name of the Lord; what promises of good things, or declarations of his mind and will, God would make, Moses was to deliver to them; and what was required of them he would inform them of. Aben Ezra interprets it, not only you, but those that will come after you, your sons and your sons' sons.

**DEUT. 29:15.** *But with [him] that standeth here with us this day before the Lord our God*, Who are before specified according to their dignity, age, sex, and station of life; or rather, "but [as] with him that standeth", etc. *and so with [him] that [is] not here with us this day*; detained at home by illness and indisposition of body, or by one providence or another; so that they could not come out of their tents, and make their appearance before 381 the tabernacle; though Jarchi interprets this of the people of future generations.

**DEUT. 29:16.** *For ye know how we have dwelt in the land of Egypt*, How long they and their fathers had dwelt there, the number of years they had been in the land, as the Targum of Jonathan, which was upwards of two hundred years; and being a country the inhabitants of

which were much given to idolatry, they had seen many of their idols, and much of their idolatrous worship; and their hearts had been apt to be ensnared by it, and the minds of some tinctured with it, and the remembrance thereof might make ill impressions on them; to remove or prevent which this covenant was made: *and how we came through the nations which ye passed by*; as the Edomites, Ammonites, Moabites, and Midianites, as Aben Ezra observes, through whose borders they came, as they passed by their countries in their journeys in the wilderness.

**DEUT. 29:17.** *And ye have seen their abominations and their idols*, Or, "their abominations, even their idols"; for the same are meant by both: it is common in Scripture to call the idols of the Gentiles abominations, without any other explanation of them; (see 1 Kings 11:5,7); because they are abominable to God, and ought to be so to men: the word for idols has the signification of dung, and may be rendered dunghill gods, either referring to such that were bred and lived in dung, as the beetle, worshipped by the Egyptians, as Bishop Patrick observes; or which were as much to be loathed and abhorred as the dung of any creature: *wood and stone, silver and gold*; these are the materials of which the idols they had seen in the several countries they had been in, or passed through, were made of; some of wood, others of stone cut out of these, and carved; others more rich and costly were made of massive gold and silver, and were molten ones; or the images of wood were glided with gold and silver; *which [were] among them*; now these being seen by them in as they passed along, they might run in their minds, or be called to remembrance by them, and so they be in danger of being drawn aside to make the like, and worship them.

**DEUT. 29:18.** *Lest there should be among you man or woman, or family, or tribe*, These words stand in connection with (Deuteronomy 29:15), with (Deuteronomy 29:16,17) being in a parenthesis, as may be 382 observed, and show the design of this solemn appearance of the people, and their entering afresh into

covenant; which was to prevent their falling into idolatry, and preserve them from it, whether a single person of either sex, or a whole family, or even a tribe, which might be in danger of being infected with it, and so all the people: **whose heart turneth away this day from the Lord our God, to go [and] serve the gods of those nations**; whose heart is enticed and drawn aside at the remembrance of the idols he has seen worshipped by others; and is looking off from the Lord God, his faith in him being weakened, his fear of him removed, and his affections for him lessened; and is looking towards the idols of the nations, with a hankering mind to serve and worship them: **lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood**: the word “rosh”, which we render “gall”, signifies, according to Jarchi, a bitter herb, which better suits with a root than gall, and is elsewhere by us rendered “hemlock”, (Hosea 10:4); and is by him very rightly interpreted of a wicked man among them; for not a principle of immorality, or heresy, rooted in the mind, productive of bitter fruits, or evil actions, is meant; but a bad man, particularly an idolater, who is rooted in idolatry, and is guilty of and commits abominable actions; the issue of which will be bitterness and death, if not recovered; which agrees with what the apostle says, (Hebrews 12:15); who manifestly alludes to this passage; see the Apocrypha: “In those days went there out of Israel wicked men, who persuaded many, saying, Let us go and make a covenant with the heathen that are round about us: for since we departed from them we have had much sorrow.” (1 Maccabees 1:11) and is confirmed by what follows.

**DEUT. 29:19. And it cometh to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse**, That is, the man before compared to a root bearing bitter herbs, when he should hear the curses pronounced by the law against such persons as himself: **that he bless himself in his heart**; inwardly pronounce himself blessed, thinking himself secure from the curse of the law, and flattering himself it will never reach him nor come upon him: 383 **saying, I shall have peace**;

all happiness and prosperity, in soul, body, and estate; inward peace of mind now, and eternal peace hereafter: **though I walk in the imagination of my heart**; in worshipping idols which he vainly and wickedly imagined to be gods; to the worship of which his wicked heart prompted him, and he was resolutely and stubbornly bent upon, and in which he continued: **to add drunkenness to thirst**; as a thirsty man to quench his thirst drinks, and adds to that, or drinks yet more and more until he is drunken; so a man inclined to idolatry, that has a secret desire after it, thirsts after such stolen or forbidden waters, and drinks of them, adds thereunto, drinks again and again until he is drunk with the wine of fornication, or idolatry, as it is called (Revelation 17:2); so the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan understand the words of adding sin to sin, particularly of adding sins of ignorance to pride, or to presumptuous ones. Wicked men, deceivers and deceived, always grow worse and worse, increasing to more ungodliness, and yet promise themselves peace and impunity, (1 Thessalonians 5:3).

**DEUT. 29:20. Then the Lord will not spare him**, Have no mercy upon him, nor forgive him, being an hardhearted, impenitent, stubborn, and obstinate sinner, as well as guilty of the grossest and most provoking sin, as idolatry is: **but then the anger of the Lord, and his jealousy, shall smoke against that man**; or, “the nose of the Lord shall smoke”; alluding to an angry, wrathful, furious man, whose brain being heated, and his passions inflamed, his breath steams through his nostrils like smoke; it denotes the vehement anger, the greatness of God’s wrath and indignation against such a person, and his burning zeal or jealousy for his own honour and glory injured by the idolater: **and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him**: for as he that offends in one point is guilty of all, and especially in such a principal point as this, which concerns the being and worship of God; so he makes himself liable to all the curses of the law, which shall not only come upon him, but abide on him; and there is no person clear of them but by

redemption through Christ, who, by being made a curse for his people, has redeemed them from the curse of the law: **and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven**; he shall have no name in Israel, not in the church, and among the people of God, from 384 whom he is to be excommunicated; shall have no name and place in the earth, being cut off from the land of the living; and shall have no name or fame after his death, his memory shall rot and perish; and he shall appear to have no name in the book of life; (see Psalm 69:28 Revelation 3:5).

**DEUT. 29:21. And the Lord shall separate him unto evil out of all the tribes of Israel**, Unto the evil of punishment, devote and consign him to it, and make him a visible and distinguished mark of his displeasure and vengeance. So some men are righteously separated from others, and preordained unto condemnation, being wicked and ungodly men; for such God has made or appointed for the day of evil; (see Proverbs 16:4 Jude 1:4); **according to all the curses of the covenant that are written in this book of the law**; the evil of punishment he shall be separated unto shall be according to them, or include them all; the sense is, that the wrath of God, and the whole curse of the law due to him for his sin, shall come upon him; (see Deuteronomy 28:16-18), etc.

**DEUT. 29:22. So that the generation to come of your children that shall rise up after you**, Not the next generation, but in future times, in ages to come, at a great distance, even after the destruction of Judea by the Romans; to which (Deuteronomy 29:23) seems to refer: **and the stranger that shall come from a far land**; on trade and business, or for the sake of travelling, his road either lying through it, or his curiosity leading him to see it: **shall say, when they see the plagues of the land**; cities and towns in ruins, fields lie uncultivated, and the whole land depopulated, and all become a barren wilderness, which was once a fruitful country, a land flowing with milk and honey: **and the sicknesses which the Lord hath laid upon it**; upon the inhabitants of it, as the pestilence and other diseases, which shall have swept the land of them; (see Deuteronomy 28:22,27,35). This

case supposes a general departure from the worship of God to the service of idols; otherwise single individuals are punished in their own persons, as in the (Deuteronomy 29:21).

**DEUT. 29:23. [And that] the whole land thereof [is] brimstone and salt, [and] burning**, That is, is become exceeding barren, as all such land is 385 where there are sulphureous mines, or salt pits, or burning mountains; not that this would be, or has been the case of the land of Judea in a strict literal sense; only these are expressions made use of to show the barrenness of it, which is its case at this day, not through the nature of its soil being changed, but through the slothfulness of the inhabitants of it; to which time it better agrees than to the time of its falling into the hands of the Chaldeans, who left men in it for husbandmen and vinedressers. Aben Ezra understands this as a prayer to God, that the land might be burnt up; that is, for the sins of the people: **[that] it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein**; not being sown, it would bear and produce no corn for men; and not being manured, no grass would spring up for the cattle: and so would be **like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, of Admah and Zeboim**; which indeed are, strictly speaking, become a sulphurous and bituminous lake, called the salt sea, and the lake Asphaltites, and where no green grass or corn, or any kind of fruit grow: which the Lord overthrew in his anger and in his wrath the Targum of Jonathan is, "which the Word of the Lord overthrew;" and it was Jehovah, the Word, or Son of God, who rained, from Jehovah the Father, out of heaven, fire and brimstone on Sodom and Gomorrah, and the rest of the cities; (see Gill on "Genesis 19:24"), in which chapter is the history of this fatal overthrow.

**DEUT. 29:24. Even all nations shall say**, For the destruction of this land, and the people of it, would be, as it has been, so very great and awful, and so very remarkable and surprising, that the fame of it would be heard among all the nations of the world, as it has been; who, upon hearing the sad report of it, would ask the

following questions: **wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land?** so distinguished from all others for the fruitfulness and pleasantness of it; the people, the inhabitants of which, he chose, above all others, to be a special and peculiar people; and where he had a temple built for him, and where he had his residence, and worship used to be given unto him: **what [meaneth] the heat of this great anger?** what is the reason of his stirring up his fierce wrath, and causing it to burn in so furious a manner? surely it must be something very horrible and provoking indeed! 386

**DEUT. 29:25. Then men shall say,** The answer that will be returned to the above questions will be this **because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers:** breakers of covenants with men are always reckoned among the worst of men, (see Romans 1:31); and especially breakers of covenant with God, and with such a God as the God of Israel was, so good, so kind, and gracious; and of such a covenant he made with them, in which so many good things were promised unto them, on condition of their obedience; as the continuance in, such a land they dwelt in, with an abundance of privileges, civil and religious: and this covenant God of theirs was the God of their fathers also; and it was always reckoned an heinous sin among the Heathens to forsake the gods of their ancestors; (see Jeremiah 2:11); **which he made with them when he brought them out of the land of Egypt;** which is another aggravation of their breach of the covenant the Lord made with them; it being made with them by that God, and at that time, when he in so wonderful a manner, with such mighty power, and a outstretched arm, and in great kindness and tenderness to them, brought then, out of hard bondage and most wretched slavery in Egypt.

**DEUT. 29:26. For they went and served other gods, and worshipped them,** As did all Israel, in the times of Solomon, and the ten tribes under Jeroboam, and other succeeding kings of Israel; and the two tribes in the times of Ahaz, and especially of Manasseh, when they worshipped all the host of heaven; (see 1 Kings

11:33 12:28 2 Kings 16:4 21:3); **gods whom they knew not;** to whom they, as well as their fathers before them, were strangers and approved not of them; and of whose power and goodness they had no experience, and of which there never were any instances; yet such was their stupidity, as to leave their God, the only true God, of whom they had many proofs in both respects, and worship these idols, which had never been profitable and serviceable to them on any account: **and [whom] he hath not given unto them;** which version seems not to afford a good sense; for to what people soever has God, the true God, given other gods to worship, which this seems to imply, though he had not given or allowed any to them? Onkelos paraphrases it, "did not do them good"; which Jarchi explains, the gods they chose them did not impart to them any inheritance, or any portion; for the word used signifies to divide, 387 or part a portion or inheritance; now the Lord God did divide to Israel the land of Canaan for an inheritance, but these idols had never divided anything to them, and had been in no instance profitable or advantageous to them; and therefore it was madness and folly in them to worship them, as well as great ingratitude to the Lord their God, who had done such great and good things for them; for so the words may be rendered, "and did not impart" or "divide to them" anything; that is, not anyone of them did; for the verb is singular.

**DEUT. 29:27. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against this land,** For this their idolatry and base ingratitude: **to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book;** in this book of Deuteronomy, and particularly (Deuteronomy 28:16-68); (see Daniel 9:11).

**DEUT. 29:28. And the Lord rooted them out of the land,** Which was true both at the Babylonish captivity by Nebuchadnezzar, and at their present one by the Romans; and especially the latter, by whom they have been so rooted out, as that they have not been able to return to it these 1700 years, nor to have any inheritance or possession in it; whereas, at the end of seventy years, they returned from the Babylonish captivity to their land again: and

which was done *in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation*; which were most abundantly shown in the utter destruction of their land, city, and temple, by the Romans: *and cast them another land, as [it is] this day*; the ten tribes were cast into Assyria, and from thence into the cities of the Medes, the two tribes into the land of Chaldea, and now into all lands; and none their own, but another, a strange and foreign country. The word “cast” denotes the vehemence of the divine displeasure at them, expressed by the removal of them out of their own land into another. In the Hebrew word for “cast”, a middle letter in it is greater than usual; the reason of which perhaps is, that this dealing of God with them might be observed and taken notice of as very remarkable; and Ainsworth thinks it is to observe the greatness of the punishment; and the Jews understand this of the casting away of the ten tribes: and they gather from hence that the ten tribes shall not return, though about it they are divided; for so they say in the Misnah , 388 “the ten tribes shall not return, as it is said, and cast them into another land, as this day; as the day goes and does not return, so they go and return not; these are the words of R. Akiba. R. Eliezer says, as the day brings on darkness and light, so the ten tribes who are now dark shall be enlightened.”

**DEUT. 29:29.** *The secret [things belong] unto the Lord our God*, Respecting the people of Israel, and the providential dealings of God with them, and especially the final rejection of them; with respect to which, the apostle’s exclamation agrees with this, (Romans 11:33); and though the Lord had revealed many things which should befall them, there were others still secret with him, and the reasons of others; and particularly the times and seasons of their accomplishment, which he retains in his own power, (Acts 1:6). There are many secret things in nature, which cannot be found out and accounted for by men, which the Lord only knows; and there are many things in Providence, which are unsearchable, and past finding out by finite minds, especially the true causes and reasons of them; and there are

many things relating to God himself, which remain secret with him; notwithstanding the revelation he has made of himself; for not only some of his perfections, as eternity, immensity, etc. are beyond our comprehension; but the mode of subsistence of the three divine Persons in the Godhead, the paternity of the one, the generation of the other, and the procession of the Spirit from them both; the union of the two natures, divine and human, in the person of Christ; the thoughts, purposes, and decrees of God within himself, until brought into execution; and so there are many things relating to his creatures, as the particular persons predestinated unto eternal life, what becomes of such who die in infancy, what will befall us in life, when we shall die, where and in what manner, and also the day and hour of the last judgment. The Jews generally interpret this and what follows of the sins of men, and punishment for them, and, particularly, idolatry; take Aben Ezra’s sense instead of many, “he that commits idolatry secretly, his punishment is by the hand of heaven (from God immediately); he that commits it openly, it lies upon us and upon our children to do as is written in the law:” *but those [things which are] revealed [belong] to us and to our children for ever*; the things of nature and Providence, which are plain and manifest, are for our use and instruction; and especially the word and ordinances of God, which are the revelation of his will, the doctrines and promises 389 contained in the Scriptures, each of the duties of religion, and the commandments of God, such as are of eternal obligation, which may be chiefly designed, because it follows: *that [we] may do all the words of this law*: for the end of this revelation is practice; hearing and reading the word will be of no avail, unless what is heard and read is practised. Some render the words , “the secret things of the Lord our God are revealed to us and to our children;” but neither the construction of the words in the original, nor the Hebrew accents, will admit of such a version; otherwise it would furnish out a very great truth: for the secrets of God’s love, of his



council and covenant, are revealed unto his people, as well as many of his providences, and the mysteries of his grace; (see Psalm 25:14). There are some extraordinary pricks in the Hebrew text on the words “to us and to our children”: which are designed to point out the remarkable and wonderful condescension and goodness of God, in making a revelation of his mind and will, both with respect to doctrine and duty, to the sons of men. 390

### Deuteronomy 30

This chapter contains some gracious promises of the conversion of the Jews in the latter day, of their calling things to mind that have befallen them, of their repentance, and the circumcision of their hearts to love the Lord, of the return of them to their own land, and of the great increase of them, and of their enjoyment of plenty of good things, (Deuteronomy 30:1-10); in it is an account of the Gospel, or word of faith, which at this time should be brought near to the Jews, and be received by them, (Deuteronomy 30:11-14); and for the present Moses desires them to consider what he now set before them, and what would be the consequences of receiving or rejecting it, and so what it would be most proper for them to make choice of, (Deuteronomy 30:15-20).

**DEUT. 30:1.** *And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee,* Declared, pronounced, foretold, and prophesied of in the three preceding chapters, especially in (Deuteronomy 28:1-68); *the blessing and the curse which I have set before thee;* the blessings promised to those that pay a regard to the will of God and obey his voice, and curses threatened to the (see Deuteronomy 28:1-20); *and thou shall call [them] to mind among all the nations whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee;* recollect the promises and the threatenings, and observe the exact accomplishment of them in their captivities, and especially in this their last and present captivity.

**DEUT. 30:2.** *And shalt return unto the Lord thy God,* By repentance, acknowledging their

manifold sins and transgressions, particularly their disbelief and rejection of the Messiah, now seeking him and salvation by him; (see Hosea 3:5); *and shalt obey his voice;* in the Gospel, yielding the obedience of faith to that; embracing the Gospel, and submitting to the ordinances of it: 391 *according to all that I command thee this day, thou, and thy children;* which was to love the Lord, and walk in his ways, directed to in the Gospel, and which were to be regarded from a principle of love to God and the blessed Redeemer; (see Deuteronomy 30:6,16); *with all thine heart and with all thy soul;* that is, both their return unto the Lord, and their obedience to his voice or word, should be hearty and sincere; which being the case, the following things would be done for them.

**DEUT. 30:3.** *That then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion on thee,* Return them from their captivity, or bring them out of it, both in a temporal and spiritual sense; free them from their present exile, and deliver them from the bondage of sin, Satan, and the law; and all this as the effect of his grace and mercy towards them, and compassion on them; (see Jeremiah 30:18); The Targum of Jonathan is, “his Word shall receive with good will your repentance;” it being cordial and unfeigned, and fruits meet for it brought forth: *and will return and gather thee from all the nations whither the Lord thy God scattered thee;* or, “will again gather thee”; as he had gathered them out of all places where they had been scattered, on their return from the Babylonish captivity; so will he again gather them from all the nations of the earth, east, west, north, and south, where they are now dispersed; when they shall turn to the Lord, and seek David their King, the true Messiah. Maimonides understands this passage of their present captivity, and deliverance from it by the Messiah.

**DEUT. 30:4.** *If [any] of thine be driven out unto the outmost [parts] of heaven,* As many of them are in this remote island of ours, Great Britain, reckoned formerly the uttermost part of the earth, as Thule, supposed to be Schetland,

an isle belonging to Scotland, is said to be ; (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 28:49"); and as some of them are thought to be in America, which Manasseh Ben Israel had a firm belief of: **from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee**; whose eye is omniscient, and reaches every part of the world; and whose arm is omnipotent, and none can stay it, or turn it back. The Targum of Jonathan is, 392 "from thence will he bring you near by the hands of the King Messiah."

**DEUT. 30:5. And the Lord thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it**, That the Jews upon their conversion in the latter day will return to the land of Judea again, and possess it, is the sense of many passages of Scripture; among others, (see Jeremiah 30:18 Ezekiel 28:25,26 37:21,22,25 Zechariah 10:10); the above Targum is; "the Word of the Lord will bring thee, etc." **and he will do thee good**; both in things temporal and spiritual; (see Ezekiel 34:24-31); **and multiply thee above thy fathers**; increase their number more than ever they were in any age; for they shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered, (Hosea 1:10,11).

**DEUT. 30:6. And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed**, No mention is made of circumcision of the flesh, which will now be out of use with the Jews; they being fully convinced of the abrogation of the ceremonial law by the Messiah, whom they will now receive. It is spiritual circumcision only that is here spoken of, with which the Jews will be circumcised, when they shall be pricked and cut to the heart, and be thoroughly convinced of sin; when the iniquity of their hearts will be laid open to them, and they put to pain, and filled with shame and loathing for it; when the hardness of their hearts will be removed, and the foolishness of them will be exposed and taken away, and they will be made willing to part with their sins, and with their own righteousness; when the graces of the Spirit will be implanted in them, and the blood of Christ applied to them for pardon and cleansing. This is the

circumcision made without hands, which is not of men, but of God; what he calls for, and exhorts unto, as being necessary, (Deuteronomy 10:16); he here promises to do; and deed none but himself can do it; for he only can come at the hearts of men, to take anything out of them, or put anything into them; it is he that opens the heart, softens, quickens, enlightens, and purifies it: Baal Hatturim says this respects the times of the Messiah: **to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul**; which, though the duty of every man, is performed by none but those that have the grace of God; there is no love to God in the heart before this inward and 393 spiritual circumcision of it: it is a fruit of the Spirit in conversion when the affections are taken off of other things, and set on Christ; when a man sees his sin and his Saviour, and the one is odious, and the other precious; when the blessings of grace are applied, and the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, which cause love to God and Christ again: **that thou mayest live**; spiritually and eternally; for there is no spiritual life in the soul till the heart is circumcised, or, in other words, regenerated and renewed; then it is quickened; then a man lives a life of faith on Christ, of holiness from him, communion with him, and has both an open right unto, and meetness for, eternal life.

**DEUT. 30:7. And the Lord thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies**, Recorded in (Deuteronomy 28:16-68); that is, the Word of the Lord, as the Targum of Jonathan; for he being now sought unto, and embraced, will be their King and their Saviour, and revenge their enemies: **and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee**: the Turks and Papists, the former having taken possession of their land, and the latter being violent persecutors of them in all their countries. This will be fulfilled when the vials of God's wrath will be poured on the antichristian states, (Revelation 16:1-21).

**DEUT. 30:8. And thou shalt return, and obey the voice of the Lord**, In the Gospel; obey the form of doctrine delivered to them, embrace the truth of the Gospel cordially, and yield a cheerful subjection to the ordinances of it; or

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receive the Word of the Lord, as the Targum of Jonathan, Christ, the essential Word, by faith, as the Saviour and Redeemer, Mediator, Prophet, Priest, and King: **and do all his commandments which I command thee this day**; the commandment nigh unto them, in their mouths and hearts, even the word of faith, the ministers of Christ preach, (Deuteronomy 30:11); besides, all the moral precepts and commands of the law, which will then be in force, being eternal and invariable; which faith in Christ, and love to him, will influence and constrain them to observe.

**DEUT. 30:9. And the Lord thy God will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand**, In every manufacture, trade, or business of life in which they should be employed; the meaning is, that the Lord will greatly bless them in all that they shall set their hands to in a lawful way; so that they shall abound in good things, and have enough and to spare, a redundancy of the good things of life, great plenty of them: **in the fruit of thy body**; abundance of children: **and in the fruit of thy cattle**; a large increase of oxen and sheep: **and in the fruit of thy land for good**; it being by the blessing of God on their labours restored to its former fertility, though now barren through want of inhabitants, and the slothfulness of those that are possessed of it; for travellers observe, the soil is still good, was it properly manured and cultivated: **for the Lord will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers**; particularly in the days of Solomon and David, when the people of Israel enjoyed plenty of all good things, and so they will hereafter; (see Hosea 2:15,21,22); The Targum of Jonathan is, "the Word of the Lord will return to rejoice, etc." (see Jeremiah 32:41).

**DEUT. 30:10. If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God**, Or rather, "for thou shalt hearken"; seeing it is before promised that the Lord would circumcise their hearts to love him, and they should obey his voice, (Deuteronomy 30:6,8). The Targum is, "receive the Word of the Lord:" **to keep his commandments and his statutes, which are written in this book of the law**; particularly in

this chapter, and all that are of a moral nature: **[and] if thou return unto the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul**; or, "for thou shall return", etc. as it is promised they should, (Deuteronomy 30:8).

**DEUT. 30:11. For this commandment which I command thee this day**, Which the Jews understand of the law, but the Apostle Paul has taught us to interpret it of the word of faith, the Gospel preached by him and other ministers, (Romans 10:6-8); which better suits with the context, and the prophecies before delivered concerning the conversion of the Jews, their reception of the Messiah, and his Gospel: 395 **it [is] not hidden from thee**; being clearly revealed, plainly and fully preached: if hidden from any, it is from them that are lost; from the wise and prudent, while it is revealed to babes, and given to them to know the mysteries of it: or too "wonderful"; hard, difficult, and impossible; its doctrines, are not beyond the understanding of an enlightened person; they are all plain to them that understand and find the knowledge of them; and the ordinances of it are not too hard and difficult to be kept; the commandments of Christ are not grievous: **neither [is] it far off**; for though it is good, news from a far country, from heaven, it is come down from thence; it is brought nigh in the ministry of the word to the ears and hearts of men.

**DEUT. 30:12. It [is] not in heaven**, The scheme of it was formed in heaven, it was hid in the heart of God there, before revealed; it was ordained before the world was for our glory; it was brought down from thence by Christ, and committed to his apostles and ministers of the word to preach it to men; and has been ever since continued on earth, and will be at the time of the conversion of the Jews: **that thou shouldest say**; that there should be any occasion of saying; it forbids any such kind of speech as, follows: **who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it to us, that we may hear it, and do it?** there is no need of that, for it is brought from thence already, and may be heard, and should be obeyed; for to put such a question would be the same as to ask "to bring

Christ down from above”, who is come down already by the assumption of human nature, to preach the Gospel, give the sense of the law, and fulfil it, to do the will of his Father, bring in an everlasting righteousness, and save his people; so that there is no need of his coming again on the same errand, since he has obtained eternal redemption, and is the author of everlasting salvation, which is the sum and substance of the Gospel.

**DEUT. 30:13.** *Neither [is] it beyond the sea,* There is no need to travel into foreign parts, into transmarine countries for it, as the Heathen philosophers did to get knowledge; for the Gospel is ordered to be preached to all the world, and sent into all nations; and at the time of the conversion of the Jews the earth will be filled with the knowledge of it, as the waters cover the sea; so that there will be no need to go into distant countries for it; nor any occasion <sup>396</sup> *that thou shouldst say, who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?* which would be all one as to desire “to bring up Christ again from the dead”; when he is already risen, and is gone to heaven, where he ever lives to make intercession for us; is thereby declared to be the Son of God with power, and is discharged as the surety of his people, having done completely what he engaged to do; and is risen for their justification, and become the firstfruits of the resurrection of the dead; wherefore whoever confesses with his mouth, and believes with his heart, that God has raised him from the dead, that is enough, he shall be saved: what a sublime sense of the words is this the apostle gives and how puerile is that of the Chaldee paraphrast in comparison of it! (see Gill on “Romans 10:6”).

**DEUT. 30:14.** *But the word [is] very nigh unto thee,* In the ministration of it by those who clearly, plainly, and faithfully preach it, and in the application of it by the Spirit of God to the heart; and in the gracious experience converted persons have of the power and efficacy of it in them, and of the comfort they receive from it: *in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it;* in the mouth by confession, being not

ashamed to own it, and profess it before men; and in the heart, where it is come with power, has a place, and works effectually, and is cordially believed, and comfortably experienced; and when this is the case, its ordinances will be faithfully kept as delivered, and cheerfully submitted to.

**DEUT. 30:15.** *See, I have set before thee this day,* Moses here returns to press the Israelites to the present observance of the laws, statutes, and judgments of one sort and another, he had been delivering to them; as being of great moment and importance to them, no other than *life and good, and death and evil;* which are the effects and consequences of obedience and disobedience to them; a happy temporal life, and a continuance of it in the good land of Canaan, and an enjoyment of the blessings and good things thereof to them that are obedient; for not spiritual and eternal life, or spiritual blessings and everlasting happiness, are to be had by man’s obedience to the law of works, only through Christ, through his obedience, righteousness, sufferings, and death; (see Galatians 3:21); so temporal death, or a cutting short of natural life in the promised land, and evil things, calamities, and distresses, or a <sup>397</sup> deprivation of all the good things of it to the disobedient; (see Isaiah 1:19,20).

**DEUT. 30:16.** *In that I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God,* Which is the sum and substance of the first table of the law, and includes the whole worship of God, the contrary to which are idolatry, superstition, and will worship, from which Moses had been dissuading and deterring them: *to walk in his ways;* which he has prescribed, as his will to walk in, and his law directs to: *and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments;* his laws, moral, ceremonial, and judicial, Moses had been repeating and reciting: *that thou mayest live and multiply;* live in the land of Canaan, and have a numerous offspring and posterity to succeed and continue in it, which is confirmed by what follows: *and the Lord thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it;* with health and happiness, with an affluence of all good

things, in the land of Canaan they were just entering into to take possession of.

**DEUT. 30:17.** *But if thine heart turn away,* From the true God, and the right worship of him, and from his commands, statutes, and judgments: *so that thou wilt not hear;* the voice of the Lord and obey it, or hearken to his laws, and do them: *but shalt be drawn away;* by an evil heart, and by the ill examples of others: *and worship other gods and serve them;* the gods of the Gentiles, the idols of the people, besides the one living and true God, the God of Israel.

**DEUT. 30:18.** *I denounce unto, you this day that ye shall surely perish,* By one judgment or another; this he most solemnly averred, and it might be depended upon that it would certainly be their case; (see Deuteronomy 4:26); *[and that] ye shall not prolong [your] days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it;* but be cut short by death, of one kind or another, by sword, or famine, or pestilence, or be carried into captivity; one or other of which were frequently their case. 398

**DEUT. 30:19.** *I call heaven and earth to record this day against you,* Either, literally understood, the heavens above him, and the earth on which he stood, those inanimate bodies, which are frequently called upon as witnesses to matters of moment and importance; (see Deuteronomy 4:26 32:1 Isaiah 1:2); or figuratively, the inhabitants of both, angels and men: *[that] I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing;* had plainly told them in express words what would be the consequence of obedience and disobedience to the law of God; long life, and the blessings of it in the land of Canaan, to those that obey it; death, by various means, and dreadful curses, to those that disobey it; of which see at large (Deuteronomy 28:16-68); *therefore choose life, that thou and thy seed may live;* that is, prefer obedience to the law, and choose to perform that, the consequence of which is life; that they and their posterity might live comfortably and happily, quietly and safely,

and constantly, even to the latest ages, in the land of Canaan.

**DEUT. 30:20.** *That thou mayest love the Lord thy God,* And show it by keeping his commands: *[and] that thou mayest obey his voice;* in his word, and by his prophets: *and that thou mayest cleave unto him;* and to his worship, and not follow after and serve other gods: *for he [is] thy life, and the length of thy days;* the God of their lives, and the Father of their mercies; the giver of long life, and all the blessings of it; and which he had promised to those that were obedient, to him, and which they might expect: *that thou mayest dwell in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them;* the land of Canaan, often thus described; this was the grand promise made to obedience to the law, and was typical of eternal life and happiness; which is had, not through man's obedience to the law, but through the obedience and righteousness of Christ. 399

### Deuteronomy 31

Moses being old, and knowing he should quickly die, and must not go over Jordan with the people of Israel, acquaints them with it, and encourages them and Joshua to go over notwithstanding, and not be afraid of their enemies, since the Lord would go with them, and deliver them into their hands, (Deuteronomy 31:1-8); and having written the law, he delivered it to the priests, and ordered that it should be read at the end of every seven years before all the people, that they and theirs might learn it, and fear the Lord, (Deuteronomy 31:9-13); and whereas the death of Moses was very near, and the Lord foreseeing the people would quickly fall into idolatry, which would bring great calamities upon them, he directed Moses to write a song, which should be a witness for him, and against them, in ages to come; which Moses accordingly did, (Deuteronomy 31:14-22); and Moses having given a charge to Joshua, and finished the writing of the law in a book, gave it to the Levites to put it in the side of the ark, (Deuteronomy 31:23-27); and then ordered the

chief of the tribes to be gathered together, that he might deliver the song, which by the direction and under the inspiration of God he had written, (Deuteronomy 31:28-30); which song is recorded in (Deuteronomy 32:1-43).

**DEUT. 31:1. *And Moses went and spake these words unto all Israel.***] The following words, even to the whole body of the people summoned together on this occasion. It seems that after Moses had made the covenant with them he was directed to, he dismissed the people to their tents, and went to his own, and now returned, having ordered them to meet him again, very probably at the tabernacle; with which agrees the Targum of Jonathan, he "went to the tabernacle of the house of doctrine;" though, according to Aben Ezra, he went to the each tribes separately, as they lay encamped; his words are these, "he went to every tribe and tribe, to acquaint them that he was about to die, and that they might not be afraid, and to strengthen their hearts;" 400 he adds, "in my opinion he then blessed them, though their blessings are afterwards written;" which is not improbable.

**DEUT. 31:2. *And he said unto them, I [am] an hundred and twenty years old this day,*** Whether the meaning is, that that day precisely was his birthday, is a question; it may be the sense is only this, that he was now arrived to such an age; though Jarchi takes it in the first sense, to which are objected his words in (Deuteronomy 31:14); yet it seems by (Deuteronomy 32:48) that having delivered to the children of Israel the song he was ordered this day to write, on the selfsame day he was bid to go up to Mount Nebo and die: and it is a commonly received tradition with the Jews, that Moses died on the same day of the month he was born; (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 34:7"). ***I can no more go out and come in;*** not that he could no longer go out of his tent and return without great trouble and difficulty, being so decrepit; but that he could not perform his office as their ruler and governor, or go out to battle and return as their general; and this not through any incapacity of body or mind, both being vigorous, sound, and well, as is clear from

(Deuteronomy 34:7); but because it was the will of God that he should live no longer to exercise such an office, power, and authority: ***also the Lord hath said unto me,*** or "for the Lord has said", and so is a reason of the foregoing; the Targum is, "the Word of the Lord said:" ***thou shalt not go over this Jordan:*** to which he and the people of Israel were nigh, and lay between them and the land of Canaan, over which it was necessary to pass in order to go into it; but Moses must not lead them there, this work was reserved for Joshua, a type of Christ; not Moses and his law, or obedience to it, is what introduces any into the heavenly Canaan only Jesus and his righteousness; (see Deuteronomy 3:27).

**DEUT. 31:3. *The Lord thy God, he will go over before thee,*** This he said to encourage the people of Israel; that though he should die, and not go over with them, their ever living and true God, the great Jehovah, the Lord of 401 hosts, he would go before them, and fight their battles for them; so that they had nothing to fear from their enemies: ***[and] he will destroy those nations from before thee;*** the seven nations which then inhabited the land: ***and thou shalt possess them;*** their countries, cities, and houses, fields, and vineyards: ***[and] Joshua, he shall go over before thee;*** as their general to fight for them, subdue their enemies, and put them into the possession of the land, and divide it to them: ***as the Lord hath said;*** (Deuteronomy 3:28).

**DEUT. 31:4. *And the Lord shall do unto them as he did unto Sihon, and to Og, kings of the Amorites,*** Deliver them up into their hands; see the history of this in (Numbers 21:10-35); ***and unto the land of them whom he destroyed;*** put them into the possession of the land of Canaan, as they were now in possession of the land of those two kings he destroyed by them. This instance is given to encourage their faith, assuring them that what had been done to them would be done to the Canaanitish kings, and their subjects, and their lands.

**DEUT. 31:5. *And the Lord shall give them up before your face,*** To ruin and destruction; the Targum of Jonathan is, "the Word of the Lord

shall deliver them up:" **that ye may do unto them according to all the commandments which I have commanded you**; that is, utterly destroy them, make no covenant with them, enter into no alliances nor contract any marriages with them; but demolish their altars, cut down their groves, and break their images in pieces; of which last Aben Ezra interprets the words; but they are not to be restrained to that single instance; (see Deuteronomy 7:1-5).

**DEUT. 31:6. Be strong and of a good courage**, The Septuagint version is, "play the men, and be strong;" be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, trusting and relying on him that goes before you; and so take heart, and be of good courage, 402 and act the manly part; the apostle seems to refer to this passage, (1 Corinthians 16:13); **fear not, nor be afraid of them**; their enemies, though so numerous, so mighty, and some of them of a gigantic stature, and their cities strong and well fenced: **for the Lord thy God, he [it is] that doth go with thee**: in comparison of whom, numbers of men, their strength of body, and fortified places, signify nothing: **he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee**; not fail to fulfil his promises to them, not leave them till he had given them complete victory over their enemies, put them into the possession of their land, and settled them in it. This promise, though made to literal Israel, belongs to the spiritual Israel of God, and is made good to every true believer in the Lord; (see Hebrews 13:5).

**DEUT. 31:7. And Moses called unto Joshua**, Who might be at some distance from him, with the tribe to which he belonged. The Targum of Jonathan adds, "out of the midst of the people:" **and said unto him, in the sight of all Israel**; now assembled together, and what follows was said in their hearing, to make him the more respectable to them: **be strong and of a good courage**; the same that is said to the people in (Deuteronomy 31:6), and which was still more necessary in him, who was to be their general, and to go at the head of them, and lead them on to battle; and though Joshua was a man of courage and valour, as well as had military skill, as appears by his fight with Amalek, (Exodus

17:9-13); yet such an exhortation was not needless, seeing he had so much work to do, and so many enemies to contend with: **for thou must go with this people unto the land which the Lord hath sworn unto their fathers to give them, and thou shalt cause them to inherit it**; the Targum of Jonathan is, "which the Word of the Lord hath sworn to give;" 403 the land of Canaan, thither he must go with them; this was the will and determination of God, and he must go alone without him, Moses, which would be a trial of his courage.

**DEUT. 31:8. And the Lord, he [it is] that doth go before thee**, The Word of the Lord, his Shechinah, according to the above Targum, and so in the next clause; the same that brought Israel out of Egypt, had gone before them in the wilderness, and now would go before Joshua and them into the land of Canaan: **he will be with thee**; to guide and direct, to assist and strengthen, to protect and defend, to give success to his arms, and victory over his enemies: **he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee**; not fail to give him counsel and direction, to afford him strength, and to fill him with courage, and to deliver his enemies into his hands; nor forsake him till he had finished the work he was to do, had made a complete conquest of the Canaanites, and settled the people of Israel in their land: **fear not, neither be dismayed**; at the number and strength of the enemy, nor at any difficulties that might lie in the way of finishing so great an undertaking, since the Lord would be with him; (see Romans 8:31).

**DEUT. 31:9. And Moses wrote this law**, The book of Deuteronomy, or the Pentateuch, the five books of Moses, which he had now finished, and which all of them together are sometimes called the law, (Galatians 4:21); **and delivered it unto the priests, the sons of Levi**; who were the teachers of the law, as Aben Ezra observes; (see Malachi 2:7); and therefore it was proper to put it into their hands, to instruct the people in it, and that the people might apply to them in any matter of difficulty, or when they wanted to have any particular law explained to them: **which bare the ark of the covenant of the**

**Lord**; for though they were the Levites, and particularly the Kohathites, who in journeying carried the ark; (see Numbers 4:5-15 10:21); yet sometimes it was borne by the priests; (see Joshua 3:13-17 6:6 1 Samuel 4:4); **and unto all the elders of Israel**; the judges and civil magistrates in the respective tribes; for as there were in the book of the law several things which belonged to the priests to perform, and all of them they were to instruct in, so there were others which were to be the rule of judgment to judges, and all civil magistrates, and which they were to take care were put in execution; and therefore it was proper that they should have a copy of this law, and which must be here understood; for it cannot be thought that one and the same copy should be given both to the priests and to all the elders. The Jews say Moses wrote thirteen copies of the law, twelve for the twelve tribes, and one to be put into the ark, to convict of fraud or corruption, should any be made .

**DEUT. 31:10. And Moses commanded them,** The priests and the elders, to whom the law was delivered: **saying**; as follows: **at the end of [every] seven years**; every seventh year was a year of rest to the land, and of remission of debts to poor debtors: at the close of this year or going out of it, according to the Misnah , even on the eighth year coming in, the following was to be done, namely, the reading of the law; and so Jarchi interprets it of the first year of release, the eighth, that is, the first year after the year of release; but Aben Ezra better interprets it of the beginning of the seventh year; for as he elsewhere observes on (Deuteronomy 15:1); the word signifies the extremity of the year, and there are two extremities of it, the beginning and the end, and the first extremity is meant; which is more likely than that the reading of the law should be put off to the end of the year, and which seems to be confirmed by what follows: **in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles**, or “in the appointed time” ; of the year of release, of the release of debtors from their debts, (Deuteronomy 15:1,2); when the time or season appointed and fixed was come: moreover, what is here directed to being

to be done at the feast of tabernacles, shows it to be at the beginning of the year, since that feast was in the month Tisri, which was originally the beginning of the year, before the coming of the children of Israel out of Egypt, and still continued so for many things, and particularly for the years of release ; and this was a very proper time for the reading of the law, when all the increase of the earth and fruits thereof were gathered in; and so their hearts filled, or at least should be, with gladness and gratitude; and when there was no tillage of the land, being the seventh year, and so were at leisure for such service; and when all poor debtors were released from their debts, and so were freed from all cares and troubles, and could better attend unto it.

**DEUT. 31:11. When all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God,** As all the males were obliged to do three times in the year, and one of those times was the feast of tabernacles, and so a proper season for the reading of the law; (see Exodus 23:14-17); **in the place which the Lord shall choose**; the city of Jerusalem, and the temple there: **thou shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing**; the book of Deuteronomy, as Jarchi, or it may be the whole Pentateuch: who were to read it is not expressly said; the speech seems to be directed to the priests and elders, to whom the law written by Moses was delivered, (Deuteronomy 31:9); and who were either to read it themselves, or take care that it should be read. Josephus ascribes this service to the high priest; he says, standing in an high pulpit (or on an high bench), “from whence he may be heard, he must read the laws to all;” but the Jewish writers commonly allot this work to the king, or supreme governor, who at least was to read some parts of it; so Jarchi says, the king at first read Deuteronomy, as it is said in the Misnah ; “he read from the beginning of Deuteronomy to (Deuteronomy 6:4); hear, O Israel, etc. and then added (Deuteronomy 11:13); then (Deuteronomy 14:22); after that (Deuteronomy 26:12); then the section of the king, (Deuteronomy 17:14); next the blessings and the curses, (Deuteronomy 27:15-26 28:16-68),



with which he finished the whole section;” and so we find that Joshua, the governor of the people after Moses, read all his laws, (Joshua 8:35); and so did King Josiah at the finding of the book of the law, (2 Kings 23:2), and Ezra, (Nehemiah 8:3). The king received the book from the high priest standing, and read it sitting; but King Agrippa stood and read, for which he was praised.

**DEUT. 31:12. *Gather the people together, men, and women, and children,*** At the three grand festivals in other years, only males were obliged to appear; women might if they would, but they were not bound to it; but at this time all of every age and sex were to be summoned and assembled 406 together; and it is said, when the king read in the book of the law, all the people were obliged to come and bring their families, as it is said (Deuteronomy 31:12); “gather the people”, etc. and as it could not be done when it happened on the sabbath day, the reading of the section was put off to the day following: ***and thy stranger that [is] within thy gates;*** not only the proselyte of righteousness, but the proselyte of the gate that renounced idolatry, for his further conviction and thorough conversion to the religion of the true God; or, as the Targum of Jonathan expresses it, that they might see the honour and glory of the law. The end is more fully expressed as follows, ***that they may hear;*** all the laws which God had given: ***and that they may learn;*** and attain unto the true knowledge and right understanding of them: ***and fear the Lord your God;*** serve and worship him internally and externally, according to these laws: ***and observe to do all the words of this law;*** so take notice of them as to put them in practice; and reading them in such a solemn and reverent manner made them the more servable, and raised the greater attention to them, to the importance of them; otherwise they were read in their families, and on sabbath days in their synagogues; (see Deuteronomy 6:7) (Acts 13:15 15:21).

**DEUT. 31:13. *And [that] their children, which have not known [anything],*** Of God and of his law and of their duty to God, to their parents,

and the rest of their fellow creatures: ***may hear, and learn to fear the Lord your God;*** hear the law of God, learn the meaning of it, and so be brought up in the fear, nurture, and admonition of the Lord, and serve him their Creator in the days of their youth: ***as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it;*** this being a means to continue the fear, service, and worship of God in their posterity, and so of their long continuance in the land of Canaan.

**DEUT. 31:14. *And the Lord said unto Moses,*** Either at the same time, or quickly after; rather, perhaps, the same day: 407 ***behold, thy days approach that thou must die;*** which does not necessarily imply that he had some days to live, though but few; but that the time of his death drew nigh, his last moments were approaching; the time of his death being, as every man’s is, fixed by the Lord, with whom is the number of his years, months, days, and moments, beyond which he cannot pass, (Job 14:5); ***call Joshua, and present yourselves in the tabernacle of the congregation, that I may give him a charge;*** this looks as if the people had been dismissed after the above exhortations given; and now Joshua was called, and Moses with him, to have a charge given him: ***and Moses and Joshua went and presented themselves in the tabernacle of the congregation;*** before the Lord. Aben Ezra says, Moses went from the camp of Israel where he was, to the camp of the Shechinah; the Jews pretend to know in what form they walked thither. Moses, they say, went on the left hand of Joshua; and they went to the tabernacle, and the pillar of cloud descended and separated between them.

**DEUT. 31:15. *And the Lord appeared in the tabernacle in a pillar of cloud,*** As he was wont to do, (see Exodus 33:9); in which cloud there was a lustre, a brightness, a glory visible, which showed that he was there: ***and the pillar of the cloud stood over the door of the tabernacle;*** it seems to have appeared first in the tabernacle, and then it came out of it, and stood over the door of it, near to which Moses and Joshua were: the Targum of Jonathan adds, “Moses and Joshua stood without;” though the

former clause, according to Noldius, should be "over the tabernacle", or above where the cloud was wont to be.

**DEUT. 31:16.** *And the Lord said unto Moses,* Out of the pillar of cloud: *behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers*; a phrase expressive of death, frequently used both of good and bad men, which serves to render death easy and familiar, and less formidable; and to assure and lead into an expectation of an awaking out of it, or a resurrection from it: *and this people will rise up*; in their posterity; for not till after Joshua's death, and the death of the elders of Israel, did they revolt to idolatry, (Joshua 24:31); 408 *and go a whoring after the gods of the strangers of the land, whither they go [to be] amongst them*; that is, after the gods of the Canaanites, who though at this time the inhabitants of the land, yet when the children of Israel became possessors of it, they were the strangers of it; and being suffered to continue contrary to the directions God had given to destroy them, would be a means of drawing them into the worship of their idols, expressed here by going a whoring after them, or committing whoredom with them. Idolatry in Scripture is frequently signified by fornication and adultery; and, as foretold, this was the case; (see Psalm 106:35-39); *and will forsake me*: their husband, departing from his worship and service: *and break my covenant which I have made with them at Sinai*; and now again in the plains of Moab, and which had the nature of a matrimonial contract; (see Jeremiah 31:32).

**DEUT. 31:17.** *Then my anger shall be kindled against them in that day*, As the anger of a man is against his wife who has treacherously departed from him: and jealousy, which is the rage of such a man, is very cruel; and much more the wrath and anger of a jealous God, who is a consuming fire: *and I will forsake them*; withdraw his favours from them, and his protection of them: *and I will hide my face from them*; take no notice of them in a providential way for good, nor hear their cries, to deliver them from evil: *and they shall be devoured*; by their enemies, or by the sore judgments of God, by famine, sword, pestilence,

and evil beasts, they and their substance: *and many evils and troubles shall befall them*; both in their own land, and in other countries, where they would be, and have been carried captive: *so that they will say in that day, are not these evils come upon us, because our God [is] not amongst us?* of which they would be sensible by their being exposed to their enemies for want of his protection, and by the evils upon them through his displeasure, and by their being deprived of the good things that came from him; but no intimation is given of their being sensible of their sins as the cause of all this.

**DEUT. 31:18.** *I will surely hide my face in that day*, Which is repeated for the certainty of it, and that it might be taken notice of; that he was the 409 spring and source of all their good things, their sun and their shield, who being withdrawn from them, they would be deprived of every thing that was good, and be liable to all evil; and this he would do, *for all the evils which they shall have wrought*; for all the immoralities they should be guilty of, every transgression of his law, whether of the first or second table, and especially idolatry: *in that they are turned unto other gods*; to the worship and service of them, which of all evils would be the most provoking to God; and the way of speaking suggests as if all evils were included in idolatry, and sprang from it, or were committed with it.

**DEUT. 31:19.** *Now, therefore, write ye this song for you*, Which was now dictated by the Lord, and given to Moses and Joshua to write, which is recorded in (Deuteronomy 32:1-43): *and teach it the children of Israel*; teach them by it, instructing them in the meaning of it: thus it was usual in ancient times to write things in verses, that they might be the more pleasingly attended to and regarded, and be longer retained in memory; and especially this practice was used with children, and still is: *put it in their mouths*; oblige them to get it by heart, or lay it up in their memories, and repeat it frequently, that it may be familiar to them, and not be forgotten by them: *that this song may be a witness for me against the children*

*of Israel*; when in times to come they shall call to mind how in this song they were cautioned against such and such sins, and what they were threatened with should befall them on account of them, and how all things have come to pass exactly as foretold in it; which would be a testimony for God of his goodness to them, of his tender care of them, and concern for them, in the previous cautions he gave them; and of his foreknowledge of future events; and a testimony against them for their ingratitude and other sins.

**DEUT. 31:20.** *For when I shall have brought them into the land which I swear unto their fathers*, To give it to them, and put them into the possession of it, even the land of Canaan, often thus described, and as it is by the following character: 410 *that floweth with milk and honey*; aboundeth with all good things; (see Exodus 3:8); *and they shall have eaten and filled themselves, and waxen fat*; that is, after they have for a considerable time enjoyed the good things of the land, and they abound with them, and increase in them, and have great fullness of them: *then will they turn unto other gods*: turn from the Lord who has brought them into all this plenty, from the fear, worship, and service of him, and turn to the worship of idols: *and serve them*: the works of men's hands, and at most but creatures, and not the Creator; than which nothing can be more absurd and stupid, as well as wicked and ungrateful: *and provoke me*: nothing being more provoking to the Lord than idolatry, it striking at his very nature, being, and glory: *and break my covenant*; now made with them; this being foretold by the Lord, which exactly came to pass in numerous instances, proves his precise foreknowledge of future events, even such as depend on the inclinations, dispositions, and wills of men.

**DEUT. 31:21.** *And it shall come to pass, when many evils and troubles are befallen them*, As did in the times of the judges, in the Babylonish captivity, and do now in their present exile: *that this song shall testify against them as a witness*; which so clearly points at their sins, with all their aggravated

circumstances, and describes so fully their calamities, distresses, and punishment for them: *for it shall not be forgotten out of the mouths of their seed*; which shows that it respects time to come, their later posterity, whose memory of this song would be conjured up by the evils that should come upon them for their sins; nor is it forgotten by them to this day, who acknowledge there are some things in it now fulfilled or fulfilling in them: *for I know their imagination which they go about even now*: or are "making"; forming and framing within themselves, there being a secret inclination in their minds to idolatry, which were working and contriving schemes to bring it about, and set it up; and this, God, the searcher of 411 hearts, knew full well, and that in process of time this evil imagination would break forth into act, in an open and flagrant manner: *before I have brought thee into the land which I swear*; to their fathers, to give it to them for an inheritance, as is suggested in (Deuteronomy 31:20).

**DEUT. 31:22.** *Moses therefore wrote this song the same day*, The same day it was dictated to him by divine inspiration; he wrote it, as Josephus says, "in hexameter verse, which he left in the holy Bible or book (the Pentateuch), containing (as he adds) a prophecy of things future, according to which all things have been done, and are done; and in nothing of it has he erred from the truth;" which is a very just account of it, and worthy of observation: *and taught it the children of Israel*; instructed them in the meaning of it, directed them to repeat it frequently, to lay it up in their memories, and often meditate upon it; as being a divine composition, and of great importance, as the consideration of it will make appear.

**DEUT. 31:23.** *And he gave Joshua the son of Nun a charge*, It may be a question who gave this charge, the Lord or Moses; according to the connection of the words with the preceding, it seems to be the latter; for the immediate antecedent to the relative he is Moses, and so the Septuagint interpreters understand it; but then they are obliged to read some following clauses different from the original, as, instead of

"I swear", they read "the Lord sware"; and the last clause they read, "and he shall be with thee"; but Aben Ezra gives the same sense without departing from the common and genuine reading, supposing that Moses gave the charge in the name and by the authority of the Lord; his words are, "he gave charge by the commandment of the Lord, therefore he saith, "which I sware unto them";" but it seems best to understand this of the Lord himself, since he ordered Moses and Joshua to present themselves before him, that he might give the latter a charge, (Deuteronomy 31:14); and the language of the following clauses best agrees with him: 412 **and said, be strong and of a good courage**; (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 31:6-7"); **for thou shalt bring the children of Israel into the land which I sware unto them**; (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 31:7"); **and I will be with thee**; (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 31:8"); the Targum of Jonathan is, "my Word shall be thy help."

**DEUT. 31:24. And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book**, In this book of Deuteronomy, and which concluded the Pentateuch: **until they were finished**; all the words of the law, and the whole five books of Moses, excepting some few verses, (Deuteronomy 34:1-12), which were added by another hand, Joshua or Ezra.

**DEUT. 31:25. That Moses commanded the Levites**, These were not the common Levites, but the priests who were also Levites, to whom the law was given, (Deuteronomy 31:9); and none but they might touch the ark, or go so near it as, they are bid to do, to put the law on the side of it; so Aben Ezra; it follows, **which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord**; as the priests are said to do, (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 31:9"); for though in journeying the Kohathites carried it, yet not until it was covered by the priests, for they must not touch it; as these must do when they put the law on the side of it, as they are ordered in (Deuteronomy 31:26). **saying**; as follows.

**DEUT. 31:26. Take this book of the law**, Not Deuteronomy only, but the whole Pentateuch:

**and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God**; not in the ark, for there were nothing there but the two tables of stone with the ten commands on them, (1 Kings 8:9); but on one side of it; the Targum of Jonathan says, it was "put in a chest (or box) on the right side of the ark of the covenant;" 413 which is very probable. Jarchi observes, that the wise men of Israel are divided about it in the Talmud ; some of them say there was a table (or ledge) that stood out from the ark without, and there it was put; others say it was put on the side of the tables of the law within the ark; the former are in the right: **that it may be therefore a witness against thee**; when they fall into idolatry or any other sin, a transgression of any of the laws therein contained.

**DEUT. 31:27. For I know thy rebellion and thy stiff neck**, How rebellious they were against the Lord and his laws, and how unwilling they were to admit the yoke of his commandments to be put upon them, and submit to it; this he had an experience of for forty years past: **behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious against the Lord**; murmuring at his providences, (Exodus 16:8,12 17:3), speaking against his ministers, (Exodus 16:2 Numbers 12:1) (Numbers 14:2 16:3,41 20:2); breaking his laws, particularly being guilty of idolatry, in making and worshipping the golden calf, (Exodus 32:8); and even now, as in (Deuteronomy 31:21), were imagining, forming, and framing in their minds something of the same kind, from the time of their coming out of Egypt unto this time they were now on the borders of Canaan; this had all along been their character; (see Deuteronomy 9:7,24); **and how much more after my death?** When he would be no more with them to instruct and advise them, to caution and reprove them, and to keep them in awe by his authority.

**DEUT. 31:28. Gather unto me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers**, The heads of the tribes, the princes, and all other inferior magistrates: **that I may speak these words in their ears**; not the words of the law, but of the song which he was ordered to write, and is

recorded in the following chapter: **and call heaven and earth to record against them**; to bear witness of what he delivered to them, and to bear witness against them should they transgress the laws he gave them; and to bear witness that they had been faithfully cautioned against transgressing, and had been severely threatened, and the punishment plainly pointed out that should be inflicted 414 on them in case of disobedience, so that they were left entirely without excuse.

**DEUT. 31:29. For I know that after my death**, Which was just at hand, some time after that, not immediately; this he knew by a spirit of prophecy, namely, what follows: **ye will utterly corrupt [yourselves]**; their ways, works, and manners, and so themselves; corrupt the worship of God by making idols, and serving them, which is the corruption chiefly intended: **and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you**: from the way of the commandments of God, which Moses had given them in his name, and in which they were directed to walk; but, as here foretold, would wander and swerve from them as they did: **and evil will befall you in the latter days**; not only in the times of the judges, and in the time of the Babylonish captivity, but in their present captivity, as they call it; which shows that the following song has things in it which respect times at a great distance, and even the present ones, and yet to come: **because ye will do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger through the work of your hands**; their idols, idolatry being the evil chiefly designed, which is of all things the most provoking of the Lord.

**DEUT. 31:30. And Moses spake in the ears of all the congregation of Israel**, Not in the hearing of the whole body of the people, and every individual thereof; no man could be able to speak to such a numerous congregation, as that they should hear him; but in the hearing of their heads and representatives, the elders of their tribes and officers, ordered to be gathered together for this purpose, (Deuteronomy 31:28); **the words of this song, until they were**

**ended**; which song is recorded in the following chapter, (Deuteronomy 32:1-43). 415

### Deuteronomy 32

This chapter contains the song mentioned and referred to in the former, the preface to it, (Deuteronomy 32:1-3); the character of the divine and illustrious Person it chiefly respects, (Deuteronomy 32:4); the ingratitude of the people of the Jews to him, who were a crooked and perverse generation, aggravated by his having bought, made, and established them, (Deuteronomy 32:5,6); and which is further aggravated by various instances of divine goodness to them, first in providing and reserving a suitable country for them, at the time of the division of the earth to the sons of men, with the reason of it, (Deuteronomy 32:7-9); then by what the Lord did for them in the wilderness, (Deuteronomy 32:10-12); after that in the land of Canaan, where they enjoyed plenty of all good things, and in the possession of which they were, when the illustrious Person described appeared among them, (Deuteronomy 32:13,14); and then the sin of ingratitude to him, before hinted at, is fully expressed, namely, lightly esteeming the rock of salvation, the Messiah, (Deuteronomy 32:15); nor could they stop here, but proceed to more ungodliness, setting up other messiahs and saviours, which were an abomination to the Lord, (Deuteronomy 32:16); continuing sacrifices when they should not, which were therefore reckoned no other than sacrifices to demons, and especially the setting up of their new idol, their own righteousness, was highly provoking; and by all this they clearly showed they had forgot the rock, the Saviour, (Deuteronomy 32:17,18); wherefore, for the rejection of the Messiah and the, persecution of his followers, they would be abhorred of God, (Deuteronomy 32:19); who would show his resentment by the rejection of them, by the calling of the Gentiles, and by bringing the nation of the Romans upon them, (Deuteronomy 32:20,21); whereby utter ruin and destruction in all its shapes would be brought upon them, (Deuteronomy 32:22-25);

and, were it not for the insolence of their adversaries, would be entirely destroyed, being such a foolish and unwise people, which appears by not observing what the enemies of the Messiah themselves allow, that there is no rock like him, whom they despised, 416 (Deuteronomy 32:26-31); which enemies are described, and the vengeance reserved for them pointed out, (Deuteronomy 32:32-35); and the song closed with promises of grace and mercy to the Lord's people, and wrath and ruin to his and their enemies, on which account all are called upon to rejoice in the latter day, (Deuteronomy 32:36-43); and this song being delivered by Moses, the people of Israel are exhorted seriously to attend to it, it being of the utmost importance to them, (Deuteronomy 32:44-47); and the chapter is concluded with a relation of Moses being ordered to go up to Mount Nebo and die, with the reason of it, (Deuteronomy 32:48-52).

**DEUT. 32:1. *Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.***] This song is prefaced and introduced in a very grand and pompous manner, calling on the heavens and earth to give attention; by which they themselves may be meant, by a "prosopopaeia", a figure frequently used in Scripture, when things of great moment and importance are spoken of; and these are called upon to hearken, either to rebuke the stupidity and inattention of men, or to show that these would shed or withhold their influences, their good things, according to the obedience or disobedience of Israel; or because these are durable and lasting, and so would ever be witnesses for God and against his people: Gaon, as Aben Ezra observes, by the heavens understands the angels, and by the earth the men of the earth, the inhabitants of both worlds, which is not amiss: and by these words of Moses are meant the words of the song, referred to in (Deuteronomy 31:29); here called his words, not because they were of him, but because they were put into his mouth, and about to be expressed by him, not in his own name, but in the name of the Lord; and not as the words of the law, which came by him, but as

the words and doctrines of the Gospel concerning Christ, of whom Moses here writes; whose character he gives, and whose person and office he vindicates against the Jews, whom he accuses and brings a charge of ingratitude against for rejecting him, to which our Lord seems to refer, (John 5:45,46); the prophecies of their rejection, the calling of the Gentiles, the destruction of the Jews by the Romans, and the miseries they should undergo, and yet should not be wholly extirpated out of the world, but continue a people, who in the latter days would be converted, return to their own land, and their enemies be destroyed; which are some of the principal things in this song, and which make it worthy of attention and observation.

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**DEUT. 32:2. *My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew,*** Which some, as Aben Ezra, take to be a prayer or wish, that the doctrine spoken by him might fall upon men like rain and dew on the earth, penetrate into their hearts, and influence them, and produce good effects there; but the words rather seem to be a prophecy of what would be: and by his "doctrine" and "speech", which signify the same thing, is meant, not his law, which was fiery, this cooling, like rain and dew; that was like a storm, this as a gentle rain; that was terrible, this desirable; that was distressing, this refreshing, this no other than the Gospel, the speech of God, the doctrine of Christ, the doctrine of grace, and mercy through him, and of life and salvation by him: it has its name from a word, which signifies to "receive"; for it was received from God by Moses, and by the prophets after him, by Christ himself, as Mediator, and by the apostles from him, and is worthy of the acceptation of all: this is comparable to "rain", because, like that, it comes from heaven, is the gift of God, tarries not for man, but comes without any desert of man, and often without his desire; falls by divine direction in places and on persons, as the Lord's will and pleasure is, and that in great plenty, with a fulness of spiritual blessings, and precious promises; and for its effects, it cools the conscience, filled with fiery wrath and

indignation, moistens and softens the hard heart, like the dry and parched earth, refreshes and revives the drooping spirit, and makes barren souls fruitful in grace and good works: and it is like “dew”, which also is from heaven, and of God, fell in the night of the world; and as that falls in a temperate air, so this, when the stormy dispensation of the law was over; and though but a small thing in the eyes of the world, is of great influence, the power of God unto salvation, very grateful and delightful, and of great moment and importance; hereby the love and favour of God is diffused, the blessings of grace dispensed, the heavenly manna communicated, and the Spirit and his graces received: and this, like rain and dew, “drops” and “distils” silently, not in a noisy manner as the law; insensibly, falling on persons at an unawares, in great abundance, like the drops of rain and dew; and effectually, working in all that believe: dew was a symbol of doctrine with the Egyptians : this is further illustrated: **as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass**: the first of those words for “rain”, according to Jarchi, has the signification of a stormy wind, but that seems to contradict the gentle dropping and distilling of it; rather it signifies “hairs”, and denotes, as our version, the smallness of the rain, being as small, thin, and light as hairs; and the latter word has the signification of millions and thousands, there being such vast numbers as those in a shower of rain: the “tender herb” and “grass” may denote the multitude of persons to whom the Gospel would come, and be made useful; and may describe sensible sinners, tender consciences, such as are weak in themselves, with whom it is the day of small things, are newborn babes, little children; who are just springing up in grace, as among the grass, and as willows by the water courses: now all this is said by Moses, to recommend his doctrine, as well as what follows.

**DEUT. 32:3. *Because I will publish the name of the Lord***, Not call on his name, as some, nor call to the heaven and earth in his name, as others, but proclaim his name, even the same that was proclaimed before Moses, (Exodus

34:6,7); and this is to be understood, not of Jehovah the Father, nor of Jehovah the Spirit, but of Jehovah the Son, the rock whose work is perfect, and the rock of salvation, (Deuteronomy 32:4,15); and not of any particular name of his, unless any of those mentioned can be thought to be intended; rather his perfections and attributes, or his Gospel, called his name, (Acts 9:15); though his name may signify no other than himself, who is the sum and substance of the Gospel, and who, in his person, office, grace, and salvation, is to be published and proclaimed, openly and publicly, constantly and faithfully, and his name only; for there is no other under heaven whereby man can be saved: **ascribe ye greatness unto our God**; to Christ, the rock of salvation, who is truly God, our God, God in our nature, God manifest in the flesh, and who is the great God, and our Saviour, and therefore greatness is to be ascribed to him: he is great in his person and perfections; his works are great, those of creation and providence, and particularly of redemption and salvation; he is great in his offices, a great Saviour, a great High priest, a great Prophet, a great King, and the great Shepherd of the sheep: those that are called upon to give greatness to him, which is his due, are the heavens and the earth, (Deuteronomy 32:1); and both have, literally and figuratively considered, bore a testimony to his greatness; the heavens, at his birth a wonderful star appeared, directing the wise men to him; at his death the sun was darkened; at his ascension the heavens were opened and received him, and still retain him; even God in heaven, by a voice from thence, bore witness of him as his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased; also by raising him from the dead, declaring him to be the Son of God with power, and by exalting him at his right hand as a Saviour, and by the effusion of the Spirit on his apostles, to preach and spread his Gospel; the angels in heaven ascribed greatness to him, by their worship of him when he came into the world, by the declaration they made of him at his incarnation, and by the testimony they bore to his resurrection, and by their subjection to

him in all things: the church below, sometimes called heaven, in the book of the Revelation, ascribe all honour, glory, and greatness to him: the earth, the whole terraqueous globe, in it have been displayed the greatness of Christ, the power and glory of his divinity; in the sea by becoming a calm at his word of command, in the rocks by being rent at his death, and will be in both by delivering up the dead in them, at the last day: the inhabitants of the earth, especially the redeemed from among men, ascribe greatness to him, by attributing daily to him all the perfections of the Godhead, and the glory of their salvation: Aben Ezra says, Moses refers to the heavens and the earth, or respects them, and compares with this (Psalm 19:1).

**DEUT. 32:4. [*He is*] the rock,** That is, Jehovah is the rock, whose name Moses proposed to publish; and our God, to whom the heavens and the earth are called upon to ascribe greatness, even Christ the rock of salvation: here begins the song; the first word in it is very emphatic; it has a letter in it larger than usual, to denote the greatness of this Person, and to make it observable; he is "this" or "that rock", by way of eminence, that rock and stone of Israel, Jacob prophesied of, which was typified by the rock Moses had smitten in the wilderness, and which, no doubt, he knew, as the Apostle Paul did, that it was a type of Christ, and had taught the Israelites so to understand it; and therefore this epithet of a divine Person would not seem strange to them, and yet is that rock the unbelieving Jews would and did stumble at, and the rock of salvation they lightly esteemed and rejected; the rock of refuge for sensible sinners to flee unto for shelter and safety from the wrath and justice of God, and from every enemy; the rock the church of God and every believer are built upon, and in which they dwell; and who is the rock of ages that will endure forever, as the Saviour of his people, and the foundation of their faith and hope: ***his work [is] perfect;*** not so much the work of creation or of providence, which are both the works of Christ, but that of redemption and salvation, in which there is not only a display of all the divine perfections, but is complete in all

its parts; the law is perfectly fulfilled, justice is fully satisfied, a perfect righteousness is wrought out, a complete pardon is procured, perfect peace is made, full atonement of sins obtained, and the whole work is finished; and is so perfect that nothing is wanting in it, or 420 can be added to it, nor can it be unravelled or undone again: likewise the work of building the church on this rock is carrying on, and will be perfected when all the elect of God, all given to Christ and redeemed by his blood, shall be called by grace and gathered in; when the last of the chosen ones, and redeemed of the Lamb, is brought in and laid in the building; when Christ shall deliver up the kingdom to the Father complete, and God shall be all in all, and his church and people will be in a perfect state to all eternity: ***for all his ways [are] judgment;*** his ways, which he himself has taken and walked in; his ways of providence are according to the best judgment and highest wisdom, and according to the strictest justice and equity; his ways of grace towards the salvation of his people, and the building up his church on himself, the rock; all the methods he took in eternity and time were all formed according to the counsel of God, and planned with the greatest wisdom, founded in his righteous nature, and according to covenant compact with his Father, and entered into in the most honourable manner; and in which he brought about the salvation of his people, in perfect consistence with the justice and holiness of God, and to the honour of them and his holy law: and he has executed all his offices of prophet, priest, and King, in the most just and righteous manner: the ways which he has prescribed his people to walk in, and in which he leads them, are ways of truth, righteousness, and holiness; such are all his ordinances and commandments: ***a God of truth;*** so Christ is called, (see Gill on "Isaiah 65:16"); or the true God, which also is his name, (1 John 5:20); and is so called in opposition to fictitious deities, and such who are only so by name or office, but not by nature; whereas he is truly and properly God, as appears from his names and nature, from his perfections, works, and worship,



ascribed to him: or “God the truth”, for he is “the truth”, (John 14:6); the truth of all types, promises, and prophecies, which all have their accomplishment in him; the sum and substance of all truths and doctrines, from whom they all come, and in whom they all centre: or “the God of faith” or “faithfulness”; the object of faith, and the author and finisher of it; and who is faithful, as the God-man and Mediator, to him that appointed him, being intrusted with all the elect of God, with all promises and blessings of grace for them, with the fulness of grace to communicate unto them, with the glory of God in their salvation, and with their future and final happiness; and is faithful in the discharge of his offices of prophet, priest, and King: **and without iniquity**; in his nature, in his heart, in his lips, and in his life; nor was ever any committed by him: **just and right [is] he**; just, both as a divine Person, and as man and Mediator; a lover and doer of righteousness, a worker out of righteousness for his people, and the justifier of them by it; just and righteous, as the, servant of God, as King of saints, and Judge of the whole world; “right” or “upright”, which is the character of a divine Person, agrees with Christ, and may denote his sincerity, uprightness, and faithfulness.

**DEUT. 32:5. They have corrupted themselves**, This and what follows may seem to be the characters of the enemies of Christ, who lightly esteemed and rejected him, set in a contrast with him; who were not only corrupt by nature, as all men are, but were men of corrupt minds in their tenets and principles; who corrupted the word of God by their traditions, in the times of Christ; and were men of corrupt practices themselves, and corrupters of others: **their spot [is] not [the spot] of his children**; of the children of the divine Person before described; Christ the rock has “children” given him by his Father, in whose adoption he has a concern, and by whose Spirit they are regenerated: these have their “spots”; by which are meant sins, and by those men are stained and polluted; so called in allusion to the spots of animals, as leopards; or to spots in faces and garments, through dirt and the like: by nature they are as

others, and while in an unregenerate estate, and indeed after conversion; though they are washed from their sins by the blood of Christ, and are justified by his righteousness, and so without spot, yet in themselves they are not without spots or sins, as their confessions and complaints, and all experience testify: but the spots or sins of wicked men are not like theirs; the children of Christ sin through infirmity of the flesh, and the force of temptation, but wicked men through the malignity of their hearts, willingly and purposely; what good men do of this kind they hate, but what Christless and graceless sinners do they love; saints do not continue in sin, but ungodly men do, and proceed to more ungodliness, and wax worse and worse; gracious souls when they sin, are sorry for it, repent of it, are melted for it, and take shame to themselves on account of it; but unconverted men repent not of their wickedness, are hardened in it, and glory of it; see the character of the Jews in Christ’s time, to which this song 422 refers, (John 8:44); though these clauses may be rendered to another sense, more agreeably to the context, and to the Hebrew accents, as they are by some; “is there any corruption in him? no”, that is, is there any corruption in the illustrious Person before described, as without iniquity, just, and right? no, none at all in his nature, divine or human; not in his divine nature, being the incorruptible God; nor in his human nature, which is entirely free from that corruption by sin, common to all that descend from Adam by natural generation, he being conceived under the power of the Holy Ghost; nor any in his life and conversation, being perfectly agreeable to the pure and holy law of God; nor any in his doctrines, however they may be charged by ignorant and malicious men, a proof of which follows: or “his children are their spot”; so the clause may be rendered; the spots of the Jewish nation, the most wicked and vilest among them, became his children; not only the lowest and meanest of them, as to civil and worldly things, but the more ignorant and the more wicked, even publicans and harlots; these, and not the righteous, he came to call and save, and did receive; these were

regenerated by his grace, and they believed in him; and to them gave he power to become his children: but then did they remain the wicked persons they had been? no, they were made new creatures, they were internally sanctified, and lived holy lives and conversations; a clear proof this, that there was no corruption in Christ, nor in his doctrine, and that he neither by his tenets nor example encouraged sin, but all the reverse; Wisdom is justified of her children, (Matthew 11:19); but then the rest, and the far greater part of the Jewish nation, in his time, have their character truly drawn, as follows: **[they are] a perverse and crooked generation;** men of perverse and crooked natures, tempers, dispositions, ways, and works; who walked contrary to the will and law of God, and were indeed contrary to all men, (1 Thessalonians 2:15,16); this is the very character that is given of them, (Matthew 17:17 Acts 2:40).

**DEUT. 32:6. Do you thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise,** This is also a proper character of the Jews in the times of Christ, who are often by him called "fools", (Matthew 23:17,19); being very ignorant of the Scriptures, and of the prophecies in them respecting him, setting up their own traditions on a level with the word of God, or above it; they were ignorant of the law of God, and the meaning of it; of the righteousness of God, of the righteousness of his nature, and of what the law required, as well as of the righteousness of Christ, and of him as a spiritual Redeemer, 423 and of salvation by him; and a most egregious instance of their folly, and of want of wisdom, was their ingratitude to him, in disesteeming and rejecting him; which is what is here referred to and meant by ill-requiting him, though not expressed till (Deuteronomy 32:15); and a most sad requital of him it was indeed, that he should come to them, his own, in so kind and gracious a manner, and yet be rejected by them; that he should become man, and yet for that reason be charged with blasphemy, for making himself God; horrid ingratitude, to infer the one from the other! and because he appeared as a servant, disowned him as the Son

of God; and because he came in the likeness of sinful flesh to take away sin, they traduced him as a sinner: **[is] not he thy Father, [that] hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee?** Moses, in order to aggravate this their ingratitude, rehearses the various instances of divine goodness to them, from the beginning of them as nation; it was the Lord that was the founder of them as a nation, whose Son, when sent unto them, was rejected by them; it was he that bought them, or redeemed them from Egyptian bondage, that made or formed them into a body politic, or civil commonwealth, that established and settled them in the land of Canaan: this is expressed in general terms; particular instances of the goodness of God to them are after enumerated: or if this is to be understood of Christ himself, who was rejected by them, it is true of some among them, in a spiritual and evangelic sense, and so, by a figure, the whole is put for a part, as sometimes the part is for the whole: Christ, the everlasting Father of the world to come, had many children in the Jewish nation, for whose sake he became incarnate, and whom he came to seek and to save; and whom he "bought" with his precious blood, and whom, by his Spirit and grace, he "made" new creatures, the children of God, kings and priests unto God; and "established" them in the faith of him, and upon him, the sure foundation; or whom he fashioned, beautified, and adorned with his righteousness, and with the graces of his Spirit.

**DEUT. 32:7. Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations,** That went before the times of Christ, and the Jews' rejection of him, and observe the instances of divine goodness to them; as in the time of the Maccabees, whom God raised up as deliverers of them, when oppressed by the Syrians and others; and in the time of the Babylonish captivity, how they were delivered out of it; in the times of David and Solomon, when they enjoyed great prosperity; and in the times of the judges, by whom they were often saved out of the hands of their 424 enemies; and in the times of Moses and Joshua, how they were led, by the one out of Egypt and through the

wilderness, and by the other into the land of Canaan; and thus might they be led on higher, to the provision and reservation of the good land for them in the times of Noah and his sons, which they are referred to in (Deuteronomy 32:8): and in all these times, days, years, and generations, they might consider what notices were given of the Messiah, the rock of salvation, rejected by them; not only by the prophets since the captivity of Babylon and in it; but before it by Isaiah and others, and before them by David, and Solomon his son, by Moses and by all the prophets, from the beginning of the world; all which would serve to aggravate their sin in refusing him: Jarchi's note on the passage is, "'remember" — "consider" -- to know what is to come; for it is in his hand (or power) to do you good, and cause you to inherit the days of the Messiah, and the world to come:" **ask thy father, and he will show thee**; either their immediate parents, father for fathers, or such as were their seniors, or rather Abraham, their father, is meant; whom they might inquire of, not by personal application to him, but by consulting the writings of Moses, and observe what is there related of him; how he was called out of Chaldea to go into the land of Canaan, his seed was after to inherit; and how he had an express grant of that land to his posterity, and where they might be shown and see the prophecy delivered to him of their being in Egypt, and coming out from thence; and what he knew of the Messiah, whose day he saw, and rejoiced at, now rejected by them his offspring: **thy elders, and they will tell thee**; not their present elders who rejected the Messiah, but those in ages past; the elders of Israel, who saw the glory of the God of Israel, and were present at the covenant made at Horeb, (Exodus 24:9,10); or rather the sons of Noah, by whom the earth was divided, to which (Deuteronomy 32:8) refers; or the ancient writers, the writers of the Scriptures: Jarchi, by "father", understands the prophets, and by "elders", the wise men: the Targum of Jonathan is, "read in the books of the law and they will teach you, and in the books of the prophets and they will tell you."

**DEUT. 32:8. When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance**, In the times of Noah and his sons, in the days of Peleg, who had his name (that is "Division") from thence, (Genesis 10:25); "the Most High" is a 425 well known and proper, epithet of God; the dividing of the earth to the several nations of it, and giving to everyone their part and portion to possess and inherit, was the work of God; for though it was done by the sons of Noah, yet by the order, appointment, and direction of the Most High, who rules in heaven and in earth, (Genesis 10:32); men might not and did not take what they pleased, or seize on as much as they could, but each had their parcel allotted and portioned out to them, by the Lord himself; so the Targum of Jonathan. "when by lot the Most High divided the world to the people that sprung from the sons of Noah:" **when he separated the sons of Adam**; one from another; distinguished by the persons from whom they descended, by the tribes and nations to which they belonged, and by the countries they inhabited; for though they descended from Noah and his sons, they were the sons of Adam, the first man: or rather "the children of men", as the wicked of that generation were called, in distinction from the sons of God, or his people and worshippers; and may have respect to the separation of them at Babel, where their languages were confounded, and they were scattered about, and some went into one part of the world, and some into another, according to the appointment and direction of divine Providence; so the builders of Babel are called, and this was what befell them, (Genesis 11:5,8,9); which sense the above Targum confirms, "when he separated the writings, the languages of the children of men in the generation of the division:" **he set the bounds of the people**; or nations, the seven nations of the land of Canaan; he pitched upon and fixed the land they should inherit, and settled the bounds of it, how far it should reach, east, west, north and south: **according to the number of the children of Israel**: the sense is, that such a country was measured out and bounded, as would be sufficient to hold the

twelve tribes of Israel, when numerous, and their time was come to inhabit it; and which, in the mean while was put into the hands of Canaan and his eleven sons to possess; not as their proper inheritance, but as tenants at will, until the proper heirs existed, and were at an age, and of a sufficient number to inherit; in which may be observed the wise disposition of divine Providence, to put it into the hands of a people cursed of God, so that to take it from them at any time could not have the appearance of any injustice in it; and their enjoying it so long as they did was a mercy to them, for so long they had a reprieve: now here was an early instance of the goodness of God to Israel, that he should make such an early provision of the land flowing with milk and honey for them, even before they were in being, yea, before their ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, existed; as early as the days of Noah; and yet, ungrateful as they were despised and set at nought his Son, the rock of salvation, when sent unto them: thus the heavenly inheritance, typified by the land of Canaan, was not only promised, but prepared, provided, secured, and reserved for the spiritual Israel of God, before the foundation of the world, from all eternity, and which is appointed according to their number; there is room enough in it for them all, though they are many; in it are many mansions for the many sons to be brought to glory.

**DEUT. 32:9. *For the Lord's portion [is] his people, Jacob [is] the lot of his inheritance.***]

This is the reason why the Lord so early provided a portion or inheritance for the children of Israel in the land of Canaan; because they were his part, his portion, his inheritance, which he chose by lot for himself, or allotted to himself; whom he chose to be his special and peculiar people; for though all the world is his, he only reserved a part for himself, which he separated from all the rest, and considers as his portion and inheritance, (see Psalm 33:12); thus the spiritual Israel of God, as they are his people, whom he has chosen, taken into covenant, given to Christ, and are redeemed and saved by him; they are his part or portion, separated by distinguishing grace from the rest

of the world; and are the inheritance of Christ, who is appointed heir of all things, and is an unalienable inheritance; and is obtained by lot, or rather is measured out by a rod or line; by the line of electing grace, by which the church and people of God are circumscribed, marked out, and distinguished from others; and by the line and rule of the sacred Scriptures, which are the measure and standard of faith and practice, of worship and discipline to them.

**DEUT. 32:10. *He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness,*** In

(Deuteronomy 32:10-12) instances are given of the goodness of God to the people of Israel, when in the wilderness; by which is meant, either "the wilderness of the land of Egypt", as it is called, (Ezekiel 20:36); where they were in a most miserable and forlorn condition, in which the Lord found them, and out of which he brought them; or rather the desert of Arabia, a waste place, where no provisions could be had; a howling wilderness, through the blowing of the winds, the cries of wild creatures, as dragons, owls, ostriches, and the like, as the Targum of Jonathan, Jarchi, and Aben Ezra, and the howling of passengers lost, or for want of provisions; here the Lord found them, and they were as acceptable to him as grapes to a traveller in a wilderness, (see Gill on "Hosea 9:10"): this is an emblem of the world, in which the spiritual Israel are, when called by grace out of it; or of an unregenerate state, in which they are found, and out of which they are brought: the phrase sometimes signifies sufficing, or finding with everything sufficient; (see Numbers 11:22); so Onkelos renders it here; which is true of the Lord's dealing with this people; he supplied them with manna, the corn of heaven, angels' food, and with water out of the rock, and flesh to eat in fulness, yea, with raiment as well as food; with everything convenient for them: so the Lord does for his spiritual Israel, feeding them with his word and ordinances, clothing them with the righteousness of his Son, giving them fresh supplies of grace, and withholding no good thing from them; so that they have enough, having all things richly to enjoy: ***he led him***

**about**; when he brought the people of Israel out of Egypt, he did not lead them the nearest way to the land of Canaan, through the the land of the Philistines, but he led them about the way of the wilderness of the Red sea; and when they were come to the borders of the land, because of their murmurings, and disobedience, they were ordered back into the wilderness again; nor were they suffered to go through the land of Edom when on the confines of it, which would have been a shorter way; but they were obliged to go round that land, which was very discouraging to them, (see Exodus 13:17,18 Numbers 14:25 21:4); and thus the Lord, though he could if he would, bring his people at once to heaven; he could sanctify them at once, as well as justify them; he could take them the moment he regenerates them into his kingdom, as the thief on the cross; yet this is not his usual way: though he calls them out from among the men of the world, he continues them in it, having something for them to do or suffer for his name's sake; he indeed leads them soon into the right and plain way of salvation, and not in a roundabout way of duties; yet he leads them in many roundabout ways in Providence, which are all right, though sometimes rough; they seem at times to be near to heaven, and then they are turned into the world again; nay, the Apostle Paul was in heaven, and yet sent into the wilderness of the Gentiles again, for the good of souls and the interest of a Redeemer; however, they all at last come safe to heaven and happiness: the words may be rendered, "he surrounded" or 428 "compassed him about", and the rather, since leading them about seems to be by way of resentment or punishment, whereas Moses is enumerating instances of goodness and kindness, as this was one; he covered them with the clouds of glory, so the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem, Jarchi and Aben Ezra: he protected them with his power and providence, and preserved them from serpents and scorpions, and the wild beasts of the wilderness, as well as from all their enemies: and the Lord surrounds his spiritual Israel with angels, who encamp about them; with himself, who is a wall of fire round about

them; with his power, in which they are kept as in a garrison; and with his love, which encompasses them as a shield: **he instructed him**; he taught him the law, as the Targum of Jonathan; so Jarchi and Aben Ezra; or the decalogue, as the Jerusalem Targum; he instructed him in the knowledge of the true God and his worship; in the knowledge of the Messiah, and of his righteousness, and salvation by him; for he instructed him by his good Spirit, (Nehemiah 9:20); so the Lord instructs his spiritual Israel, by his Spirit, his ministers, his word and ordinances, in the knowledge of themselves, and of himself in Christ, and of Christ and the way of life by him; and this being joined with the Lord's leading about his people, may suggest that he instructs them by adverse dispensations of Providence: the word signifies causing to understand; and God only can teach and instruct in such sense as to give men an understanding of the things they are taught and instructed in: **he kept him as the apple of his eye**; in the most careful and tender manner: the apple of the eye is an aperture in it, which lets in rays of light into the "retina" or chamber where the images of things are formed; this is wonderfully guarded in nature, for, besides the orbit of the eye, which is strong and bony, and the eyelids, which in sleep are closed, to prevent anything falling into the eye to disturb it; and the eyebrows, which are fringed with hair to break off the rays of light, which sometimes would be too strong for it; besides all these, there are no less than six tunics or coats to keep and preserve it: and in like manner did the Lord keep and guard Israel, while passing through the wilderness, from fiery serpents, scorpions, and the nations, that none might hurt, as Jarchi; and especially thus he keeps his spiritual Israel, who are parts of himself, one with him, near and dear to him; and about whom he sets guard upon guard, employs all his perfections to secure them, and constantly watches over them night and day, and keeps them from all evil and every enemy, and preserves them safe to his kingdom and glory. 429

**DEUT. 32:11. *As an eagle stirreth up her nest,*** Her young ones in it, to get them out of it: Jarchi says the eagle is merciful to its young, and does not go into its nest suddenly, but first makes a noise, and disturbs them with her wings, striking them against a tree or its branches, that so they being awakened may be fitter to receive her: with respect to literal Israel, Egypt was their nest, where they were who were then in their infant state, lay like young birds in a nest; and though it was a filthy one and where they were confined, yet they seemed sometimes as if they did not care to come out of it; until the Lord made use of means to get them out, by the ministry of Moses and Aaron, by suffering their taskmasters to make their bondage heavier, and by judgments inflicted on the Egyptians, which made them urgent upon them to depart: with respect to spiritual Israel, their nest is a state of unregeneracy, in which they are at ease, and do not care to be awakened and stirred out of it; but the Lord, in love to them, awakens them, stirs them up, and gets them out, by sending his ministers to arouse them, by letting in the law into their consciences, which works a sense of wrath, by convincing them by his Spirit of their sin and danger, opening their eyes to see their wretched and miserable estate and condition, and by exerting his almighty power, plucking them as brands out of the burning: ***fluttereth over her young;*** by that means to get them out of the nest, and teach them to fly, as well as to preserve them from the attempts of any to take them away; for though some writers represent the eagle as hardhearted to its young, casting them out of the nest, when they are taken care of by the offifrage; yet this is to be understood of it when tired with nursing, and when its young are capable of taking care of themselves; or of some sort of eagles; for Aelianus testifies, that of all animals the eagle is most affectionate to its young, and most studiously careful of them; when it sees anyone coming to them, it will not suffer them to go away unpunished, but will beat them with its wings and tear them with its nails: Jarchi thinks this phrase is expressive of the manner of its incubation on its young; it does not, he says, lie

heavy upon them, but lifts up herself, and touches them as if she did not touch them; but it rather signifies the motion she makes with her wings to get her young, when fledged, out of the nest, and to teach them to make use of their wings, as she does; and we are told that young eagles, when their wings are weak, will fly about their dams and learn of them to fly; and hence it is that young eagles while they are eating flutter their wings, that motion being so natural to them, and seeing their dams do so likewise: this passage seems to contradict a notion that 430 has obtained with some, that an eagle only breeds one at a time; the philosopher says, the eagle lays three eggs and casts out two of them; according to the verse of Musaeus, it lays three, casts out two, and brings up one; and so, he says, it commonly is the case: but sometimes three young ones are seen together; and the black eagles are more kind to their young, and careful in the nourishment of them; and the same says Pliny; yea we are told, that sometimes seven are seen in a nest: ***spreadeth abroad her wings taketh them, beareth them on her wings;*** that is, spreads forth her wings when she flutters over her young to instruct them; or she does this in order to take up her young and carry them on them: it is said that eagles fly round their nest, and vary the flights for the instruction of their young; and afterwards taking them on their backs, they soar with them aloft, in order to try their strength, shaking them off into the air: and if they perceive them too weak to sustain themselves, they with surprising dexterity fly under them again, and receive them on their wings to prevent their fall; (see Gill on "Exodus 19:4"); thus the Lord, comparable to this creature for his affection to the people of Israel, his care of them, and his strength to bear and carry them, did bear them as on eagles' wings, and carried and saved them all the days of old; even Christ, the Angel of Jehovah's presence, the rock of salvation they rejected, (see Exodus 19:4) (Isaiah 63:9); and all this in a spiritual and evangelic sense may be expressive of the gracious dealings of God with his spiritual Israel; teaching and enabling them to mount up

with wings as eagles, to soar aloft in the exercise of faith, hope, and love, entering thereby within the veil into the holiest of all, and living in the constant and comfortable expectation of heaven and happiness; and of the Lord's taking his people up from the low estate in which they are, and raising them up to near communion with himself, bearing them on his heart, in his hands, and on his arm, supporting them under all their afflictions, and carrying them, through all their troubles and difficulties, safe to eternal glory and happiness.

**DEUT. 32:12.** *[So] the Lord alone did lead him*, Out of Egypt, through the wilderness, to the land of Canaan, going before them in a pillar of fire and cloud; though this is not to be understood to the exclusion of the ministry of Moses and Aaron, by whom he led them, (Psalm 77:20); it may be interpreted of the people being alone in the wilderness when led: 431 *and [there was] no strange god with him*; with Israel; so Aben Ezra, no idolatry among them then; to which sense are the Targums of Jerusalem and Jonathan; but it may rather signify that the Lord alone was the leader of his people, and he had no assistant in that work, and therefore all the glory should be given to him: he is the leader of his people, in a spiritual sense, out of a state of unregeneracy, which is a state of darkness and bondage; out of the ways of sin, and from the pastures of their own righteousness, into an open state of grace, which is a state of light and liberty; in Christ the way, and in the paths of faith, truth, holiness, and righteousness, unto the heavenly glory, typified by the land of Canaan, the blessings of which are next described: the Jews say, this will be in the days of the King Messiah; when there will be no abominable thing in Israel, the Lord alone shall lead him.

**DEUT. 32:13.** *He made him to ride on the high places of the earth*, Or land, the land of Canaan; by which are meant the towers, castles, and fortified places in it, some of which might be built on hills and mountains; and being made to ride on them may denote the delivery of them into their hands, their conquests and possession of them, and triumph in them; (see

Isaiah 58:14); so the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases, it, "made him to dwell in the towers of the land of Israel," those high walled and strongly fenced cities which they dreaded; this may be an emblem of the conquest believers have of their spiritual enemies, sin. Satan, and the world, in and through Christ; of their safety and triumph in him; of their high and elevated frames of soul, when they have got above the world and the things of it; this will be the case of spiritual Israel in every sense in the latter day, when the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains: *that he might eat the increase of the fields*: the produce of them, particularly corn for bread, and which the Israelites ate of as soon as they came into the land of Canaan, (Joshua 5:11,12); an emblem of the Gospel, and the truths of it, which are salutary, nourishing, strengthening, reviving, and cheering, and of Christ the bread of life, which believers by faith eat of, and feed upon and live: *and he made him to suck honey out of the rock*; not water out of the rock, as sweet to them as honey, that they had in the wilderness; but either the honey of bees that made their nests in rocks, as a swarm of them did in the 432 carcass of a lion; and so in like manner as honey came out of the lion, it may be said to be sucked out of the rock: so Homer speaks of swarms of bees out of a hollow rock: or this was the honey of palm trees, as Aben Ezra observes, some say, which might grow on rocks, (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 8:8"); and this is favoured by the Targum of Jonathan, which paraphrases the words, "honey from those fruits which grow on the rocks," unless it means honey gathered by bees from such fruits; the rock may typify Christ, and the honey out of it the Gospel, which is from him and concerning him; comparable to honey for the manner of its production and gathering, by the laborious ministers of the word; for its nourishment, and especially for its sweetness, its precious promises, and pleasant doctrines: *and oil out of the flinty rock*; that is, oil out of the olives, which grow on rocks, and these delight to grow on hills and mountains; hence we read of the mount of Olives, (see Job

29:6); and so the Targum of Jonathan, "and oil out of the olives and suckers which grow on the strong rocks;" this may signify the Spirit and his graces, the unction which comes from Christ the Holy One, and the blessings of grace had from him, and the Gospel and its truths; which are cheering and refreshing, mollifying and healing, feeding and fattening, pure and unmixed, and useful for light, as oil is.

**DEUT. 32:14. *Butter of kine***, Made of milk, which kine or cows give; Jarchi says, this is the fat that is gathered on the top of milk, he means cream, and which indeed was the butter of the ancients, and is here meant: ***and milk of sheep***: which they give, though not in such plenty as the kine, yet what is very wholesome and nourishing: the philosopher observes, that sheep give more milk in proportion to the size of their bodies than cows: and Pliny says their milk is sweeter and more nourishing, and the butter made of it is the fattest: ***with fat of lambs***; or fat lambs, rich and delicious food: ***and rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats***; a fruitful country abounding with pasturage, where rams and goats of the best sort were and the breed 433 of them was coveted and had in the land of Canaan; the kine of Bashan are mentioned elsewhere, (Psalm 22:12 Amos 4:1); ***with the fat of kidneys of wheat***: that is, the best wheat, the grains are plump and full; and Aben Ezra observes, that a grain of wheat has some likeness to a kidney, (see Psalm 81:16 147:14); ***and thou didst drink the pure blood of the grape***; wine which comes from the grape, red wine, pure and unmixed, (see Genesis 40:11); the land of Canaan was a land of vines, and abounded with good wine, (Deuteronomy 8:8); which the Israelites, when they came into it, drank of in common, who had only drank water in the wilderness, and had but little flesh, and lived on manna, and now abounded with plenty of all good things; all which are observed as instances of divine goodness, and to aggravate their ingratitude in rejecting the Messiah, they then enjoying all these good things, the land being alike fertile and affluent then, as appears from (Isaiah 7:14,15,21,22); Jarchi applies this fruitfulness

to the times of Solomon, as the butter of kine, and the kidneys of wheat, (1 Kings 4:22,23); and fat of lambs, and the blood of the grape, to the times of the ten tribes, (Amos 6:4-6); but this was the constant fertility of the land, and lasted to the times of the Messiah: now all these may be expressive of the blessings of grace, and the spiritual food of the Gospel: Ainsworth very prettily remarks, that here is both food for babes and for grown persons, butter and milk for the one, and meat for the other, and drink for them both: the plain truths of the Gospel are like butter, soft and easy to be taken in, and like milk, easy of digestion, cooling, nourishing, sweet, and pleasant; the more sublime truths of the Gospel are meat for strong men, signified by the flesh of fat lambs, rams, and goats; which all being used in sacrifices were typical of Christ; as also the finest of wheat is an emblem of him the bread of life, on whom the weakest believer lives by faith; and the drink for both, the wine the blood of the grape, may signify the love of Christ, the Gospel and the truths of it, and the blessings of grace, which come through the everlasting covenant.

**DEUT. 32:15. *But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked***, This is undoubtedly a name of the people of Israel; it is to be met with only in three places more, in (Deuteronomy 33:5,26 Isaiah 44:2); it is generally thought to come from a word which signifies upright and righteous, such these people ought to have been, and some among them were; and they generally professed themselves, and outwardly appeared to be upright, just, and 434 righteous persons, and were desirous of being reckoned so; which was their character in the times of Christ, when they rejected him: others derive it from a word which signifies to behold, to see, and so describes them as seeing ones; and such they had been in the times of Moses, saw extraordinary sights and wonders in Egypt, the great salvation at the Red sea, the Lord going before them in a pillar of cloud and life; the manna every day falling about their tents; twice rocks smitten, and waters flowing from them, and had often very uncommon sights of the glory of God: and in the times of Christ, to



which this song refers, they saw him in the flesh, preaching in their synagogues, doing miracles, riding on an ass to Jerusalem, according to one of their prophecies, and expiring on the cross, and yet rejected him. They are said to “wax fat”, enjoy great outward prosperity, to abound in temporal good things, as they also did in spiritual, privileges; enjoying, or they might have enjoyed, such a ministry of the word, as never was before or since, the ministry of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, of Christ himself, and of his apostles, yet they “kicked”; which may denote their disobedience to the laws of God, moral and ceremonial, (see 1 Samuel 2:29 Nehemiah 9:25,26); and particularly the introduction of idolatry among them, which was kicking against God, and his worship; first among the ten tribes, in the times of Jeroboam, and among the two tribes, more especially in the times of Manasseh; and this kicking was particularly verified in Judas’s lifting up his heel against Christ, and betraying him; which was not merely the sin of him only, but what the whole body of the people were involved in, (see Psalm 41:9 Acts 7:52): ***thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered [with fatness]***; which is repeated and expressed by different words, both for the certainty of it, and to denote their great affluence of good things, and so the more to aggravate their impiety and ingratitude, next observed: ***then he forsook God [which] made him***; the worship of God, as the Targum of Jonathan, giving into idolatry in times past; and the written word of God, by giving heed to the traditions of the elders, to the making void and of none effect the word of God; or Christ, the essential Word of God; so the Targum of Jonathan, “and left the Word of God, who created them;” 435 that Word of God which was in the beginning of all things, and by whom all things were made, and they also; who in the fulness of time was made flesh, and dwelt among men, (John 1:1-3,14); ***and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation***; the same divine Person, described in (Deuteronomy 32:4); and there called “the Rock”, (see Gill on “Deuteronomy 32:4”); here “the rock of

salvation”; because salvation flows from him: he is the author of it, and it is to be had of him, and no other; and this epithet shows not only his ability and strength to effect it, but the security of it in him, which being wrought out is an everlasting one. He is said to be the rock of “his” salvation, Jeshurun or Israel, he being of the Jews, raised up among them, and sent unto them, and was the Saviour of some of them actually, even of the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and on account of his salvation deserving of universal esteem. But the Jews “lightly esteemed” him, had no value for him, set this rock and stone at nought; he was refused and rejected by the builders, who is now the head of the corner; they despised him, mocked at him, and treated him with the utmost contempt and disdain, yea, with abhorrence; all which, and more, is signified by the word here used: they traduced him as a vile and wicked person, and charged and, treated him as such, so some render the word ; and, as others , they made a dead carcass of him, they crucified and slew him; this is the crime of ingratitude hinted at in (Deuteronomy 32:6); and all between is an enumeration of instances of divine goodness to this people, mentioned with a view to aggravate this unheard of sin.

**DEUT. 32:16. *They provoked him to jealousy with strange [gods]***, Or “with others” ; the word “gods” is not in the text, nor were the Jews guilty of worshipping strange gods or idols in the times of Christ, nor had they been from the time of their coming out of the Babylonish captivity; but the word, as Cocceius observes, is used for “another”, as in (Job 19:27); and signifies other saviours, other messiahs, whom the Jews set up when they rejected Christ, the rock of salvation; and it is observable, that before the coming of Christ, they never attempted to set up any; but, after they had rejected him, were ready to embrace everyone that offered, of which one, called Bar Cochab, the son of a star, in allusion to (Numbers 24:17); is a flagrant instance; and whom, when they found themselves deceived, they called Bar Cozba, the son of a lie, or a lying fellow; to whom our Lord may be thought to

have respect, (John 5:43); and where he expressly calls him another. Now, not only to reject Jesus, the 436 true Messiah, but to set up others in his room, false Christs, was highly provoking to God, who is a jealous God, and will not give his glory to another: **with abominations provoked they him to anger**; by advancing the traditions of the elders to an equality with, and above the word of God; and by continuing sacrifices, after the great sacrifice was offered up, when they ought to have ceased; for, by continuing them, it was saying Christ was not come in the flesh, nor his sacrifice offered up; it was trampling under foot the Son of God, and treating his blood and sacrifice with contempt; which must be an abomination to God, and highly provoking of his anger, when that sacrifice was of a sweet smelling savour to him; and especially what was abominable to him, and grievously provoked him to anger and wrath, was their setting up the idol of their own righteousness, refusing to submit to the righteousness of Christ, (Romans 10:3); and indeed, whenever anything is set up in competition with him, or in opposition to him, be it what it will, it must be an abomination to God; because it opposes his purposes and resolutions of saving men by Christ alone, reflects on his wisdom in the scheme of salvation, flies in the face of his love, grace, and mercy, makes the death of Christ of none effect, advances pride in the creature, gives God the lie, who says there is no other Saviour, and is a total slight and neglect of his Gospel; all which must be abominable, and dreadfully provoking to him; (see Isaiah 65:5) (Luke 16:15 18:14);

**DEUT. 32:17. They sacrificed to devils, not to God**, Their sacrifices being continued, when it was the will of God they should cease, were reckoned by him not as, offered to him, but to demons, and to such that were not God; they being therein under the instigation of Satan, and doing his lusts, (John 8:44); just as Pagans and Papists, worshipping idols under the influence and direction of Satan, are said to worship devils, and sacrifice to them, (1 Corinthians 10:20 Revelation 9:20); and indeed

setting up their own righteousness was sacrificing to their own net, and burning incense to their own drag, to an idol, and not to God: to which may be added, that whereas they trampled under foot the Son of God, and did despite to the Spirit of grace, by which Christ cast out devils, and offered himself without spot, they excluded two of the divine Persons in the Deity, and so worshipped not the true God, Father, Son, and Spirit: 437 **to gods whom they knew not, to [gods that] came newly up**; such as angels, into the worship of which they fell, as their writings testify, and to which the apostle seems to have respect, (Colossians 2:18); **whom your fathers feared not**; paid no regard unto, put no trust or confidence in; or, as the Targum of Jonathan, "with whom your fathers had nothing to do:" as they had not with the idol of man's righteousness, but wholly looked unto and trusted in the grace and righteousness of Christ, and expected salvation alone by him: the Gospel of righteousness and salvation by Christ was preached to our first parents in Eden's garden, which they embraced and believed in; Noah was an heir and preacher of the righteousness of faith, that is, of the righteousness of Christ, received by faith; that righteousness, which was what Abraham believed in, was imputed to him for his justifying righteousness; and Jacob waited for the Messiah, the salvation of God; in short all the Old Testament saints were saved by the grace of Christ, as we are; the idols, the works of men's own righteousness, are new deities they paid no deference to, placed no confidence in.

**DEUT. 32:18. Of the rock [that] begat thee thou art unmindful**, The same with the rock of salvation, (Deuteronomy 32:15); repeated and expressed in different words, that their wretched ingratitude might be taken notice of and observed: begetting is ascribed to this rock, as regeneration is to Christ, (1 John 2:29); and was true of some among the Jews: some choose to render the words, "the rock of thy kindred"; being a near kinsman, a brother through his incarnation, which aggravated their unmindfulness of him: **and hast forgotten God**

*that formed thee*: for the rock they were unmindful of and forgot is the true God and eternal life, the essential Word of God, as both the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem interpret it; him the Jewish nation forgot; they forgot the characters given of him in the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament; and therefore they knew him not when he came and fulfilled the voices of the prophets they were ignorant of in condemning him: hence they were unmindful of his person, his offices, his works, his benefits, and the great salvation by him; as indeed too many are that call themselves Christians: some observe that the word here used signifies bringing forth children with pain, and so way respect the bitter 438 sorrows and sufferings of Christ, sometimes expressed by a word which signifies the pains of women in childbirth, (Acts 2:24); and called the travail of his soul, (Isaiah 53:11); and so a further aggravation of their ingratitude, that they should forget him that suffered so much, at least on account of some of them; for, those he endured to bring forth children unto God, or to gather together the children of God, scattered abroad both in Judea and in the whole world, (John 11:51, 52).

**DEUT. 32:19.** *And when the Lord saw [it]*, The disregard of the Jews to Christ, their forgetfulness of him, their disesteem and rejection of him; their continuance of sacrifices, when the great sacrifice was offered up; their setting up other messiahs and saviours, and the idol of their own righteousness, in opposition to the righteousness of Christ; all which not only as the omniscient God he saw, but took notice of, and considered, and did not at once pass judgment on them, at least did not immediately execute it, but waited some time to see how they would afterwards behave; for it was thirty years or more after the crucifixion of Christ that the utter destruction of the Jews came upon them: *he abhorred [them]*; in his heart, despised them, and at last rejected them with contempt and abhorrence, very righteously and in just retaliation, (see Zechariah 11:8); as for what before observed, so for what follows: *because of the provoking of his sons, and of*

*his daughters*; which is not to be understood of the Lord being provoked to wrath by the sins of those who called themselves or were called his sons and daughters; for these are such who were truly his sons and daughters, and different from those in (Deuteronomy 32:20), said to be “children in whom [is] no faith”: these are no other than the disciples and followers of Christ, that believed in him, both men and women, and so the children of God, his sons and his daughters by special grace; and the “provoking” of them is the wrath of the enemy against them, as the same word is used and rendered in (Deuteronomy 32:27); and should be here, “because of wrath”, or “indignation against his sons and his daughters”; meaning the affliction, distress, and persecution of them, through the wrath of the unbelieving Jews; for after the death of Christ they persecuted his apostles, they beat them and cast them into prison, and put some to death; a persecution was raised against the church at Jerusalem, in which Saul was concerned, who breathed out threatenings and slaughters against the disciples of the Lord, and haled men and women, the sons and daughters of God, and committed 439 them to prison, and persecuted them to strange cities, and gave his voice to put them to death; and in the Gentile world, when the Gospel was carried there, the Jews stirred up the Gentiles everywhere against the followers of Christ, to harass and distress them; and this the Lord saw, and he abhorred them for it, and rejected them.

**DEUT. 32:20.** *And he said, I will hide my face from them*, Now the Lord proceeds to pass sentence on the Jews for their ill treatment of his Son, and of his followers; which respects judgments that should come upon them, both spiritual and temporal, or corporeal; the former lies in (Deuteronomy 32:20,21), and the latter in (Deuteronomy 32:22-25); and this the Lord said in his own heart and mind, decreed and determined it within himself, and declared it in his word by his prophets, as here and in other places: and this first part of the sentence denotes the withdrawing of the gracious presence of God, and the manifestation of his

favour, from the people of the Jews, his dislike and contempt of them, having taken out from among them the remnant according to the election of grace, the disciples and followers of Christ; and the removal of the Gospel, and the ordinances of it, from them, the means of light and knowledge, joy and comfort, and the giving of them up to blindness and hardness of heart, which continues to this day; they have a vail of darkness and ignorance upon their hearts while reading the books of the Old Testament, which will be done away when they turn to the Lord, and not before; likewise this was fulfilled when all the symbols of the divine Presence were removed, when the temple was destroyed, and all things in it, or carried away; and this house, which was formerly the house of God, and where he dwelt, was left desolate by him; and it is remarkable, that a little before the destruction of Jerusalem, a voice was heard in the temple, "let us go hence", as Josephus relates : ***I will see what their end [shall be]:*** their destruction, called in the New Testament "the end of the world"; the end of the Jewish church state and commonwealth: this the Lord said, not as ignorant what it should be, or when it would be; but the sense is, either that he would cause them and others to see it, when he should bring wrath upon them to the uttermost; or that he would look upon it with pleasure and delight, which would be an aggravation of their punishment, (Proverbs 1:26); ***for they [are] a very froward generation;*** men of perverse spirits, of a contrary and contradictory temper and disposition, who pleased not God, 440 and were contrary to all men; as well as contradicted and blasphemed the Gospel of Christ, were men of distorted principles in religion, implicated and inconsistent, they wresting the Scriptures to their own destruction; and were obstinate, stubborn, and inflexible in their notions and practices, and that to the last, which was their ruin: ***children in whom [is] no faith;*** for though they had faith in one God, in the Scriptures of the Old Testament as the word of God, in the law of Moses, and in a future state, the resurrection of the dead, and judgment to

come; especially the Pharisees, the greater part of the Jews; yet though they were the children of Abraham, and would be thought to be the children of God, they had no faith in Jesus, the true Messiah; him they disbelieved and rejected; and as their fathers could not enter into the land of Canaan, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness, because of unbelief; so these were cast out of the land, and from the Lord, because of their unbelief in the rejection of the Messiah. Aben Ezra observes, that it may be interpreted there is no men of faithfulness, or no faithful men among them, as in (Psalm 12:1); they were a faithless generation, covenant breakers, broke their covenant with God, and therefore he rejected them.

**DEUT. 32:21. *They have moved me to jealousy with [that which is] not God,*** With a false messiah; for after the death of Jesus, the true Messiah, God as well as man, many false Christs arose, as he predicted, and were received for a time, who were mere men, and deceivers; and their now vainly expected messiah, or whom they look for, according to their own sense of him, is no other than a mere creature, and not God: or with the idol of their own righteousness; which, as an idol is nothing in the world, that is, nothing in the business of justification, and put in the room of Christ highly provokes the Lord to jealousy: ***they have provoked me to anger with their vanities;*** such were their false Christs they in vain trusted in, and such the idol of their own righteousness they set up, but could not make to stand; and such were the traditions of their elders; they put upon an equality with, or above the word of God; all which stirred up the wrath and anger of God against them: ***and I will move them to jealousy with [those which are] not a people:*** this is not to be understood of any particular nation, but of the Gentiles in general, and of God's elect among them, and of the calling of them; which would be provoking to the Jews, as the Apostle Paul has taught us to understand it, (Romans 10:19). These were not the people of God, or 441 not my people, as he says (Romans 9:25,26 1 Peter 2:10); In some sense indeed they were his people, being

chosen by him, and taken into covenant with him; for he is God not of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also; and those were given to Christ as his people, and are his other sheep which were not of the Jewish fold; and who were redeemed by him to be a peculiar people out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation, all which was before their calling: yet, in another sense they were not his people; they were without any spiritual privileges, the word and ordinances, without the knowledge of God and Christ, without communion with them; they were not a people near unto the Lord, he had not laid hold on and formed them for himself in regeneration and conversion; they were not reckoned the people of God, nor called so, and especially by the Jews, who accounted themselves to be the only people of God; (see Ephesians 2:11,12); ***I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation***; either the Romans in particular are meant, so called because of their gross idolatry, to which they were addicted, who otherwise in their political affairs were a wise and understanding people; to these Judea became a province, and were subject to tribute; and by the exactions of the Romans, and their ill usage of them, they were provoked to rise against them, which issued in their ruin: or rather the Gentiles in general, who might be called foolish because of their superstition and idolatry, ignorance, and blindness in religious matters, and especially were so in the account of the Jews; and the elect of God among them in particular, who in their state of unregeneracy were foolish, as all unregenerate men are; both their principles and practices were foolish, and they were the foolish things of the Gentile world that God chose and called: and the calling of them was exceedingly provoking to the Jews; which was as if a man, moved to jealousy by the behaviour of his wife, should strip her of her ornaments and jewels, and reject her as his wife; and take another before her eyes of mean estate, and marry her, and put her ornaments on her, to which the allusion is; for the Lord, being moved to jealousy by the conduct of the Jewish nation towards him, rejected them from being his people, and stripped them of all their

privileges, civil and religious, and took the Gentiles in the room of them, and so in just retaliation moved them to jealousy and wrath. It was displeasing to the carnal Jews to hear of the prophecies of the calling of the Gentiles, (Romans 10:20); and the first display of grace to them was resented even by believing Jews themselves at first, (Acts 11:2,3,18). The anger of the Scribes and Pharisees on this account is thought by some to be hinted at in the parable of the two sons, (Luke 15:27,28). The Jews were offended with Christ for eating with publicans, the Roman tax gatherers, and were greatly displeased when he told them the kingdom of God would be taken from them, and given to another nation, (Matthew 9:10,11) (Matthew 21:43,46). Their rage and envy were very great when the Gospel was first preached to the Gentiles, (Acts 13:41,44-46); and there is such an extraordinary instance of their spite and malice to the Gentiles, and of their jealousy and anger they were moved unto, as is not to be paralleled, (1 Thessalonians 2:15,16).

**DEUT. 32:22. *For a fire is kindled in mine anger***, Here begins the account of temporal and corporeal judgments inflicted on the Jews for their disbelief and rejection of the Messiah, their contempt of his Gospel, and ill treatment of his followers; and this here respects the destruction of the land of Judea in general, and the burning of the city and temple of Jerusalem in particular, as the effect of the wrath and anger of God like fire kindled against them: ***and shall burn unto the lowest hell***; which denotes an entire destruction, like that of the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah with fire and brimstone from heaven; which issued in a sulphurous lake, and which sulphureous matter sunk to the bottom of the Dead Sea; and to that destruction is this of the land of Judea compared, (Deuteronomy 29:23); ***and shall consume the earth with her increase***: the land of Judea, with the cities and towns in it, and buildings on it, and the fruits of the earth; which were either gathered into their barns and storehouses, or were growing in their fields, and vineyards, and oliveyards; all were destroyed and consumed at or before the destruction of Jerusalem, or

quickly after it: ***and set on fire the foundations of the mountains***; the city of Jerusalem, as Jarchi himself interprets it, whose foundations were by the mountains, according to (Psalm 125:2); and the temple of Jerusalem particularly was built on Mount Moriah, and that as well as the city was utterly consumed by fire: and it is remarkable that when Julian the apostate attempted to rebuild it, as is related even by an Heathen historian, that flames of fire burst out from the foundations, and burnt the workmen; so that he was obliged to desist from his rash undertaking. 443

**DEUT. 32:23. *I will heap mischief upon them,*** One calamity upon another, which are after particularly mentioned: ***I will spewed mine arrows upon them***; God is here represented as an enemy to the Jews, as having bent his bow against them like an enemy, (Lamentations 2:4); and as having a quiver, and that full of arrows, and as determined to draw out and spend everyone of them, in taking vengeance upon them; which arrows are his four sore judgments mentioned (Ezekiel 14:21); and expressed in (Deuteronomy 32:24,25).

**DEUT. 32:24. [*They shall be burnt with hunger,*** This is the arrow of famine, (Ezekiel 5:16,17); the force of which is such that it makes the skin black as if burnt, (Lamentations 5:10); Onkelos paraphrases it, "inflated or swelled with famine," which is a phrase Josephus makes use of in describing the famine at the siege of Jerusalem. Jarchi observes, that one of their writers interprets the words "hairs of hunger", because he says that a man that is famishing and pining, his hair grows, and he becomes hairy: this judgment was notorious among the Jews, at the siege of Jerusalem, and was very sore and dreadful: (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 28:53"): ***and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction;*** with burning fevers, pestilential ones, with the plague, the arrow of the Lord that flies by day, the pestilence that walks in darkness, and the destruction that wastes at noonday, (Psalm 91:5,6); and which also raged at the siege of Jerusalem, arising from the stench of dead bodies, which lay in all parts of the city, and is

one of the signs of the destruction of it given by our Lord, (Matthew 24:7,9); ***I will also send the teeth, of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the dust***; another of the arrows in the quiver of the Lord of hosts, or of his four judgments, and which he used to threaten the people of the Jews with in case of disobedience, (Leviticus 26:22). And such of the Jews who fled to deserts, and caves and dens of the earth, for shelter, could not escape falling into the hands of wild beasts, and of meeting with poisonous serpents that go upon their bellies, and feed on the dust of the earth; and besides, when Titus had taken Jerusalem, he disposed of his captives some one way and some another; and, among the rest, many were cast to the wild beasts in the theatre, as Josephus relates; add to this, that both Rome Pagan, and Roman Papal, are called beasts, (Revelation 13:1,11); 444 into both whose hands the Jews fell, and from whom they have suffered much; with which in part agrees the Targum of Jerusalem, "the teeth of the four monarchies, which are like to wild beasts, I will send upon them;" and particularly the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases it, "and the Greeks, who bite with their teeth like wild beasts, I will send upon them;" but it would have been much better to have interpreted it of the Romans.

**DEUT. 32:25. *The sword without,*** Either without the city, the sword of the Roman army besieging it, which destroyed all that came out or attempted to go in; or in the streets of the city, the sword of the seditious, which destroyed multitudes among themselves: ***and terror within***; within the city, on account of the sword of the Romans, and the close siege they made of it; and on account of the famine and pestilence which raged in it, and the cruelty of the seditious persons among themselves; all these filled the people with horror and terror in their houses; and even in their bedchambers, as the word signifies, they were not free from terror; yea, from the temple, and inward parts, and chambers of that, which may be referred to, terror came, that being in the hands of the seditious; they sallied out from thence, and ravaged the city, and filled all places with the

dread of them; and many, no doubt, through fear died, as well as by the sword and other judgments; which it is threatened ***shall destroy both the young man and the virgin, the suckling [also], with the man of gray hairs;*** none of any age or sex were spared, even those unarmed; not the young man, for his strength and promising usefulness; nor the virgin for her beauty and comeliness; nor the suckling for its innocence and tenderness; nor the aged man through any reverence of his gray hairs, or on account of the infirmities of old age, but all would be destroyed; and never was such a carnage made at the siege of anyone city in the world before or since; no less than 1,100,000 persons perished in it, as Josephus relates .

**DEUT. 32:26. *I said,*** Or could have said, or might have said; that is, determined and resolved, as it was in his power, and in right and justice might have done what follows: ***445 I would scatter them into corners;*** which does not fitly express the sense of the word used, and besides this was what was done; it is notorious that the Jews were and are scattered into the several corners of the world, and there is no corner where they are not; whereas the phrase is expressive of something that could and might have been done, but was not: moreover, to disperse them into the several parts of the world does not agree with what follows; for that, instead of making their remembrance to cease, would make them the more known, and the more to be remembered. But the word literally taken may be rendered, "I will corner them" ; drive them up into a corner, and cut them off together, or search for them in, and ferret them out of, every corner in which they should get, and destroy them all: agreeably to which is the Targum of Onkelos, "mine anger shall rest upon them, and I will destroy them;" and so Aben Ezra interprets it of the destruction of them, and observes, that otherwise it would not agree with what follows. There may be an allusion in it to the corner of the field, which was ordered to be left to the poor, and not reaped, (Leviticus 19:9); and so the sense is, I could and might have determined when the harvest of this land and people was

come, or the time of wrath upon them, to cut down every corner, and leave none, no, not one standing stalk of corn, but make clean riddance of them: ***I would make the remembrance of them cease from among men;*** as of the Amalekites, Moabites, Midianites, Edomites, Chaldeans, and others, whose names as well as nations are no more. This is what the enemies of the Jews plotted and conspired to do, (Psalm 83:4); and what God could and might have done, but has not; the Jews continue to this day a distinct people, though it is now near 1900 years since the destruction of their city and temple, and their dispersion in the various parts of the world; which is what was never known of any other people in the like circumstances, and which is a most amazing and surprising event; the reasons of it follow.

**DEUT. 32:27. *Were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy,*** Satan, the enemy of mankind in general, of the people of God in particular, and especially of the Messiah, the seed of the woman, and of God himself, whom he would dethrone, or at least place himself on an equality with him; this enemy is full of wrath, enmity, and blasphemy, against God, and stirs up all of this kind in the hearts of men, and instigates them to persecute the people of God; and does all he can to obscure the glory of God, and lessens his own "grief", as the word signifies, occasioned by it: and now 446 though God has nothing to fear, either from the power and policy of the devil, being infinitely mightier and wiser than he; yet as Moses expressed his concern, if God should cut off the people of Israel as one man, that the Egyptians would say he brought them out of Egypt for mischief, or that he was not able to bring them into the land of Canaan, (Exodus 32:12 Numbers 14:15,16); so the Lord, speaking after the manner of men, as Aben Ezra observes, expresses his fears of the wrath of the enemy; not properly, but it denotes his precaution, provision, and preparation he made to put a check upon it, and a stop to it, that he might not have the opportunity of instilling it into the minds of men, that God was cruel to his people, or had not ability to save them from their enemies, or

was unfaithful to his promises; and therefore he did not entirely cut them off, as he could and might have done, but made a reserve of them, as a standing proof to the contrary: **lest their adversaries**; the Romans, who fought against them, took them, and carried them captive: **should behave themselves strangely**; alienate the glory of God from him, and give it to their strange gods; which the Romans were wont to do, when they obtained victories, and did do something of this kind to Jupiter Capitolinus, when they carried the Jews captive, and their trophies in triumph to Rome: yet there was such an apparent hand of God in this affair, that the Heathens were obliged to own it. Titus the conqueror himself confessed that it was God that favoured him, and that it was he that brought the Jews out of the fortresses and fastnesses in which they were; and that no hands of men, or machines, were anything against such towers as they had : and when some neighbouring nations would have crowned him because of his victories over the Jews, he refused it, saying, he was unworthy of it, he had not done this of himself, but had only lent an hand to God that was angry with them . Cicero also observes the hand of God in the conquest, captivity, and servitude of the Jewish nation; moreover, a remnant was preserved to be to the Romans, as the Canaanites were to the Israelites, thorns in their sides, and pricks in their eyes; to be a burden to them, a dead weight upon them, and to check their ovations and triumphs over them; for, that people conquered gave them great trouble, raised commotions and insurrections in many places, which obliged the emperors in succeeding reigns to come from distant parts, and quell them, and were the occasion of vast quantities of blood being shed; insomuch that one of their poets wishes Judea had never been subdued by them: 447 likewise a number of them was preserved to prevent the growth and spread of idolatry, and that they might be a standing example and caution to Christians among the Gentiles not to give into it, when they should observe what they suffered on the account of it, as their prophecies, extant in their sacred books

preserved, abundantly testified and declared: **[and] lest they should say, our hand [is] high, and the Lord hath not done all this**; lest anyone should say among the Gentiles, as particularly deists, lest they should lift up their horn on high, and speak with a stiff neck, and deny that ever any such things were done for this people the Scriptures speak of, as the miracles in the land of Egypt, at the Red sea, and in the wilderness; and confidently affirm there never was any such people, and defy Christians to show them a Jew if they could: now here was a reserve made of them, to be a standing proof of the truth of divine revelation against such infidels; as also that they might be a check unto all false teachers, and leave them inexcusable who embrace the same errors that have been condemned in them, and God has shown his displeasure at, and which they still retain; such as the doctrines of freewill, of justification by a man's own righteousness, of salvation not being wholly by the Messiah, and of his being non-Jehovah, or only a mere creature; for the words may be rendered, "non-Jehovah hath done all this" ; or he that is not Jehovah hath done all that is done for the people of the Jews; and say, all that the Messiah hath done, with respect to salvation, is done by him that is not Jehovah, or God, but a creature. These were the doctrines of the Jews in Christ's time; the Pharisees, the prevailing sect among them, were freewillers, as Josephus relates ; and the whole nation were selfjusticiaries, as the Apostle Paul assures us, and sought for righteousness not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law, ( Romans 9:31,32 10:3); and such they are to this day, as well as Unitarians to a man; now Arians, Socinians, Pelagians, and Arminians, may look upon these people, who are continued, as having imbibed the same errors; and may read theirs in them, and God's displeasure at them.

**DEUT. 32:28. For they [are] a nation void of counsel**, This is said not of the Jews, whose character is given, (Deuteronomy 32:6); and instances of their ingratitude, folly, and want of counsel and understanding, have been already mentioned, and punishment for the same



inflicted on them, according to this prophetic song; so that the prophecy respecting them is issued, and another people are taken notice of, even their enemies, of whom the Jewish writers in general interpret these words, and what 448 follows; and was true of the Gentiles, both of the Pagan sort of them, who took too much to themselves, and ascribed the destruction of the Jews, and their conquest of them, to themselves, and their idols; and of false Christians among them, when the Roman empire became Christian, such as expressed themselves in the language of the latter part (Deuteronomy 32:27), "our hand is high", etc. which plainly showed them to be a people devoid of the true knowledge of the Scriptures, they should have made the men of their counsel, and have consulted; and of the Gospel of Christ, which is the counsel of God, as the Arians, Pelagians, etc. must be, or they would never imbibe and advance tenets so diametrically opposite thereunto: **neither [is there any] understanding is them**; of divine and spiritual things, of the Scriptures, and the doctrines of them; of the person of Christ, and his divine perfections, or they would never deny his deity; of the righteousness of God, of that which is required in the law, and revealed in the Gospel, or they would never set up a righteousness of their own for justification; and of themselves, their unrighteousness, impurity, and impotence to that which is good; or they would never so strongly assert the purity of human nature, and the power of man's freewill: God foreseeing all the folly, and want of counsel and understanding in the Gentile world, under different characters, preserved a remnant of the Jews as a standing admonition to them.

**DEUT. 32:29. O that they were wise**, These are not the words of God, and so no instances of mere velleities, and unsuccessful wishes in him, and as arguing a power in man to make himself wise if he would; but of Moses, under a spirit of prophecy, foreseeing the ignorance and stupidity of the above persons; or as representing a true believer in Christ, in the times in which such men should live; for the person speaking is one that had faith in Christ,

the rock of salvation, and built upon him alone for it; and who had enemies on that account, as appears from (Deuteronomy 32:31-33): and these words are spoken not of the Jews, with whom this song has no more concern, unless it be in what respects, their conversion in the latter day; but of false Christians, Pelagians, Arians, etc. whose language and character are expressed in (Deuteronomy 32:28,29): and contain a pathetic wish that they might have wisdom to see their follies, errors, and mistakes, and renounce them: or, "if they were wise"; as they are not, and their tenets show it: 449 **[that] they would understand this**; namely what follows: **[that] they would consider their latter end**; either the latter end of the Jews; had they wisdom, they would understand and observe that the displeasure of God against them, and his destruction of them, was for their lightly esteeming the rock of salvation, as Arians do; and for setting up their own righteousness, in opposition to the righteousness of Christ, as do Pelagians and Arminians; and were they wise, they would be hereby cautioned against such notions; and though imbibed by them, would relinquish them; as they may justly fear some such like end will be theirs: for if God does not give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth their end must be miserable; since the errors they embrace and profess are what the apostle calls "damnable heresies"; who, denying the Lord that bought them, bring on themselves swift destruction; and whose judgment, he says, lingers not, and their damnation slumbers not, (2 Peter 2:1,3).

**DEUT. 32:30. How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight**, This is said for the conviction of the Pagan Romans of their folly in behaving strangely, attributing to their gods what belonged to the true God; for since the Jews were more numerous than they, both in Judea, in the times of Titus Vespasian, when the country was subdued by him; and in other parts of the world, in the times of Adrian, when the Jews rose up in vast numbers, greatly superior to the Romans, and yet were conquered; which,

allowing the phrase to be hyperbolic, was like one to a thousand, and two to ten thousand: now since this was what was promised to the Jews in case of obedience, that they should in this manner chase their enemies, (Leviticus 26:8); it cannot be accounted for that they should in like manner be chased by their enemies, as threatened (Isaiah 30:17); **except their rock had sold them, and the Lord had shut them up**; that is, unless the Lord, who was their rock and fortress, and in whom they should have trusted as such, had forsaken them, and given them up into their enemies' hands, shut up as they were in the city of Jerusalem in the times of Titus, and afterwards in Bithur in the times of Adrian; it is a plain case that this was of God, and not owing to the idols of the Gentiles; (see Psalm 44:9-12); Cocceius and Van Till interpret this of Constantine overcoming Maxentius, Licinius, and Maximinius, whereby the whole Roman empire on a sudden became Christian nominally, when but a little before Dioclesian had erected a trophy with this inscription on it, "the Christian name blotted out;" 450 so that the odds between the Christians and Pagans were as one to a thousand, and two to ten thousand, and the victory therefore must be ascribed to God; this could never have been unless Satan, the great red dragon, had given his kingdom to the beast, which was done by the permission and sovereign will of God; (see Revelation 6:14 12:7,8 13:2 17:17); so those interpreters, but the former sense seems best.

**DEUT. 32:31. For their rock [is] not as our rock**, That is, the gods of the Heathens, the rock in which they trusted, are not like the God of Israel, the rock of salvation, in which all true believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, place their confidence; and indeed let that be what it will, that is short of Christ the rock, men lay the stress of their salvation on, it is no rock, but sand, and will stand them in no stead; (see Matthew 7:24-27); **even our enemies themselves [being] judges**; as has been confessed of the God of Israel by the Heathens; (see Exodus 14:25 Numbers 23:8 1 Samuel 4:8); and was by Titus with respect to the

destruction of Jerusalem; (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 32:27"); and by the Roman emperors when conquered by the Christians, who asked pardon of the God of the Christians, and owned that the God of Constantine was the true God; (see Gill on "Revelation 6:16").

**DEUT. 32:32. For their vine [is] of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah**, This respects the false Christians in the Roman empire, who should have taken warning by the Jews, and not have embraced such sentiments of theirs, which had been resented by the Lord, and condemned in them; such as the doctrines of man's freewill, of justification and salvation not alone by Christ, but by their own works of righteousness, saying, "our hand is high, and the Lord hath not done all this", (Deuteronomy 32:27). Now out of the errors and heresies which arose in the primitive Christian church sprung the man of sin, the son of perdition, antichrist, or the antichristian and apostate church of Rome, the degenerate plant of a strange vine; and is here described as "of the vine of Sodom", a slip from that, transplanted from Judea, and from the worse part of it, Sodom; bearing a resemblance to the old Jewish church in its more degenerate state, reviving many of its antiquated rites and ceremonies, and embracing its unsound doctrines; especially which relate to justification, and salvation by the works of men; and having such a likeness to Sodom in its abominable practices, that it is even called Sodom itself, (Revelation 11:8); particularly for pride, luxury, idleness, idolatry, profaneness, 451 contempt of serious religion, and for bodily uncleanness; even for that sin which has its name from Sodom, which has not only been frequently committed by the popes and other great personages among their, and connived at; but praised and commended in printed books, published and sheltered under public authority; (see Gill on "Revelation 11:8"); and with this compare (Ezekiel 16:49); "and of the fields of Gomorrah"; another city of the plain, destroyed for the same sins that Sodom was; the phrase signifies the same as before; who has not heard of the apples and fruits of Gomorrah, which are said to look very

fair and beautiful without, but when touched into ashes? a fit emblem of the fair show of religion and devotion, and the many outward works of piety in the Romish church they pretend to perform, but when examined are “lies in hypocrisy”, (1 Timothy 4:2); **their grapes [are] grapes of gall, their clusters [are] bitter**; which may denote the large number of the members of this church clustered together, and the many religious orders in it; which make a fair show in the flesh, but are in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity; and the variety of ordinances and institutions of man’s devising: so as the ordinances of the true church of Christ are compared to clusters of grapes, (Song of Solomon 7:7); the ordinances of the false church are like clusters of bitter grapes, both for their quantity and quality; and may mean also their many evil works and actions, especially their oppression and cruelty in persecuting the saints, and shedding their blood; just as the wild grapes of the vine of Judah are interpreted of oppression and a cry, (Isaiah 5:4,7).

**DEUT. 32:33. *Their wine [is] the poison of dragons***, Of these creatures, both land and sea dragons, (see Gill on “Micah 1:8”); (see Gill on “Malachi 1:3”); Pliny says the dragon has no poison in it; yet, as Dalechamp, in his notes on that writer observes, he in many places prescribes remedies against the bite of the dragon; but Heliodorus expressly speaks of some archers, whose arrows were infected with the poison of dragons; and Leo Africanus says, the Atlantic dragons are exceeding poisonous: and yet other writers besides Pliny have asserted that they are free from poison. It seems the dragons of Greece are without, but not those of Africa and Arabia; and to these Moses has respect, as being well known to him. The Targum of Jerusalem is, “the poison of this people is like the poison of dragons as they drink wine;” 452 and the Targum of Jonathan, “as the poison of dragons, when they are at or from their wine;” that is, after and as soon as they have drank it; for, according to natural historians, serpents, though they need and use

but little drink, yet are very fond of wine: and it seems that thereby their poison becomes more sharp and intense, as Bochart observes; wherefore the allusion is very proper and pertinent, and denotes the wine of fornication of the apostate church of Rome, frequently spoken of (Revelation 14:8 17:2 18:3); which is no other than her corrupt doctrines, intoxicating, enticing, and leading to idolatry and superstition; and as the true Gospel of Christ is sometimes compared to wine, so the false doctrines of this church; but then it is such that is not only loathsome and abominable, but poisonous and pernicious to the souls of men, damnable and ruinous, and brings upon them swift destruction, (2 Peter 2:1-3 Revelation 14:9-11); and may well be compared to the poison of dragons for such reasons; as also because they are doctrines of devils, and come from the great dragon, that old serpent called the devil and Satan, (2 Timothy 4:1 Revelation 12:3,9); **and the cruel venom of asps**; which, of all kind of serpents, Pliny says is the least curable; nay, according to the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions of this clause, it is incurable; and so Aristotle says there is no remedy for it; and so says Aelianus, who also observes, that the mark it makes is so small, that it is scarcely discerned by the sharpest eye. Pliny represents it as a most revengeful creature; when its mate is killed by any, it will pursue the slayer, flee where he will, and as far and fast as he can: it breaks through all difficulties, and is not to be stopped by rivers, or any obstacles, and will attack the person, whom it presently knows, let him be in ever such a crowd: and therefore it and its poison may well be called cruel; and as the poison of this creature lies under its tongue, this is a fit simile to express the poisonous and pernicious doctrines of the apostate church.

**DEUT. 32:34. *[Is] not this laid up in store with me***, The fruit of the degenerate vine, its bitter clusters of grapes, and poisonous wine; meaning the evil principles and practices of the apostate church, well known to God, taken notice of by him, and laid up in his mind and memory; for both she and her sins will come in

remembrance before God, and will be brought to open view, and appear to have been laid up by him, in order to be exposed at a proper time; (see Revelation 16:19 18:5); and so the Targums 453 interpret it of evil works: or this may be understood of the punishment of the evil doctrines and practices of the antichristian church, the sentence of which God had secretly passed in his eternal mind, and which he had in reserve, and in due time would execute; it was drawn and signed by him, and, as he says, **[and] sealed up among my treasures**; his treasures of wrath, denoting the secrecy of it, and the sure and certain performance of it, and the authority of Christ to execute it; to whom this sealed diploma is given, and all judgment committed; and particularly this to judge the whore of Rome; and who, is able to open the sealed book of God's purposes and decrees, and to accomplish them; and among the rest those which relate to the utter ruin of antichrist, and the antichristian states: so the Targum of Jerusalem, interprets it of the vengeance of the Lord, laid up for the wicked; "is not the cup of the judgment of vengeance mixed and prepared for the ungodly sealed up among my treasures, to the day of the great judgment?" it is true of the cup of the wine of the fierceness of the wrath of God, or of the wine of the wrath of God poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation, which he will make great Babylon, and all the worshippers of the beast, drink of, (Revelation 14:9,10 16:19).

**DEUT. 32:35. To me [belongeth] vengeance and recompense**, Or, I will repay, or recompence, as it is quoted in (Romans 12:19 Hebrews 10:30); and so all the three Targums, the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions, here, and so Jarchi interprets it. Vengeance belongs only to a divine Person, not to an Heathen deity called Dice, or vengeance, (Acts 28:4); nor to Satan and his spiteful angels, nor to any of the sons of men in a private capacity; though magistrates, being in public office, and representing God, are revengers to execute wrath on them that do evil, (Romans 13:4); otherwise it is peculiar to God; and there is a great deal of reason to believe he will

recompence it, as it may be concluded from his hatred of sin, his strict justice, and his faithfulness to his threatenings as well as his promises; from the instances of his vengeance on the old world, on Sodom and Gomorrah, and others; and from his taking vengeance on the inventions even of good men, whose sins he pardons, and especially from his sparing his own Son, when standing in the legal place and, stead of sinners: and this is applicable to Christ, who not only in the days of his flesh took vengeance Satan, and his principalities and powers; and, when 454 he came in his kingdom and power, took vengeance on the Jews his enemies, who would not have him to rule over them; but also, at his spiritual coming, he will take vengeance on antichrist, whom he will destroy with the breath of his mouth, and send that son of perdition into the perdition appointed for him; and pour out the vials of his wrath on all the antichristian states, the time of which is next pointed at: **their foot shall slide in [due] time**; there is a time fixed for the reign of antichrist, when it will end, forty two months, or 1260 days; that is, so many years; (see Revelation 11:2 13:5); and a little before the expiration of them, his foot will begin to slide, as the slipping of the foot is just before a fall; and then will the foot of antichrist slip and slide, when the witnesses slain by him shall revive and stand upon their feet, and cause fear to fall on them that are on the earth; and when they shall ascend up into heaven, or rise to superior power and authority, greatness and splendour, than they formerly had, and this in the sight of their enemies; and when there will be earthquakes and revolutions in the several antichristian states; and the tenth part of the great city shall fall, and many persons of renown be slain, and others frightened, and will give glory to the God of heaven; when an angel, or a set of Gospel ministers, shall fly in the midst of heaven, with the everlasting Gospel, to preach to all nations; which will be immediately followed by another, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen; when the kings of the earth will dislike and resent various things done by the pope of Rome, and shall hate him, and meditate his

ruin, and then may his foot be said to slide; see. (Revelation 11:11,13 14:6-8 17:16); **for the day of their calamity [is] at hand**; a cloudy day, as the word signifies, when the kingdom of the beast will be full of darkness and confusion, (Revelation 16:10); and when all those calamities shall come upon Babylon, expressed in (Revelation 14:8-19); **and the things that shall come upon them make haste**; even all those evil things God has determined in his counsels and purposes, and which are foretold in prophecy, these shall come upon antichrist in haste; for, though his judgment and damnation may seem to linger and slumber, it shall not; God will hasten it in his due time, and all his judgments will come on Babylon in one day, (Revelation 18:8).

**DEUT. 32:36. For the Lord shall judge his people**, The true church and members of it, in opposition to the false and apostate church; his chosen and covenant people, whom he gave to Christ, and who are redeemed by 455 his blood, and effectually called by his grace; the people he shall call out of Babylon, or preserve from the corruptions of it before its fall; and who are the objects of his love and delight; a distinct, peculiar, and special people, near unto him, and all righteous: these he will judge at this time, distinguish between them and the followers of antichrist; he will take their cause in hand, and plead it, and do justice to them; he will right their wrongs and injuries, and take vengeance on their enemies; he will protect and defend them, reign and rule over them. Now will be the time, when the witnesses slain are raised, that he will take to himself his great power and reign, and the time of the dead when they will be judged, and a reward given to his servants and prophets, to his saints, and all that fear his name; and when he will destroy them that have destroyed the earth, (Revelation 11:17,18); so the Targum of Jonathan interprets this of the word of the Lord that shall judge his people in mercy: **and repent himself for his servants**; by whom are meant not only the ministers of the Gospel, his witnesses that prophesy in sackcloth, and who will be slain when they have finished their testimony; but all that are

effectually called by grace, who though they have been the servants of sin, and the vassals of Satan, yet by the grace of God become the servants of God and of righteousness; dislike and cast off their old masters; readily, willingly, and cheerfully, take upon them the yoke of Christ, and freely obey him, constrained by his love, and influenced by views of interest in him: and so serve him without any selfish views, owning that, when they have done all they can, they are but unprofitable servants: now for or on account of these he will repent himself, because of the evils he has suffered to come upon them, being moved with pity, and compassion to them in their miserable circumstances, as they will be in when the witnesses his servants will be slain; not that, properly speaking, repentance is in God; he never changes his mind, counsel, and purposes; he never alters his love, his choice, nor his covenant; or repents of his gifts, and calling of special grace; though he is sometimes said to repent of outward good things he has bestowed, or promised to bestow conditionally; and of evils he has threatened or inflicted; yet this is only to be understood of a change of his outward dealings and dispensations with men, according to his changeable will; and this will be the case now with respect to his servants, whom he will have suffered to be slain, and lie unburied; but repenting or changing his manner of conduct to them will revive them, and cause them to ascend to heaven; (see Revelation 11:11,12); 456 **when he seeth that [their] power is gone**; not the hand and power of the enemy, going and prevailing over them, and strong upon them, as the Targum of Jonathan and Jarchi; but rather the hand and power of the righteous, as the Targum of Jerusalem; and respects not their internal power and strength, which they have not in themselves, but in Christ; though the exertion of that power, and the exercise of their graces, as faith, and hope, and love, will be greatly declined; but their external power, and protection which they had from Protestant princes; they being removed, and others not like them succeeding, or apostatizing to the

church of Rome: the outward court or national establishments are a fence and protection to the inward court worshippers, or servants of God; when that shall be given to the Gentiles, the Papists, as it will, (Revelation 11:2); the power or hand, the protecting sheltering hand of the saints, will be gone, and they will become a prey to their adversaries: **and [there is] none shut up or left**; a phrase used to express the miserable state and condition of a people, when none are left, but all are carried off, or cut off, and destroyed, and there is none to help them; (see 1 Kings 14:10 21:21 2 Kings 9:8 14:26); when there are none shut up in garrisons, and left there to defend a people; or there are none shut up in prison, or any left to till the ground; which is sometimes the case when a nation is conquered, and the greater part are carried captives; but it denotes such a general destruction, that there are none remaining any where, and thus it will be at the slaying of the witnesses. This passage has respect to their dead bodies, which will not be shut up in graves, nor any left to bury them, (Revelation 11:9). There will scarcely be a professor of religion, or any that will appear to favour the witnesses slain in any respect; there will be "none to support and uphold," as the Targum of Jerusalem; not to support and uphold the true religion, or to help the people of God in these their distresses: and when the Lord shall see all this, he will look upon them with an eye of pity and compassion; he will repent for his servants, according to the multitude of his tender mercies; and will plead their cause, and judge them, and will put on the garments of vengeance, and repay fury and recompense to his and their enemies, (Isaiah 59:15-18); who will insultingly say as follows. 457

**DEUT. 32:37. And he shall say, where [are] their gods?** Not the Lord shall say to Israel, upbraiding them with their idols and their idolatries; but, as the Targum of Jonathan, "the enemy shall say, where is the God of Israel?" and to the same purpose is, the Jerusalem Targum, and which is the sense of other Jewish writers; and the words may be rendered impersonally, and in the singular number, "and

it shall be said, where is their God?" as it follows, **[their] rock in whom they trusted?** that is, it shall be said to the people of God, when in the low estate before described, and which will make it still more distressing; it shall be said to them by their enemies in a sneering way, where is the Lord their God they boasted of, and the rock of salvation in whom they trusted? which agrees with other passages of Scripture, (Psalm 42:3, 10 79:10 Micah 7:9). The persons insulted and upbraided are the Protestant witnesses at the time of their being slain; when "they that dwell upon the earth", the Papists, "shall rejoice over them", (Revelation 11:10); they are such who are true believers in the God and Father of Christ, as their God and Father in Christ, who of his own free grace has blessed them with all spiritual blessings in him; and who trust in Christ the rock alone for justification before God, for acceptance with him, and for their whole salvation; rejecting the Popish notion of justification by works, the doctrines of merit, and of works of supererogation, and the like; who now will be taunted at, and triumphed over, saying, where is the God of the Protestants they gloried in, as being on their side? and where is their rock on which they say the church is built, and not on Peter?

**DEUT. 32:38. Which did eat the fat of their sacrifices, [and] drank the wine of their drink offerings,** Alluding to the fat of the sacrifices under the law, which was claimed by the Lord as his, and represented as his food, (Leviticus 3:11, 16); and to the drink offerings of wine, which were of a sweet savour to God, and with respect to which wine is said to cheer him, (Numbers 15:7 Judges 9:13). Now New Testament worship and services are here expressed in Old Testament language, which is not unusual; (see Isaiah 56:7 66:20-23); and signify the best of the sacrifices and services of true believers in Christ, presenting their souls and bodies unto him as a holy, living, acceptable sacrifice, which is but their reasonable service; offering their sacrifices of prayer and praise unto him through Christ; doing all good works in his name and strength, and all acts 458 of

beneficence in love to him and his people, with which sacrifices he is well pleased; yea, cheerfully laying down their lives as victims in his cause, when called unto it. Now these words are a taunt at the Protestant doctrine of the acceptance of the service and sacrifices of believers in Christ, through him, and for his sake, and not for any merit or worthiness in them: **let them rise up and help you**; their God and their rock, Jehovah the Father, their covenant God, and his Son the rock of their salvation, in whom they trust; and so they will arise and help them in this time of extreme distress; though they may seem as asleep, and to take no notice of the sad estate of saints, they will arise in wrath and indignation at their enemies, and deliver them out of their hands; the Spirit of life from God shall be sent to bring to life the slain witnesses, and Christ will rise up in the exertion of his kingly power; he will take to himself his great power, and reign, and destroy them that destroyeth the earth, (Revelation 11:11,17,18); **[and] be your protection**; or "let him be your hiding place"; that is, the rock in whom they trusted, and so he is, and will be "an hiding place the wind, and a covert from the storm", (Isaiah 32:2); not only from the wrath and justice of God, but from the rage and fury of men; Christ will protect and defend his people against all their enemies, and in his own time will deliver them from them; who, in answer to these taunts and derisions, rises up, and thus he says, as follows.

**DEUT. 32:39. See now that I, [even] I, [am] he**, Which words are directed to the people of God in their low estate, to look to Christ, and expect deliverance and salvation from him; or to their enemies that insult them, to the despisers, to look, and wonder, and perish, as they will, when the witnesses slain by them shall arise, and go up to heaven in their sight, (Revelation 11:11-13); they are spoken by the Word and Son of God, to whom the Father has committed all judgment, and who will now rise up and execute it; so the Targum of Jonathan, "when the Word of the Lord shall reveal himself to redeem his people, he will say to all people, see now, etc." and who will declare himself to be

the great Jehovah, the self-existent Being, the eternal and immutable I AM; for this phrase is expressive of his existence, eternity, immutability, and sovereignty; and which the above Targum paraphrases thus, 459 "see now that I am he that have been, and am, and I am he that shall be," which, as it is a deciphering the word "Jehovah", is what is applied to Christ, (Revelation 1:8). The repeating the word "I", as it may denote the strong affection of the speaker, and the certainty of what he would do, so it may have respect to both sorts of persons the words are directed to, and to the several sorts of things to be done, hereafter related; signifying that it is the same I, that does the one, does also the other, kills and makes alive, etc. **and [there is] no god with me**; this the Redeemer and Saviour says elsewhere, (Isaiah 44:6 45:21); (see Deuteronomy 32:12); there is but one God, and Christ the Word, with the Father and the Spirit, are that one God, (1 John 5:7); and there is no other with him; he is the true God, in opposition to all factitious and fictitious gods; he is not a made god, nor a god by office, nor by name and title only, but by nature the one, true, only, and living God; and so it may be most truly believed of him, that he is able to do, and will do, what he next says: **I kill, and I make alive**; I wound, and I heal: Christ is the sovereign disposer of life and death, of sickness and health, in a temporal sense; and in a spiritual sense he wounds and kills, by the law in the hand of his Spirit; and he heals and makes alive by his Gospel, as it is accompanied by his Spirit and grace also: this is by some referred to the resurrection from the dead, which will be by Christ the resurrection and the life, the earnest, exemplar, and efficient cause of it; so the Targum of Jerusalem, "I am he that kills the living in this world, and quickens the dead in the world to come:" but it refers to another resurrection previous to that, namely, the reviving of the witnesses after they have been slain three days; who, as they will be killed in a civil sense, in the same sense they will be quickened by the Spirit of life from Christ; that is, they will be raised from that very low estate into which they will be brought, into

a glorious one, signified by their ascending up into heaven; which will be done by Christ when he takes to himself his great power, and reigns; then as he suffered his witnesses and people to be wounded and killed, he will make them alive, and heal them, and restore comforts and happiness to them, (see Revelation 11:11,12); 460 ***neither [is there any] that can deliver out of my hand***; for, at the same time that he saves his people, he will take their enemies into his hands, out of which there will be no escape; at this time seven thousand names of men, or men of name, will be slain, (see Gill on "Revelation 11:13").

**DEUT. 32:40. *For I lift up my hand to heaven***, Which is a gesture used in swearing, (Genesis 14:22), and is ascribed to a divine Person, (Ezekiel 20:5); and particularly to Christ the angel, that is so wonderfully described, (Revelation 10:1-5); though sometimes it is used, as Aben Ezra observes, to excite the attention of hearers, but here it signifies swearing; and so the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem paraphrase it, "I have lift up my hands with an oath to heaven;" and to the same sense is the Septuagint version: ***and say, I live for ever***; which is the form of an oath; when men swear, they are to swear, the Lord liveth, or to swear by the living God, and him only, (Jeremiah 4:2); and when the Lord swears in this manner, he swears by his life, by himself, because he can swear by no greater; and his form of swearing is, "as truly as I live, saith the Lord", (Numbers 14:21,28); so the above angel is said to swear by him that liveth for ever and ever, (Revelation 10:6); and since Christ is the living God, without beginning of days, and end of life, and lives for evermore, he may be thought to swear by himself, by his own life, which is for ever; and as the oath of the Lord is used in condescension by him, to confirm the faith of his people in the immutability of his counsel and promises, and to ascertain unto them the sure performance of them; so it is also used to assure wicked men of the certain performance of his threatenings; and it is as if Christ here said, as sure as I am the living God,

and do and shall live for ever, I will most certainly do the things which next follow.

**DEUT. 32:41. *If I whet my glittering sword***, That is, I will do it as sure as I live, if I do not, be it so and so; what that is is not said, but left to be concluded. A glittering sword is a sword drawn, the blade of it drawn out of the scabbard, cleaned and polished, whetted and made sharp, that it may more easily penetrate and pierce; and this, being brandished, glitters like lightning, as the word used signifies. Whetting the sword is a preparation for doing execution with it; and is a warning, a giving notice of it, as girding: the sword on the thigh also is ascribed to Christ, (Psalm 45:3). 461 This sword intends a sword of justice, the sharp sword said to proceed out of the mouth of Christ, the judiciary sentence which he will pronounce and execute on antichrist, and all his followers, (Revelation 19:15,21); ***and my hand take hold on judgment***: in order to execute it; the allusion is to the laying hold on the instruments of justice and death, as the glittering sword before mentioned, and arrows afterwards; and may have respect to the four sore judgments, or at least to some of them, which the Lord will execute on mystical Babylon, (Ezekiel 14:21 Revelation 18:8); and particularly to the seven vials of God's wrath, which will be poured out on the antichristian states, (Revelation 16:1-21); ***I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and I will reward them that hate me***; his enemies that hate him, and will not have him to rule over them, are the followers of antichrist, who has his name from his opposition to Christ, his hatred of him, and enmity against him; opposing him in his kingly office, taking upon him to exercise dominion and tyranny over the consciences of men, making new laws, and imposing them on them, and dispensing with the laws of Christ; and setting aside his priestly office by the sacrifice of the Mass, granting pardons and indulgences, and advancing the works and merits of men, in opposition to the righteousness of Christ, and pretending even to works of supererogation; making of none effect, as much as in him lies, his prophetic office, by setting up unwritten



traditions before the word of God, and making them the rule of faith and practice, and assuming to himself an infallible interpretation of the sense of Scripture. The vengeance Christ will render, as a righteous reward to those his enemies, is expressed by destroying antichrist with the breath of his mouth; by the beast going into perdition; by leading them captive who have led others; by killing them with the sword who have killed others with it; by pouring out the vials of his wrath on them; by giving them the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath; by smiting them with the sword that comes out of his mouth, and by bringing upon them death, mourning, and famine, and burning them with fire; all which he will most surely render unto them, (2 Thessalonians 2:8 Revelation 13:10 15:1 17:8 18:8) (Revelation 19:15,20,21).

**DEUT. 32:42. *I will make mine arrows drunk with blood***, Signifying, that by various judgments he would bring upon them, which, like arrows, would come suddenly, fly swiftly, and pierce deeply, there would be a prodigious effusion of blood like that in (Revelation 14:20); so that 462 these arrows, which cause it, being plunged and soaked, and covered in it, may be said to be inebriated with it, just as the sword is said to be bathed and filled with blood, (Isaiah 34:5); which prophecy respects the same vengeance of Christ on the selfsame enemies of his as here; and as the whore of Rome is said to be drunken with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus, the arrows of her destruction are represented in just retaliation as drunk with her blood, (Revelation 17:6); ***and my sword shall devour flesh***: the flesh of kings, of captains, of mighty men, of horses, and of them that sit on them the flesh of all men, bond and free, small and great, (Revelation 19:18); that is, shall destroy great multitudes of men: ***[and that] with the blood of the slain, and of the captives***; that is, his arrows should be drunk not only with the blood of these that were wounded and killed, but of the captives; who commonly are spared, but in this case should not, their blood should be shed: it may be rendered, "because of the blood of the slain",

etc. ; because of the blood of the saints whom they have killed, and carried captive, and who have died in prisons: ***from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy***; or "of the enemy"; that is, from the time the enemy began to oppress the saints, and take revenge on them, and shed their blood; all that blood shall be found in them that has been from the beginning shed, and charged to their account, and revenged on them; just as the blood of all the righteous, from the beginning of the world, was brought upon the Jews, (Matthew 23:35) (Revelation 18:24). The Targum of Jerusalem is, "from the heads of their mighty men, the generals of their armies;" to, which agrees the Septuagint version, "from the head of the princes of the enemies;" and so may refer to the head or heads of the antichristian people, the pope of Rome, and his princes, the cardinals, and all the antichristian kings and states, the captains and generals of their armies, which will be brought to Armageddon, and there destroyed, (see Psalm 68:21) (Revelation 16:14,16 17:14 19:18,19,21). 463

**DEUT. 32:43. *Rejoice, O ye nations, [with] his people***, Or, "rejoice, ye nations", who are "his" people; so Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it; the Gentiles, who are the Lord's chosen and covenant people, redeemed and called, and the fulness of them now brought in, and so matter of great rejoicing; or rather, as the Septuagint, which is approved and confirmed by the Apostle Paul, "rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people", (Romans 15:10); and as it is there applied to the then state of the Christian church, when Jews and Gentiles were incorporated and united together; so here it respects future time, when, as the fulness of the Gentiles will be brought in, so the Jews will be converted, and the "loammi", (Hosea 1:9), will be taken off from them, and they will be reckoned among the people of God; and Jews and Gentiles will be joined together in the same Gospel church state, and so are called upon to rejoice in their common salvation, and in their common blessings and privileges, and particularly for what follows: ***for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will***

**render vengeance to his adversaries;** by his servants are meant the martyrs of Jesus, whose blood has been shed by antichrist, and the antichristian powers, his adversaries; as the blood of the Waldenses in the valleys of Piedmont, the Albigenses in Spain, and the Petrobrussians in France, the Bohemians in Germany, the Wickliffites, Lollards and the “martyrs” in Queen Mary’s days in England, with many others; and when inquisition is made for blood, the blood of those will be found out, and vengeance rendered for it: **and will be merciful unto his land, [and] to his people:** or “will atone for” , expiate, cleanse, and purge both land and people; clear the whole earth, which is the Lord’s, from Mahometanism, Paganism, and Popery, and cover it with the knowledge of the Lord by the everlasting Gospel, which will be preached to all nations; and particularly the land of Canaan, laid under an anathema or curse, as threatened, (Malachi 4:6); under which it has lain ever since the destruction of it by the Romans, and has ever since been inhabited by Pagans, Mahometans, and Papists; and, though once a land flowing with milk and honey, has been turned into a barren wilderness, and will thus remain, and Jerusalem, its metropolis, trodden down by the Gentiles, until their times are fulfilled; which now will be, and then it will be restored to its former fruitfulness and fertility, (Luke 21:24 Ezekiel 34:25-27); and will be inhabited by the converted Jews, to whom the Lord will be pacified, upon the foot or Christ’s atonement, which now will be made known and applied unto them, with the full and free pardon of all their sins, (Romans 11:25-27); and 464 thus ends this most excellent and wonderful song, which is of such a large extent and compass, as to reach from the beginning of the Jewish nation, and before it, to the conversion of the Jews in the latter day; an history of more than four thousand years already; and how long more is yet to come before all in it is fulfilled no man can say.

**DEUT. 32:44. And Moses came,** To the people, as the Greek version, the heads of the people being gathered together according to his order,

(Deuteronomy 31:28); The Targum of Jonathan says, he came from the tabernacle, the house of instruction: **and spake all the words of this song in the ears of the people;** which is observed both before and after the reading of it, to show the certainty of it, and how punctually and faithfully he had delivered it: **he, and Hoshea the son of Nun;** the same with Joshua, whose name at first was Hoshea, (Numbers 13:16), probably Joshua read the song to one part of the people, while Moses read it to the other.

**DEUT. 32:45. And Moses made an end of speaking all these words to all Israel.]**

Finished all he had to say to them from the Lord, whether by way of precept, moral, civil, and ceremonial or in the form of a song.

**DEUT. 32:46. And he said unto them,** By way of exhortation: **set your hearts to all the words which I testify among you this day;** it was not enough to hear them, but they were to lay them up in their hearts, and retain them in their memories; and not only so, but reflect on them in their minds, and closely apply to the consideration of them, and get the true knowledge and sense of them, and put it in practice: **which ye shall command your children to observe, to do all the words of this law;** which shows that the exhortation does not respect the song only, but the whole law delivered in this book; which they were not only to attend to themselves, but to transmit to their children, and enjoin them the observance of, that so religion might be perpetuated in their posterity.

**DEUT. 32:47. For it [is] not a vain thing for you,** That is, the law is not, and the observance of it in them and their children; it was no light and trifling matter, but of great importance and consequence, obedience to it being attended with rewards, and disobedience with punishment: 465 **because it [is] your life:** if obeyed, the means of a comfortable and happy life, in the enjoyment of all good things, of the preservation and continuance of it to a length of time; and long life was always reckoned a great temporal mercy: **and through this thing ye shall prolong [your] days in the land whither**

*you go over Jordan to possess it*; that is, through their obedience to the law they should live long in the land of Canaan, which they were just going to possess; which explains what is meant by its being their life; their comfortable living and continuance in the land depended on their obedience to the law; (see Isaiah 1:19,20).

**DEUT. 32:48. *And the Lord spake unto Moses the selfsame day***, On which he finished the reading of the law, and the above song, which was the seventh of Adar or February; according to the Targum of Jonathan, the day he died on; according to the Egyptian Calendar, it was the sixteenth of that month, (see Deuteronomy 34:5); *saying*; as follows.

**DEUT. 32:49. *Get thee up into this mountain Abarim***, Which was near in sight, and pointed at; it was a range of mountains, of which (see Numbers 21:11 27:12 33:47); *[unto] Mount Nebo*; which was one of the mountains of Abarim, and had its name either from its height, or a city of this name, to which it was near, (see Numbers 32:38); Jerom says, in his lays it was shown six miles from Heshbon to the east; it should be read, to the west: *which [is] in the land of Moab*; it formerly belonged to it, but was taken from the Moabites by Sihon, and now possessed by Israel: *that [is] over against Jericho*; which lay on the other side of Jordan, in the land of Canaan: *and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession*; which he might take a view of from the high mountain of Nebo, especially his sight being strengthened by the Lord, as no doubt it was; and this would give him a pleasure to behold, though he might not go into it, and confirm his faith that Israel would possess it, as well as be an emblem to him of the heavenly Canaan he was going to inherit. 466

**DEUT. 32:50. *And die in the mount whither thou goest up***, Immediately after having taken a view of the land, expect to die, prepare for it, and willingly and cheerfully submit to it: *and be gathered unto thy people*; to the spirits of just men made perfect in heaven, his more immediate and more remote ancestors, the souls of good men; for otherwise there were

none that died, and were buried here, before him, and therefore can have no respect to the buryingplace of his people: *as Aaron thy brother died in Mount Hor, and was gathered unto his people*; of which Moses was an eyewitness; and which is observed, because there was a great likeness between the death of him, and what Moses was now called to, both as to the place and manner of it; and likewise the cause of it, later mentioned; as also to make death more easy and familiar, and less terrible to him, when he cared to mind how calmly, cheerfully, and comfortably, his brother Aaron died; (see Numbers 20:25-29).

**DEUT. 32:51. *Because ye trespassed against me among the children of Israel***, By their unbelief, doubting whether God would give water or no to such a rebellious people, and by giving way to passion and wrathful expressions: and this was done *at the waters of Meribahkadesh*; so called, to distinguish it from another Meribah, where also there was a contention on account of water, (Numbers 20:13 27:14): *in the wilderness of Zin*; where Kadesh was, and further describes and distinguishes this place; of the one we read in (Exodus 17:7); and of the other, which is here referred to, in (Numbers 20:1,13); *because ye sanctified me not in, the midst of the children of Israel*; through their unbelief and disagreeable behaviour, they sanctified him not themselves, and gave no honour to him, nor were the cause of his being sanctified by the Israelites; and this was the reason why Moses and Aaron might not enter into the land of Canaan, (Numbers 20:12 27:12-14).

**DEUT. 32:52. *Yet thou shalt see the land before [thee]***, Which Jarchi interprets, afar off; and so does Noldius; he saw it at a distance, as the Old Testament saints saw the things promised afar off, and were persuaded of them, though they did not enjoy them, (Hebrews 11:13): 467 *but thou shalt not go thither unto the land which I give the children of Israel*; the land of Canaan was a gift of God to Israel, into which they were not to be introduced by Moses, but by Joshua; signifying that eternal life, or the heavenly Canaan, is the gift of God

through Christ, the antitype of Joshua, and not to obtained by the works of the law. 468

### Deuteronomy 33

This chapter relates the blessings Moses pronounced upon the people of Israel a little before his death; first, in general, on account of their having a law given them in so glorious a manner, (Deuteronomy 33:1-5); then, in particular, each of the tribes distinctly is blessed, Reuben, (Deuteronomy 33:6); Judah, (Deuteronomy 33:7); Levi, (Deuteronomy 33:8-11); Benjamin, (Deuteronomy 33:12); Joseph, (Deuteronomy 33:13-17); Zebulun and Issachar, (Deuteronomy 33:18,19); Gad, (Deuteronomy 33:20,21); Dan, (Deuteronomy 33:22); Naphtali, (Deuteronomy 33:23); Asher, (Deuteronomy 33:24,25); and the chapter is concluded with some strong intimations of what God was unto the people of Israel in general, and of what he had done and would do for them; all which are expressive of their great happiness, (Deuteronomy 33:26-29).

**DEUT. 33:1.** *And this is the blessing wherewith Moses the man of God blessed the children of Israel before his death.*] Namely, what is related in the following verses, this being the general title to the chapter: Moses is called "the man of God", being raised up of God, and eminently qualified by him with gifts for the work he was called unto, and by whom he was inspired to say what is after expressed: it is a title given to prophets, (1 Samuel 9:6-8); and so Onkelos here paraphrases it, "Moses the prophet of the Lord," and Aben Ezra observes, that this is said to show that he blessed Israel by a spirit of prophecy, and which he did a little before his death, when very near it; and, as the same writer says, on the very day of his death.

**DEUT. 33:2.** *And he said,* What follows, of which, in some things, he was an eye and ear witness, and in others was inspired by the Spirit of God, to deliver his mind and will concerning the future case and state of the several tribes, after he had observed the common benefit and blessing they all enjoyed, by having such a law given them in the manner

it was: 469 *the Lord came from Sinai*; there he first appeared to Moses, and sent him to Egypt, and wrought miracles by him, and delivered his people Israel from thence, and when they were come to this mount he came down on it, as Aben Ezra, from Gaon, or he came "to" it; so to Zion, (Isaiah 59:20), is "out of" or "from Zion", (Romans 11:26); here he appeared and gave the law, and from thence went with Israel through the wilderness, and conducted them to the land of Canaan: *and rose up from Seir unto them*: not to the Edomites which inhabited Seir, as say Jarchi, and the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem, but to the Israelites when they compassed the land of Edom; and the Lord was with them, and gave them some signal proofs of his power and providence, kindness and goodness, to them; particularly, as some observe, by appointing a brazen serpent to be erected for the cure those bitten by fiery ones, which was a type of the glorious Redeemer and Saviour, and this was done on the borders of Edom, (see Numbers 21:4,8); for the words here denote some illustrious appearance of the Lord, like that of the rising sun; so the Targum of Onkelos, "the brightness of his glory from Seir was shown unto us;" and that of Jonathan, "and the brightness of the glory of his Shechinah went from Gebal:" *he shined forth from Mount Paran*: in which the metaphor of the sun rising is continued, and as expressive of its increasing light and splendour: near to this mount was a wilderness of the same name, through which the children of Israel travelled, and where the Lord appeared to them: here the cloud rested when they removed from Sinai; here, or near it, the Spirit of the Lord was given to the seventy elders, and from hence the spies were sent into the land of Canaan, (Numbers 10:12 11:24 12:16 13:3); in this wilderness Ishmael and his posterity dwelt, (Genesis 21:21); but it was not to them the Lord shone forth here, as say the above Jewish writers, and others; but to the Israelites, for here Moses repeated the law, or delivered to them what is contained in the book of Deuteronomy, (see Deuteronomy 1:1); beside, in a literal sense, as these mountains were very near one another,

as Saadiah Gaon observes, the great light which shone on Mount Sinai, when the Lord descended on it, might extend to the other mountains and illuminate them, (see Habakkuk 3:3); 470 **and he came with ten thousands of saints**: or holy angels, as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan, and so Jarchi; which sense is confirmed by the authorities of Stephen the protomartyr, and the Apostle Paul, who speak of the law as given by the disposition of angels, they being present, attending and assisting on that solemn occasion, (Acts 7:57 Galatians 3:19 Hebrews 2:2); (see Psalm 68:17); the appearance of those holy spirits in such great numbers added to the grandeur and solemnity of the giving of the holy law to the people of Israel, as the attendance of the same on Christ at his second coming will add to the lustre and glory of it, (Luke 9:26 2 Thessalonians 1:7,8); **from his right hand [went] a fiery law for them**: the Israelites; Aben Ezra thinks the phrase, "his right hand", is in connection with the preceding clause; and the sense is, that fire came from the law, thousands of saints were at the right hand of God to surround Israel, as the horses of fire and chariots of fire surrounded Elisha; and the meaning of the last words, "a law for them", a law which stands or abides continually; and so the Septuagint version is, "at his right hand angels with him:" no doubt that law is meant which came from God on Mount Sinai, by the ministration of angels, into the hand of Moses; called a fiery law, because it was given out of the midst of the fire, (Deuteronomy 5:26); so the Targum of Onkelos, "the writing of his right hand out of the midst of fire, the law he gave unto us;" and because of its effects on the consciences of men, where it pierces and penetrates like fire, and works a sense of wrath and fiery indignation in them, by reason of the transgressions of it, it being the ministration of condemnation and death on that account; and, because of its use, it serves as a lantern to the feet, and a light to the path of good men: this law may include the judicial and ceremonial laws given at this time; but it chiefly respects the moral law, and which may be said to come

from God, who, as Creator, has a right to be Governor of his creature, and to enact what laws he pleases, and from his right hand, in allusion to men's writing with their right hand, this being written by the finger of God; and because a peculiar gift of his to the Israelites, gifts being given by the right hand of men; and may denote the authority and power with which this law came enforced, 471 and Christ seems to be the person from whose right hand it came: (see Psalm 68:17,18 Acts 7:38).

**DEUT. 33:3. Yea, he loved the people**, The people of Israel, of which his giving the law to them in such a glorious manner was an instance, and was a distinguishing blessing which other nations were not favoured with, (see Deuteronomy 4:6,8 Psalm 147:19,20 Romans 9:4); how much more is the love of God shown to his spiritual Israel and special people, by giving them his Gospel, the precious truths, promises, and ordinances of it, and, above all, in giving them his Son to be the Redeemer and Saviour of them, as revealed therein! these he embraces in his arms and in his bosom, as the word here signifies; admitting them to great nearness and familiarity with him, to commune with Father, Son, and Spirit, to a participation of all the blessings of grace here, and to the enjoyment of glory hereafter: **all his saints [are] in thy hand**; not the sons of Levi, who were round about the ark, as Aben Ezra interprets it; rather all the people of Israel, who were chosen to be a holy people to the Lord above all people, and who were the care of his providence, protected by his power, and guided with his right hand; and were in a wonderful manner kept and preserved by him, both at the time of the giving of the law, and in their passage through the wilderness; it is eminently true of the chosen people of God, who are given to Christ, and made his care and charge, as all such who are sanctified and set apart by God the Father are, they are preserved in Christ, (Jude 1:1); and these are sanctified in and by Christ, and by the Spirit of Christ, and so may be truly called his saints; and they are in the hands of Christ, as dear to him as his right hand, highly valued by him, held in his right hand;

they are in his possession, are his peculiar people, portion, and inheritance, they are at his dispose, under his guidance and direction; and are in his custody and under his protection, and where they are safe from every enemy, and can never be snatched, taken, or removed from thence; (see John 10:28,29); here they are put by the Father, as an instance of his love to them, and care of them, though not without the consent and desire of the Son, and this was done in eternity, when they were chosen in him: **and they sat down at thy feet**; which may respect the position of the Israelites at the bottom of Mount Sinai, while the law was giving, which may be said to be the feet of the Lord, he being on the top of the mount, (see Exodus 19:17,18 24:10); all the Targums interpret it of the feet of 472 the cloud of glory, they pitching their tents where that rested, (Numbers 9:17,18); some think it an allusion to scholars sitting at the feet of their masters to receive instructions from them, (see Acts 22:3); so the disciples and followers of Christ sit at his feet, attending on his word and ordinances with calmness and serenity of mind, with much spiritual pleasure and delight, and where they continue and abide; and which may denote their modesty and humility, their subjection to his ordinances, and readiness to receive his doctrines, and their perseverance in them, (see Mark 5:15 Luke 10:39 Song of Solomon 2:3); the word signifies, in the Arabic language, to sit down at a table, and so the word is used in the Arabic version of (Matthew 8:11 Luke 11:37); and the ancient manner being reclining, the guests might be said to sit at the feet of each, especially at the feet of the master; so Christ sits at his table, and his people with him at his feet, (Song of Solomon 1:12); **[everyone] shall receive of thy words**; of the words of the law, as the Israelites, who heard them and promised obedience to them, (Exodus 24:7); and would hear and receive them again, (Joshua 8:34,35); and so Christ's disciples, everyone of them that hath heard and learned of the Father, and comes to him, and believes in him, receives the words or doctrines given him by the Father, (John 17:8); so as to understand them, approve

of them, love them, believe them, and act according to them; these they receive into their hearts as well as into their heads, with all readiness, gladness, and meekness; even everyone of the persons before described or loved by the Lord, are in the hands of Christ and sitting at his feet.

**DEUT. 33:4. *Moses commanded us a law***, The law was of God, it came forth from his right hand, (Deuteronomy 33:2); it is of his enacting, a declaration of his will, and has his authority stamped upon it, who is the lawgiver, and which lays under obligation to regard it; but it was delivered to Moses, and by him to the children of Israel, on whom he urged obedience to it; and so it is said to come by him, and sometimes is called the law of Moses, (see John 1:17 7:19,23 8:5); **[even] the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob**; which either describes the persons who were commanded to keep the law, the tribes of Jacob or congregation of Israel, who were the Lord's people, portion, and inheritance, (Deuteronomy 32:9); or the law commanded, which was to be valued, not only as a peculiar treasure, but to be considered a 473 possession, an estate, an inheritance, to be continued among them, and to be transmitted to their posterity, (see <19B9111>Psalm 119:111); these are the words of the people of Israel, and therefore are thus prefaced in the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem, "the children of Israel said, Moses commanded, etc." they were represented by Moses.

**DEUT. 33:5. *And he was king in Jeshurun***, That is, in Israel, or over the people of Israel, of which name of theirs, (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 32:15"); either God, as Jarchi; for the government of the Israelites was a theocracy, and their laws were immediately from God, and by him they were guided and directed in all things; wherefore, when they were so importunate for a change in their government, and to have a king over them, they are said to reject the Lord, that he should not reign over them, (1 Samuel 8:7); or Moses, as Aben Ezra on the place, Maimonides, and others; who, under God, had the civil government of the Hebrews; both may be

received, God was the supreme Governor, and Moses the chief magistrate under him: **when the heads of Israel [and] the tribes of the people were gathered together**; at Mount Sinai, to hear the law there and then given, or to hear it repeated by Moses, as in this book of Deuteronomy, who were at different times convened together for that purpose, (see Deuteronomy 1:1 5:1); next follow the particular blessings of the several tribes, beginning with Reuben the firstborn.

**DEUT. 33:6. Let Reuben live, and not die**, As a tribe, continue and not be extinct, though they should not excel, because of the sin of their progenitor; and it may have a special regard to the preservation of them, of their families on the other side Jordan, while they passed over it with their brethren into Canaan, and of them in that expedition to help the other tribes in the conquest of the country and the settlement of them in it; which Jacob by a spirit of prophecy foresaw, and in a prayer of faith petitioned for their safety: all the three Targums refer the words to a future state, as a wish for them, that they might live and enjoy an eternal life, and not die the death of the wicked in the world to come; and which they call the second death, and from whom the Apostle John seems to have borrowed the phrase, (Revelation 2:11) (Revelation 20:6 21:8); Reuben signifies, “see the Son”; and all that see the Son of God in a spiritual manner, and 474 believe in him with a true faith, as they live spiritually now, shall live eternally hereafter, and never die the second or eternal death; on them that shall have no power, (see John 6:40); **and let [not] his men be few**; or, “though his men be few?” as Bishop Patrick chooses to render the words, and as they will bear, **w**, “vau”, being sometimes so used, of which Noldius gives instances; and the number of men in this tribe were but few in comparison of some others; and so those that see the Son of God and believe in him are but a small number; for all men have not faith. (2 Thessalonians 3:2)

**DEUT. 33:7. And this [is the blessing] of Judah**, Which follows; the same supplement of the words is made in the Targums of Jonathan

and Jerusalem; but Aben Ezra thinks it refers to what goes before, that this, the same thing prayed for or prophesied of Reuben, belongs also to Judah, that he should live and not die; it may be in the wars in which that tribe would be and was engaged: **and he said, hear, Lord, the voice of Judah**; in prayer, as all the Targums paraphrase it, which was eminently fulfilled in David, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and other kings, which were of this tribe; who, when in distress, lifted up their voice in prayer to God, and were heard and delivered, as the Lord’s people in all ages are: Judah signifies professing, confessing, praising, etc. this tribe was both a praying and praising people, as all good men be; they profess the name of the Lord, and their faith in him; they confess their sins and unworthiness; they praise the Lord for his mercies, temporal and spiritual, and pray to him for what they want; and their voice is heard with pleasure, and answered: particularly Judah was a type of Christ, who was of this tribe, and whose voice in prayer for his people has been always heard: **and bring him unto his people**; in peace, often engaged war, so all the Targums: and as it may refer to Christ his antitype, it may respect his incarnation, when he came to his own and was not received by them; and to his resurrection from the dead, when he appeared to his disciples, to their great joy; and to the ministry of the Gospel among the Gentiles, when to him was the gathering of the people; and will be further accomplished at the last day, when he shall return and appear to them that look for him, a second time, without sin unto salvation: **475 let his hands be sufficient for him**; both to work with, and provide for themselves all the necessaries of life, and to fight with their enemies, and defend themselves against them; so Christ’s hands have been sufficient, or he has had a sufficiency of power and strength in his hands, to combat with and overcome all his and our enemies, to work out the salvation of his people, and to supply all their wants: **and be thou an help [to him] from his enemies**: which this tribe often experienced in their wars with their enemies, being very warlike and

courageous, successful and victorious, both before they had kings and in the several kings of their tribe, as David, Jehoshaphat, and others; and was remarkably fulfilled in Christ, whose helper the Lord was as man and Mediator, (see Isaiah 1:7-9 49:1-26); no mention is made of Simeon, because of the affair of Baalpeor, in which that tribe had a great concern, (Numbers 25:1-18); as Aben Ezra observes; or because, according to Jacob's prophecy, it was to be scattered in Israel; though the same is also said of Levi, who yet is here blessed; rather therefore the reason is, because Simeon had his inheritance in the midst of the tribe of Judah, and so was blessed in it, (see Joshua 19:1); thus the Targum of Jonathan expresses it here, "and he joined in his portion and in his blessing, Simeon his brother;" some copies of the Septuagint version, as that in the king of Spain's Bible, make mention of him at the end of Reuben's blessing, "and let Simeon be much in number."

**DEUT. 33:8.** *And of Levi he said*, That is, Moses said of the tribe of Levi, as both the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem: **[let] thy Thummim and thy Urim [be] with thy Holy One**; with Aaron, as the same Targums interpret it, who was of the tribe of Levi, and was a holy good man, a saint of the Lord, as he is called, (Psalm 106:16); of the Urim and Thummim, which were with him and with every high priest, (see Gill on "Exodus 28:30"); and though they were not in use under the second temple, yet had their fulfilment in Christ the antitype of Aaron, who may be chiefly here intended; who is after called the Lord's Holy One, as he is, both as God and man, holy in both his natures, divine and human, and in his life and actions; and with him are the true Urim and Thummim, lights 476 and perfections, the light of nature, grace and glory, and all perfections, both divine and human; (see Gill on "Exodus 28:30") : **whom thou didst prove at Massah, [and with] whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah**; which, as it may respect Aaron, may be understood either of the Lord's proving him and contending with him, by suffering the children of Israel to murmur

against him and Moses, at the said places; when, according to the three Targums, he stood in the temptation, and was perfect and found faithful; or of Levi, who, with the rest of the tribes, tried him, and strove with him at the same places; though Jarchi says they did not murmur with the rest that murmured: as it may refer to Christ the antitype of Levi, the sense is, that the Urim and Thummim should be with the Holy One, the Messiah, whom thou, O Levi, with the rest of the tribes, tempted and strove with at the places mentioned; for it is expressly said, they tempted the Lord, (Exodus 17:7); and which is interpreted of Christ, (1 Corinthians 10:9).

**DEUT. 33:9.** *Who said unto his father and to his mother, I have not seen him*, Which some understand of the high priests who were of this tribe, and according to the law were not to defile themselves, or mourn for a father or mother, (Leviticus 21:11); or rather, as others, of their having no respect to them in judgment, but determining all causes that came before them according to the law of God, and the rules of justice and equity, in the most impartial manner, without having any regard to the nearest relations to them: with this compare what Christ the antitype of Levi says, in (Matthew 12:49,50); **neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor knew his own children**; had no respect to persons in judgment, though ever so nearly related: many restrain this to the affair of the golden calf, when the tribe of Levi gathered together, girded their swords on their thighs, and slew every man his brother, companion, and neighbour, guilty of that idolatry, (Exodus 32:26,27); **for they have observed thy word, and kept thy covenant**; the law of God, spoken by him, and had the nature of a covenant with the people of Israel: this the tribe of Levi observed, not only what respects the worship of God, and the contrary to it, idolatry, but all other moral and religious duties; Christ fulfilled the whole law, and did always and all things what pleased the Lord, (John 8:29). 477

**DEUT. 33:10.** *They shall teach Jacob thy statutes, and Israel thy law*, The priests and



Levites, being dispersed among each of the tribes, having cities in them allotted to them, taught the people the laws, statutes, and ordinances of the Lord, moral, civil, and ceremonial, (see Malachi 2:6,7); **they shall put incense before thee**; upon the altar of incense, which none but a priest might do, as the case of Uzziah shows; and which, the Jews say, he might do but once: the same priest might not offer incense twice; a new priest was always employed: in this they, were typical of Christ, the only Intercessor who is always at the golden altar, to offer up the prayers of all saints with his much incense, (Revelation 8:3,4); **and whole burnt offerings upon thine altar**; the altar of burnt offering, typical of Christ, who is both altar, sacrifice, and priest.

**DEUT. 33:11. Bless, Lord, his substance**, Which lay in tithes, firstfruits, etc. for the priests and Levites had no share in the division of the land; unless this can be understood of the cities and suburbs which were given them, or of houses and fields devoted, which fell unto them, or rather of their cattle, for the use of which they had suburbs appointed them; for otherwise in husbandry and merchandise they were not employed: some render it "an host" or army, their service being a militia, or warfare, (Numbers 4:3); Jarchi refers this to the Hasmonaeans or Maccabees, which were of this tribe; **and accept the work of his hands**; in offering incense and sacrifices, and all other administrations of the office of priests and Levites; thus the righteousness and sacrifice of Christ are of a sweet smelling savour, and very acceptable to God; and all the spiritual sacrifices of the saints who are priests unto God, as of prayer and praise, are acceptable to him through Jesus Christ: **smite through the loins of them that rise against him**; such as were the companies of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; and in all ages faithful ministers of the word meet with many enemies, whom they would not be, able to withstand were not the Lord to appear for them, and protect them from them, and smite them thoroughly: **and of them that hate them, that they rise not again**; destroying them with an utter destruction, so

that they are not able to make any other efforts upon them; for such who are enemies to the priests of the Lord are enemies 478 to him, and to true religion, enemies to God and Christ, to the law and to the Gospel, to the word of God and to the ordinances of it, and therefore to be severely handled and thoroughly punished: Christ's enemies shall all be subdued under him; (see Psalm 110:1,5,6).

**DEUT. 33:12. [And] of Benjamin he said**, The tribe of Benjamin, as the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem; which is taken notice of next to Levi, because, as the priesthood was in the tribe of Levi, the temple in which the priests officiated was in the tribe of Benjamin, or near it; and is observed next but one to Judah, and before his elder brother Joseph, because his tribe lay between Judah and Joseph, (Joshua 18:11); and Levi having no inheritance in the land: **the beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him**; this is commonly understood of the tribe of Benjamin, beloved by the Lord, as the head of the tribe was by his father Jacob; the first king of Israel being of that tribe, and the temple built in it, or on the edge of it, and its land the most fat and fertile of the land of Canaan, as Josephus observes; and may be said to "dwell by him", the Lord, because the tabernacle of the Lord was so near that tribe, and so to dwell "in safety" under his protection, and which was the means of preserving it from apostasy, when ten tribes revolted: though the Messiah may be intended, the Son of God, and man of God's right hand, the antitype of Benjamin, the beloved of the Lord, and dear son of his love; his Benjamin, who is now in human nature exalted at his right hand: and this may denote his inhabitation in the flesh, and dwelling by or near Benjamin, being born at Bethlehem in the tribe of Judah, bordering on Benjamin, and frequently had his abode in Jerusalem, which was in the tribe of Benjamin, (Joshua 18:28); and where he was in safety amidst his enemies, they not having power to lay hold on him until his hour was come: **[and the Lord] shall cover him all the day long**; for ever, as Jarchi notes, because that, after Jerusalem was chosen, the divine Majesty dwelt

in no other place: this may be understood either of the Messiah covering Benjamin and protecting him, as he is the covert of all his Benjamites and beloved ones, from all their enemies, from all evils and dangers, from all storms and tempests, and everything troublesome and distressing, (see Isaiah 32:2); or the Lord's covering his beloved One the Messiah; as he did in his infancy, from the designs of Herod upon his life, and from the 479 attempts of others before his time was come; he hid him in the shadow of his hand, (Isaiah 49:2); **and he shall dwell between his shoulders**; either the Lord shall dwell between the shoulders of Benjamin; the temple in which the Lord dwelt was built on Mount Moriah, in the tribe of Benjamin, in the highest part of his land, as Jarchi notes; the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem paraphrase the words, "in his border the Shechinah (or the glory of the Shechinah of the Lord) shall dwell," for if the temple was not within the tribe of Benjamin, yet it was certainly on the borders of it: or Benjamin shall dwell between the shoulders of the Lord, being bore up and supported by him: Christ dwells in the hearts of his people, and over them as an head, and they dwell upon his shoulders, on which the care and government of them lies, (Isaiah 9:6); in the Talmud this passage is applied to the days of the Messiah.

**DEUT. 33:13. And of Joseph he said,** The tribe of Joseph, as the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem: **blessed of the Lord [be] his land**; as the lands inherited by his sons were extremely fruitful, the countries of lead and Bashan by Manasseh, and the fields of Samaria by Ephraim: Jarchi says, "there was not in the inheritance of the tribes a land so full of all good things as the land of Joseph;" typical of the church of Christ, the antitypical Joseph, which abounds with all good things through him, or of the better country in heaven: **for the precious things of heaven**; that is, the pleasant, precious, and excellent fruits, reproduced by the influence of the heavens, particularly showers of rain which descend from thence; emblems of the grace of God, and Gospel of Christ, which bring spiritual blessings to the

sons of men on earth, and make them fruitful in every good word and work: for the dew; which descends also from heaven, and is of unspeakable use to the fruits of the earth, and is sometimes used as an emblem of the favour and goodness of God to his people, (Hosea 14:5); **and for the deep that coucheth beneath**; that is, beneath the earth, and breaks out upon it, and waters it, and makes it fruitful, which happiness the 480 land of Joseph had, as well as the rain and dew of heaven: this is to be understood of springs and fountains that flow out of the earth to the enriching of it; and so the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem paraphrase the words, and may be applied to Christ and to his Gospel, (Song of Solomon 4:15 Isaiah 12:3 Joel 3:18).

**DEUT. 33:14. And for the precious fruits [brought forth] by the sun,** Which has a wonderful influence upon many and most of the fruits of the earth, to produce them out of their seeds in it, to bring them forward, to ripen and perfect them, and to make them rich and excellent. Jarchi says, "the land of Joseph lay open to the sun, and it sweetened the fruits of it;" it improved them, and made them more valuable; and this is spiritually true of Christ the sun of righteousness, to whose influence are owing the blessings of grace, redemption, peace, pardon, and justification, and the graces of the Spirit, faith, hope, and love, and by what believers are filled with, the fruits of righteousness, (see Malachi 4:2 Philippians 1:11); **and for the precious things put forth by the moon**; the fruits which the moon helps forward by its coolness and moisture; and those the above Jewish writer says are cucumbers and gourds; and as various creatures are affected by the moon, it is observed by a naturalist, that onions, when the moon waxes old, increase, and flag when it is young; and Pliny says, that at the increase of the moon all sort of corn grows bigger and larger; but a late learned writer remarks, that though upon the pressure of the moon on the globe many things depend, as the ebbing and flowing of the sea, epileptic and convulsive paroxysms, yet it does not appear that this

pressure exerts its power on plants, so as to thrust them forth, and therefore thinks this respects the ejection or protrusion of monthly fruits; for the word here used is in the plural number, and signifies “months”; and so Onkelos paraphrases the words, “it produces precious fruits at the beginning of every month;” or ripe fruit at the beginning of every month, as the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem; for the spiritual meaning, (see Revelation 22:2).

**DEUT. 33:15. *And for the chief things of the ancient mountains,*** Which were from the beginning of the world, and for which the land, possessed by the children of Joseph, Manasseh, and Ephraim, were famous; as the 481 mountains of Gilead and Bashan, inherited by the former, and Mount Ephraim, and the mountains of Samaria, by the latter; which produced, besides great quantities of grass and corn, also vines, figs, olives, etc. ***and for the precious things of the lasting hills;*** which will endure as long as the world, the same as before in other words; and which precious things may be emblems of the spiritual blessings of grace, provided in an everlasting covenant, and given to Christ for his people before the world began, or any mountains and hills were formed, and which are as lasting and as immovable as they are; (see Proverbs 8:22-31), (Isaiah 54:10 2 Timothy 1:9 Ephesians 1:3).

**DEUT. 33:16. *And for the precious things of the earth, and fulness thereof,*** Corn of all sorts produced out of the earth, and grass that grows out of it, and cattle that feed upon it; for all which some part of the land of Joseph, particularly Bashan, was famous; as for the oaks that grew on it, so for the pasturage of it, and the cattle it bred, (Deuteronomy 32:14); (see Psalm 22:12); ***and [for] the good will of him that dwelt in the bush;*** the angel of the Lord, the Word and Son of God, who appeared to Moses in the bush, and made himself known as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and expressed his good will to Israel, by sending Moses to deliver them out of their bondage: and the favour and good will of the same divine Person is here wished for, and which has appeared in his assumption of human nature,

obedience, sufferings, and death, (Luke 2:14). The bush was an emblem of Israel, and the state they were then in, and of the church of Christ; of which (see Gill on “Exodus 3:2”); and where Christ may be said to dwell, as he did among men, when he was made flesh, and does dwell in the midst of his churches, and in the hearts of his people by faith: ***let [the blessing] come upon the head of Joseph;*** that is, in all things, as Onkelos; or all these blessings, as the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem; all before mentioned, let them come openly and visibly, and in great plenty, upon the posterity of Joseph, who was a type of Christ, the head of the righteous, on whom all the blessings of grace are, and from whom they descend to all his spiritual offspring, (Proverbs 10:6 Ephesians 1:3); ***and upon the top of the head of him [that was] separated from his brethren;*** when he was sold by them into Egypt; the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem are, 482 “and was shining in the glory of his brethren;” that is, when he was a ruler in Egypt, and had honour from his brethren there, and was beautiful and glorious among them, as a Nazarite, as the word here used signifies, (see Lamentations 4:7); and may he applied to Christ, who was chosen from among the people, and separated from sinners, and called a Nazarene, (Psalm 89:19 Hebrews 7:26 Matthew 1:23).

**DEUT. 33:17. *His glory [is like] the firstling of his bullock,*** Such as were in Bashan, a country possessed by the posterity of Joseph, (see Psalm 22:12 Amos 4:1); and so might be called “his” bullock, or a young bull, was reckoned both comely and majestic; so Menis or Mnevis, king of Egypt, preferred a bull above all animals to be worshipped, because the most beautiful of all, as Aelianus relates; and Astarte, according to Sanchoniatho, put a bull’s head upon her own, as a sign of royalty or kingly power. The Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem refer this to the birthright which belonged to Reuben, and was taken from him, and given to Joseph, (see 1 Chronicles 5:2). Some will have Joshua intended by the firstling of his bullock, so Jarchi; who was of the tribe of Ephraim, and so famous for

his strength and courage, his warlike exploits and victories, and the glory, honour, and renown he obtained; and who was a type of Christ, the first and only begotten Son of God, the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person; this is applied to the Messiah in some ancient Jewish writings : **and his horns [are like] the horns of unicorns;** of the monoceros or rhinoceros; and as the strength of these creatures, as of others, lies in their horns, these are figures of the power and strength of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, the sons of Joseph; (see Numbers 23:22); **with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth;** not to the ends of the world, as if the posterity of Joseph should carry their conquests and spread their dominion over all people to the ends of the world, as the Targum of Jonathan suggests; but to the ends of the land of Canaan, which was done by Joshua, when he smote the thirty one kings of that country. The word "push" is used in allusion to the horns of creatures, with which they push, drive away from them, or hurt and destroy those that annoy them: 483 **and they [are] the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they [are] the thousands of Manasseh;** though Manasseh was the eldest son of Joseph, fewer are ascribed to him than to Ephraim the younger, according to Jacob's prediction, (Genesis 48:19). This has been in a spiritual sense verified in Christ, the antitype of Joseph, the horn of salvation, who by his great strength has vanquished all his, and the enemies of his people, and even spoiled principalities and powers.

**DEUT. 33:18. And of Zebulun he said,** The tribe of Zebulun, as the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem, with whom Issachar is joined, they being brethren, and of the same mother as well as father; though Zebulun the youngest is set before Issachar the older, as in Jacob's blessing, (Genesis 49:13,14); **rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out;** in their going out to sea, to merchandise, to traffic in foreign parts, it being a maritime tribe, (see Genesis 49:13); and so are called upon to rejoice and be thankful for their safe preservation on the seas, and success in trade; and to this sense are the paraphrases

of Jonathan and Jerusalem: though Onkelos interprets it of their going out to war against their enemies, and certain it is that they were also a warlike as well as a seafaring tribe; (see Judges 5:18); **and Issachar, in thy tents;** being a tribe that stayed at home, and attended to husbandry, and dwelt in tents, to take care of and feed their cattle; in doing which they should be prosperous, and have occasion to rejoice, and be thankful to the Lord: though the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem carry it to a different sense, to their schools, in which they dwelt: this tribe being, as supposed, a learned tribe, studious, in the law; which is gathered from (1 Chronicles 12:32).

**DEUT. 33:19. They shall call the people unto the mountain,** To the mountain of the house of the sanctuary, as all the three Targums; to the temple built on a mountain, which Moses by a spirit of prophecy foresaw would be, to which the tribes of Zebulun and Issachar would not only come up themselves, though at the more distant parts of the land; but call and urge others, both Israelites and Gentiles, to do the same, partly by their example, and partly by persuasions and arguments; not the tribes of Israel that lay nearest them only, but the Heathens, the Tyrians and Sidonians, on whom they bordered, and the Gentiles in Galilee of the Gentiles, which were neighbours to them; a like instance see in (Isaiah 2:2,3); and perhaps this may have respect to the times of Christ and his apostles, and 484 to their being in those parts where the Gospel was preached, and many people were called, (Matthew 4:13-16); **there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness;** or true sacrifices, as the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem, in opposition to illegitimate ones, which were not according to the law, that had blemishes and defects in them, and to such as were gotten by robbery, or in an unlawful way; and may signify all righteous actions and good works done in faith, and from right principles, though not to be depended upon for a justifying righteousness before God; and all spiritual sacrifices, especially the sacrifices of praise for all blessings, and particularly for the righteousness of Christ; and these are to be

offered in the church of God, and upon the altar, which sanctifies every gift, and from whence they come up with acceptance to God: **for they shall suck [off] the abundance of the sea**; get a great deal of riches by trading at sea, and therefore under great obligations to offer sacrifices to the Lord, by whom they were prospered: **and [off] the treasure hid in the sand**; as gold and silver, pearls and corals, and the like, extracted from thence; or riches buried there through shipwrecks; or it may design the great wealth and riches they got by glass made of sand, taken out of the river Belus, which washed the coast of the tribe of Zebulun, as many historians relate .

**DEUT. 33:20. And of Gad he said**, The tribe of Gad, as the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem: **blessed [be] he that enlargeth Gad**; that is, the Lord, to whom the praise and glory were to be given, who had appointed to Gad a large inheritance on the other side Jordan, and had settled him in it, and which became larger by the conquest of the Hagarites, and others, (1 Chronicles 5:18-22); **he dwelleth as a lion**; bold and courageous, secure, and without fear of any of his enemies, though near him, on his borders, as the Moabites and Ammonites were; of the same spirit and temper were the men of the tribe of Gad in the times of David, (1 Chronicles 12:8); **and teareth the arm with the crown of the head**, at once, just as a lion tears its prey; which figurative phrases are expressive of this tribe conquering and destroying strong and mighty men, signified by the "arm", in which the strength of a man lies, and of kings and governors, pointed at by the 485 "crown of the head"; as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan; which was done in the times of Joshua, when with and under him they subdued and destroyed the kings and princes of the land of Canaan.

**DEUT. 33:21. And he provided a first part for himself**, That is, the portion of the land of Sihon and Og, as Jarchi rightly interprets it; which was the beginning or firstfruits of the subduing of the land that was promised; this he looked at, chose, and desired it as his inheritance, (Numbers 32:1,2); **because there,**

**[in] a portion of the lawgiver, [was he] seated**; or in the portion and part of the inheritance of Israel was he placed by Moses the lawgiver, according to the will of God; or because there were in it palaces and towers of great personages, lawgivers, kings, and princes, well covered and strongly fortified; or here he was "hid", or "protected", i.e. their families, wives, and children, while they assisted their brethren in subduing Canaan: **and he came with the heads of the people**; either "to" them, to Moses, Eleazar, and the seventy elders, and the heads of the tribes of Israel, to ask leave to have his part and portion on the other side Jordan, or "with" them, as we supply it; came with them over Jordan armed, to assist in the conquest and subduing of the land of Canaan: **he executed the justice of the Lord, and his judgments with Israel**; that is, either he justly and truly fulfilled all his promises and engagements, on condition of which he was placed on the other side; or he, together with the rest of the Israelites, executed the righteous judgment of God upon the Canaanites, in the expulsion and destruction of them.

**DEUT. 33:22. And of Dan he said**, Of the tribe of Dan, as the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem: **Dan [is] a lion's whelp**; or like one for boldness, strength, and courage; and was verified in Samson, who was of this tribe; who, when a young lion roared against him, the Spirit of the Lord came on him, and he tore it to pieces, (Judges 14:5,6); **he shall leap from Bashan**; not Dan, for he was seated far from that country; but the sense is, he was like to a young lion for its strength, when it leaps from Bashan, as Aben Ezra rightly explains it. Bashan was a mountain in which lions haunted, and from whence they might be said to leap, as they do when they seize on their prey: it may have some respect to 486 the leap of the Danites from the northwest part of the land of Israel, where they were settled, but was not sufficient for them, to the northeast of it, when they went against Leshem, and took it, and called it Dan; (see Joshua 19:47).

**DEUT. 33:23. And of Naphtali he said**, The tribe of Naphtali, as the Targums of Jonathan

and Jerusalem: ***O Naphtali, satisfied with favour***; with the favour of men, which to have is a great blessing; and as he gave goodly words to others, he had the good word of others, (Genesis 49:21); and with the favour of God, as the next clause shows; which is the greatest blessing of all, and is special and peculiar, free and sovereign, and the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; and to be full of this, and satisfied of an interest in it, is the highest of enjoyments; and nothing is of a more satisfying nature, it is a feast of itself; (see Psalm 63:3,5); ***and full with the blessing of the Lord***; as such must needs be who are full of and satisfied with the your, good will, and love of God; for they are filled with all spiritual blessings, with all the blessings of grace, which spring from his free favour, as pardon of sin, a justifying righteousness, adoption, sanctifying grace, a right and title to eternal life. This may have respect to the temporal happiness of this tribe, which had a remarkable share in the favour and good will of God, and in the blessings of his goodness. Strabo, an Heathen writer, speaking of this part of the land of Judea, says it was a happy and fruitful country, bearing all manner of fruit; in this tribe was the fruitful country of Gennesaret, full of delightful gardens and fields, which lay along by a lake of that name, frequently mentioned in the New Testament; which country, Josephus says, one may call the ambition of nature; and the Targum of Jonathan has it, "ye shall be full of the fruits of the valley of Gennesaret;" and particularly this country was favoured with the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ; (see Matthew 4:13-15 9:1 11:23); ***possess thou the west and the south***; not the west and south of the land of Israel; for, according to Josephus, this tribe lay to the east and north of it, just the reverse; and it is plain from (Joshua 19:34); that it had Asher on the west, and Zebulun on the south; wherefore some understand this of the commodities this tribe was supplied with, as through the tribe of Asher on the west, on which those trading cities Tyre and Sidon bordered; and 487 through Zebulun on the south, which was near the sea, and was given to navigation and trade: though

it should be observed that the word for "west" signifies the "sea"; and intends not the Mediterranean sea, which this tribe did not reach; but the sea of Tiberias and Gennesaret, as all the Targums explain it; and Bochart observes, that the portion of Naphtali reached from the south of the city of Dan to the sea of Tiberias; so that the south is observed with respect to Dan last mentioned, and the west or sea to the sea of Tiberias.

**DEUT. 33:24. *And of Asher he said***, The tribe of Asher, as the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem: ***[let] Asher [be] blessed with children***; with large numbers, as it appears this tribe was, having in it 53,400 men of war, (Numbers 26:47). It was esteemed a great blessing to have many children, (Psalm 128:3,4); or "above the children"; above or more than the rest of the children of Jacob; (see Luke 2:36,38); Jarchi observes, that he had seen, in a book called Siphri, that there was none in all the tribes blessed with children as Asher, but not known how: ***let him be acceptable to his brethren***; either for his excellent bread, and royal dainties, (Genesis 49:20); or for the goodness of his olives and oil, and for the brass and iron found in this tribe, as follows; or, as some say, because of his children, his daughters being very beautiful: ***and let him dip his foot in oil***; have such plenty of it, that if he would he might dip or wash his feet in it; and it was usual not only to anoint the head, but the feet also, with oil, (Luke 7:46).

**DEUT. 33:25. *Thy shoes [shall be] iron and brass***, Either they should have such an abundance of these metals, that they could if they would have made their shoes of them; but that is not usual; though it is said of Empedocles the philosopher, that he wore shoes of brass, which was very singular; and some think that this tribe, because of the abundance of these metals, used to stick their shoes with iron and brass nails at the bottom of them, as country people, soldiers, and travellers in various nations do; but the true sense seems to be, that the land that fell to this tribe, and on which they trod, should yield much iron and brass; as in Carmel, a mountain on the borders

of it, brass was taken, as says Hesychius; and Zidon is by Homer said to abound with brass, which belonged to this tribe; and Sarepta, another city in it, had its name from 488 *Prx*, which signifies to melt, from the melting of these metals in it; (see Deuteronomy 8:9); though some Jewish writers take the sense to be, that the land of Asher was so strongly fortified as if it had been enclosed with walls of brass and iron, or the gates of its cities were shut up with bolts and bars of iron and brass, as Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech observe; so the Arabic: *and as thy days, [so shall] thy strength [be]*; the same in old age as in youth; which is the sense of the Latin Vulgate version, and all the Targums: such were the vigour and strength of. Moses himself, (Deuteronomy 34:7); and so may denote a renewal of youth, like that of eagles; and, in a spiritual sense, a revival of the graces of the Spirit of God, as to the exercise of them, and an increase of spiritual strength, so that the inward man is renewed day by day; and may also denote such a measure of strength given, as is proportioned to the events that daily befall, or to the services and sufferings men are called unto; (see 1 Corinthians 10:13 2 Corinthians 4:16 12:9,10).

**DEUT. 33:26. [There is] none like unto the God of Jeshurun,** Or Israel, as all the three Targums; for this is one of the names of the people of Israel; (see Gill on "Deuteronomy 32:15"); and the Lord was their God in a special sense, having chosen, redeemed them, and made a covenant with them; and there is no God like him for the perfections of his nature, his purity and holiness, his goodness, wisdom, power, faithfulness, etc. and for the wonderful works of nature, providence, and grace, done by him; and for the blessings of goodness, temporal and spiritual, he bestows on men. The tribes being particularly blessed, the whole body of the people are pronounced happy, and whose happiness is enlarged on in (Deuteronomy 33:26-29); *[who] rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky*; which he has the sovereign rule and disposal of, and can and does dispose of all the artillery therein, as illustrious proofs of his

glory and excellency, and for the help of his people, and the destruction of their enemies; as when he sent forth hail, thunderings, and lightnings, upon the Egyptians, and frightened them; and cast down hailstones upon the Canaanites, and slew many of them; and when the stars in their course fought against Sisera; (see Psalm 68:4,33,34) (Judges 5:20). 489

**DEUT. 33:27. The eternal God [is thy] refuge,** God is eternal, from everlasting to everlasting; the Ancient of days, before all things, and all time; which is, and was, and is to come: the same is true of Christ, who is the everlasting Father, or Father of eternity, the true God, and eternal life; as appears from his nature, having the whole fulness, all the perfections of deity in him; from his office, as Mediator, in which he was set up from everlasting; from his concern in eternal election, in the everlasting covenant, and in the creation of all things out of nothing: and he is the refuge of his people, the antitype of the cities of refuge, to whom sinners, under a sense of sin, flee for refuge; and where they are safe from avenging justice, the wrath of God, the condemnation of the law, everlasting ruin and destruction, or the second death; or their "mansion", or "dwelling place"; which he has been in all generations, as Moses also says, (Psalm 90:1,2). Such is Christ to his people, who dwelt secretly in him from everlasting, being chosen in him, and given to him; and openly in conversion, where they dwell as in a strong hold, safely, quietly, comfortably, and pleasantly: *and underneath [are] the everlasting arms*; that is, of God, which are the support of his people, and their protection, safety, and security; such as the arms of his everlasting love, which encircle them, and compass them about as a shield; his everlasting covenant, which is immovable, and in which they ever remain; eternal redemption and salvation, wrought out by Christ, which secures them from destruction; and everlasting power, by which they are kept and preserved as in a garrison; and everlasting consolation, which flows from all this: and so the arms of Christ, or his almighty power, are under the world, to uphold it in being; and under his church, to

support it, on whose shoulders the government of it is; and under particular believers, whom he carries in his arms, embraces in his bosom, bears them up under all their afflictions and temptations, trials and exercises; nor will he ever suffer them to drop out of his arms, or to be plucked from thence: **and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee**; the Canaanites out of the land of Canaan, to make room for Israel, which he was just about to do, and quickly did. In like manner Christ thrusts out Satan and the spiritual enemies of his people, whom to dispossess is a work of mighty power; and not only so, but gives orders to destroy them, and does destroy them, and makes his people more than conquerors over them: 490 **and shall say, destroy [them]**; the Canaanites: to do which the people of Israel had an order from the Lord, (Deuteronomy 7:1,2).

**DEUT. 33:28. Israel then shall dwell in safety alone**, The Canaanites being thrust out of their land, and Israel put into the possession of it, should dwell in safety, or “confidently” ; without fear of enemies, though surrounded with them on all hands; and though alone, a separate people, distinct from all others their neighbours round about them; (see Numbers 23:9). So the spiritual Israel dwell in the eternal God, their mansion, or dwelling place; in Christ, their rock; and in a strong city, the church, where they are in the utmost safety. God is all around them; Christ is their refuge, strong hold, and tower; the Holy Spirit in the midst of them is mighty; angels are their guardians, and the church their strong city, whose walls and bulwarks are salvation: here they dwell confidently and securely; though they have sometimes their fears, they have no just reason for them; and when faith is in exercise, are free from them, casting all their care on the Lord, and having confidence in him; where they are alone, not solitary; all the three divine Persons dwell with them, and also angels and saints their fellow citizens; but independent of others, having large provisions in Christ, in the covenant, and in the house of God; and are a separate and distinct people now, and will be to all eternity; (see Gill on “Numbers 23:9”); **the**

**fountain of Jacob [shall be] upon a land of corn and wine**; that is, the Israelites that spring from Jacob, as streams of water from a fountain; (see Isaiah 48:1); these shall be or dwell upon the land of Canaan, a land abounding with corn and wine, and all good things, (Deuteronomy 8:7- 9); or “in” or “by the fountain of Jacob” ; in a well watered land, there they should dwell. So the spiritual Israel of God dwell in and by Christ, the fountain of gardens, the well of living waters, of life and salvation, in whom all fulness of grace dwells for their supply: or “the eye of Jacob” is or shall be on a land, etc. that is, the Israelites had their eye on the good land of Canaan, and would quickly not only be in sight, but in possession of it. Every true Israelite has a spiritual eye, which is the eye of faith, the evidence of things not seen, which looks to and upon that better country, the land afar off, heaven and eternal happiness, and expects and waits for the full, enjoyment of it: **also his heavens shall drop down dew**: the heavens over the land of Canaan should drop down dew upon it, and make it fruitful to bring forth 491 corn and wine, which was Jacob’s blessing, (Genesis 27:28). Thus the Lord in the heavens drops down the dew of grace, and the blessings of it, upon his people, which make them revive as the corn, and grow as the vine; and Christ’s heavenly ministers drop the dew of Gospel doctrine upon them, to the great refreshment of them, (Deuteronomy 32:3) (Hosea 14:5-7).

**DEUT. 33:29. Happy [art] thou, O Israel**, This is the conclusion of the blessing on Israel summed up in a few words; they having God to be their God, and having so many good things promised them, and in sight of them; being now got through, the wilderness, and on the borders of the land of Canaan; as all such must be happy, whose covenant God is the Lord; since they must be beloved of him, chosen by him, and blessed with all spiritual blessings; and in the faith, hope, and view of eternal happiness: **who [is] like unto thee?** for an interest in the favour of God, for a share in the blessings of goodness, for a good God, a good land, and good laws; for wisdom and knowledge, for riches and



honour, for holiness and happiness: ***O people saved by the Lord***; redeemed by him out of Egypt, preserved in the wilderness, saved from many dangers and enemies, and now brought near to the land of Canaan. The Targum of Jonathan is, "saved or redeemed in the name of the word of the Lord:" by whom the spiritual Israel of God are redeemed from all their sins, from the curses of the law, and out of the hand of all their enemies; and are and will be completely saved in soul and body, with an everlasting salvation: ***the shield of thy help***; that is, the Lord, by whom they are saved; he is the shield that protects them; the shield of faith and of salvation, which faith lays hold on and makes use of for its defence, and who is the help of his people in all times of trouble: ***and who is the sword of thy excellency***; to destroy their enemies, and whereby they would be raised to that excellency and glory they were in the land of Canaan; ***and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee***; who threatened what they would do unto them, but were not able: or "shall lie unto thee", be in such dread and fear as to tell lies to save themselves, and pretend to be 492 what they were not, as the Gibeonites did, of whom Jarchi interprets this passage: ***and thou shall tread upon their, high places***; be possessed of their cities and fortresses, built on an eminence; (see Deuteronomy 32:13); all the three Targums, and so Jarchi, interpret it of treading on the necks of their kings, which was fulfilled, (Joshua 10:24). 493

### Deuteronomy 34

This chapter informs us of Moses going up to the top of Pisgah, where he was shown the whole land of Canaan, (Deuteronomy 34:1-4); of his death, burial, and age, (Deuteronomy 34:5-7); of Israel's mourning for him, and the time of it, (Deuteronomy 34:8); of his successor Joshua, (Deuteronomy 34:9); and of the character of Moses, to whom no prophet was to be compared, (Deuteronomy 34:10-12).

**DEUT. 34:1. *And Moses went up from the plains of Moab***, Where the Israelites had lain encamped for some time, and where Moses had repeated to them the law, and all that, is

contained in this book of Deuteronomy; and after he had read to them the song in (Deuteronomy 32:1-43); and had blessed the several tribes, as in the preceding chapter: at the command of God he went up from hence, ***unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that [is] over against Jericho***; Nebo was one of the mountains of Abarim, which formed a ridge of them, and Pisgah was the highest point of Nebo, and this was over against Jericho on the other side Jordan, (see Deuteronomy 32:49); hither Moses went, to the top of this high mountain, for aught appears, without any support or help, his natural force not being abated, though an hundred and twenty years old; and hither he seems to have gone alone, though Josephus and the Samaritan Chronicle say, Eleazar, Joshua, and the elders of Israel accompanied him: ***and the Lord showed him all the land of Gilead, unto Dan***; the Word of the Lord, as the Targum of Jonathan, who appeared to him in the bush, sent him to Egypt, wrought miracles by him there, led him and the people of Israel through the Red sea and wilderness, and brought them to the place where they now were: and though the eye of Moses was not become dim, as was usual at such an age he was of, yet it can hardly be thought it should be so strong as to take a distinct view of the whole land of Canaan, to the utmost borders of it: no doubt but his natural sight was wonderfully strengthened and increased by the Lord, by whom he was directed first to 494 behold the land of Gilead on that side of Jordan where he was, and which was the possession of the two tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh; and then he was directed to look forward to the land of Canaan beyond Jordan, to the northern part of it; for Dan is not the tribe of Dan, but a city of that name, formerly Leshem, which the Danites took, and lay the farthest north of the land, hence the phrase "from Dan to Beersheba", (see Joshua 19:47); this city is so called by anticipation: Aben Ezra thinks Joshua wrote this verse by a spirit of prophecy; and it is very likely the whole chapter was written by him, and not the eight last verses only, as say

the Jewish writers: this view Moses had of the good land a little before his death may be an emblem of that sight believers have, by faith, of the heavenly glory, and which sometimes is the clearest when near to death; this sight they have not in the plains of Moab, in the low estate of nature, but in an exalted state of grace, upon and from off the rock of Christ, in the mountain of the church of God, the word and ordinances being often the means of it; it is a sight by faith, and is of the Lord, which he gives, strengthens, and increases, and sometimes grants more fully a little before death.

**DEUT. 34:2. *And all Naphtali***, Which lay in the northern part of the land, and where was Galilee of the Gentiles, and so he had a sight of all that country most frequented by the Messiah when come, (see Matthew 4:13-15); ***and the land of Ephraim and Manasseh***: which lay in the midland part of the country: ***and all the land of Judah***; which lay to the south: ***unto the utmost sea***; the Mediterranean sea, which was the western boundary of the land, called the "hinder sea", (Zechariah 14:8); and might as well be so rendered here, for the same word is used: Jarchi would have it read, not the "hinder sea", but the "latter day": for, he says, the Lord showed to Moses all that should happen to Israel until the resurrection of the dead; and so the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases the above passages, and observes that the Lord showed Moses the mighty deeds of Jephthah of Gilead, and the victories of Samson, who was of the tribe of Dan; the idolatries of that tribe, and Samson the saviour that should spring from them; Deborah and Barak, and the princes of the house of Naphtali; Joshua the son of Nun, of the tribe of Ephraim, that should fight with and slay the kings of Canaan; and Gideon the son of Joash, of 495 the tribe of Manasseh, that should fight with Midian and Amalek, and all the kings of Israel, and the kingdom of the house of Judah; the king of the south, that should join the king of the north to destroy the inhabitants of the earth; and even the destruction of Armilus or antichrist, and the war of Gog and Magog, and the great affliction Michael shall save from.

**DEUT. 34:3. *And the south***, The southern part of the land, even all of it; and having shown him that, he is directed eastward to take a view of ***the plain of the valley of Jericho***; which lay before him, a delightful plain; (see Joshua 5:10); ***the city of palm trees***; so Jericho was called, because of the multitude of palm trees which grew there, and which Josephus not only testifies, who speaks of it as a plain planted with palm trees, and from whence balsam comes; but several Heathen writers: Pliny says Jericho was set with palm trees; Diodorus Siculus speaks of the country about Jericho as abounding with palm trees, and in a certain valley, meaning the vale or plains of Jericho, is produced that which is called balsam; so Strabo says, Jericho is a plain surrounded with mountains abounding with palm trees, where there is a plantation of palm trees, with other fruit trees, the space of a hundred furlongs: ***unto Zoar***; near the salt sea; (see Genesis 19:22).

**DEUT. 34:4. *And the Lord said unto him***, The Word of the Lord, as the Jerusalem Targum, having shown him all the land of Canaan: ***this [is] the land which I swore unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed***; to Abraham, (Genesis 15:18); to Isaac, (Genesis 26:3); to Jacob, (Genesis 28:13); ***I have caused thee to see [it] with thine eyes***; not only had indulged him with a general view of it, but had strengthened his eyesight, that he had a full, clear, and distinct sight of it: ***but thou shalt not go over thither***; which he had said more than once before and abides by it, and this because of the behaviour of Moses at the waters of Meribah, (Numbers 20:12); (see Deuteronomy 3:25-27).

**DEUT. 34:5. *So Moses the servant of the Lord died there, in the land of Moab***, Which formerly belonged to Moab, and was taken from them by Sihon king of the Amorites, and now in the possession of Israel: here on a 496 mountain in this land Moses died; and yet, contrary to the express words of this text, some Jewish writers affirm that he died not, but was translated to heaven, where he ministers; yea, that he was an angel, and could not die: but it is

clear he did die, even though a servant of the Lord, as he was, and a faithful one; but such die as well as others, (Zechariah 1:5); there is a saying of some Jews, "Moses died, and who shall not die?" no man can promise himself immortality here, when such great and good men die: the Targum of Jonathan says, he died on the seventh of Adar or February, on which day he was born; and it is the general opinion of the Jewish writers, that he died on the seventh of that month, in the middle of the day, and that it was a sabbath day: though, as Aben Ezra observes, some say he died on the first of Adar; and Josephus is express for it, that it was at the new moon, or first day of the month; and with this agrees the calculation of Bishop Usher: **according to the word of the Lord**; according to the prophecy of the Lord, and according to a command of his, that he should go up to the above said mountain and die, (Numbers 27:12,13 Deuteronomy 32:49,50); or, as the Targum of Jerusalem, according to the decree of the Lord; as the death of every man is, both with respect to time and place, and manner of it: it is appointed for men once to die, (Hebrews 9:27); because it is in the original text, "according to the mouth of the Lord"; hence some Jewish writers, as Jarchi particularly, interpret it of his dying by a kiss of his mouth, with strong expressions and intimations of his love to him, (Song of Solomon 1:2); and no doubt but he did die satisfied of the love of God to him, enjoying his presence, and having faith and hope of everlasting life and salvation; but the true sense is, he died according to the will of God, not of any disease, or through the infirmities of age, but by the immediate order and call of God out of this life.

**DEUT. 34:6. And he buried him**, Aben Ezra says he buried himself, going into a cave on the top of the mount, where he expired, and so where he died his grave was; but though he died on the mount, he was buried in a valley: Jarchi and so other Jewish writers say, the Lord buried him; it may be by the ministry of angels: an Arabic writer says, he was buried by angels: it is very probable he was buried by Michael, and who is no other than the archangel or head

of principalities and powers, our Lord 497 Jesus Christ, for a reason that will be hereafter suggested, (see Jude 1:9); **in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Bethpeor**; where stood a temple dedicated to the idol Peor, (see Deuteronomy 3:29); **but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day**; to the time when Joshua wrote this, or, as others think, Samuel: if Moses is the same with the Osiris of the Egyptians, as some think, it may be observed, that his grave is said to be unknown to the Egyptians, as Diodorus Siculus and Strabo both affirm; and the grave of Moses is unknown, even unto this our day: for though no longer ago than in the year 1655, in the month of October, it was pretended to be found by some Maronite shepherds on Mount Nebo, with this inscription on it in Hebrew letters, "Moses the servant of the Lord"; but this story was confuted by Jecomas, a learned Jew, who proved it to be the grave of another Moses, whom Wagenseil conjectures was Moses Maimonides; but some think the whole story is an imposition: the reason why the grave of Moses was kept a secret was, as Ben Gersom suggests, lest, because of his miracles, succeeding generations should make a god of him and worship him, as it seems a sort of heretics called Melchisedecians did: the death and burial of Moses were an emblem of the weakness and insufficiency of the law of Moses, and the works of it, to bring any into the heavenly Canaan; and of the law being dead, and believers dead to that through the body of Christ, and of the entire abrogation and abolition of it by Christ, according to the will of God, as a covenant of works, as to the curse and condemnation of it, and justification by it; who is Michael the archangel, and is the end of the law for righteousness; he abolished it in his flesh, nailed it to his cross, carried it to his grave, and left it there; the rites and ceremonies of it are to be no more received, nor is it to be sought after for righteousness and life, being dead and buried, (Romans 7:6).

**DEUT. 34:7. And Moses [was] an hundred and twenty years old when he died**, Which age of his may be divided into three equal periods,

forty years in Pharaoh's court, forty years in Midian, and forty in the care and government of Israel, in Egypt and in the wilderness; so long he lived, though the common age of man in his time was but threescore years and ten, (Psalm 90:10); and what is most extraordinary is, *his eyes were not dim*; as Isaac's were, and men at such an age, and under, generally be: 498 *nor his natural force abated*; neither the rigour of his mind nor the strength of his body; his intellectuals were not decayed, his memory and judgment; nor was his body feeble, and his countenance aged; his "moisture" was not "fled", as it may be rendered, his radical moisture; he did not look withered and wrinkled, but plump and sleek, as if he was a young man in the prime of his days: this may denote the continued use of the ceremonial law then to direct to Christ, and the force of the moral law as in the hands of Christ, requiring obedience and conformity to it, as a rule of walk and conversation, (1 Corinthians 9:21).

**DEUT. 34:8.** *And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days*, According both to Josephus and the Samaritan Chronicle, they cried and wept in a very vehement manner, when he signified to them his approaching death, and took his leave of them; and when he was dead they mourned for him, in a public manner, the space of time here mentioned, the time of mourning for his brother Aaron, (Numbers 20:29); *so the days of weeping [and] mourning for Moses were ended*; on the eighth of Nisan or March, as says the Targum of Jonathan, and on the "ninth" they prepared their vessels and their cattle for a march, and on the tenth passed over Jordan, and on the "sixteenth" the manna ceased, according to the said paraphrase.

**DEUT. 34:9.** *And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom*, The successor of Moses, and who, by the spirit of wisdom on him, was abundantly qualified for the government of the people of Israel; in which he was a type of Christ, on whom the spirit of wisdom and understanding is said to rest, (Isaiah 11:2); *for Moses had laid his hands upon him*; which was a symbol of the

government being committed to him, and devolving upon him after his death, and expressive of prayer for him, that he might be fitted for it, of which action (see Numbers 27:23); *and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the Lord commanded Moses*; or by the hand of Moses; they received him and owned him as their supreme governor under God, and yielded a cheerful obedience to his commands, as the Lord by Moses commanded them to do, and as they promised; (see Joshua 1:16-18). 499

**DEUT. 34:10.** *And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses*, Not in the times of Joshua, who wrote this chapter, at least the last eight verses, (Deuteronomy 34:5-12), as say the Jews; nor to the times of Samuel, whom others take to be the writer: of them; nor to the times of Ezra, as others; nor even throughout the whole Old Testament dispensation to the times of Christ, the great Prophet, like to Moses, that was to arise; and the Messiah is by the Jews owned, as by Maimonides, to be equal to him, and by others to be above him: it is a well known saying of theirs, that "the Messiah shall be exalted above Abraham, and extolled above Moses, and made higher than the ministering: angels;" but as to all other prophets he excels them, and therefore they call him the prince, master, and Father of the prophets, and say, that all prophesied from the fountain of his prophecy: the difference between him and them is observed, by Maimonides to lie in many things; as that they prophesied by a dream or vision, but he awake and seeing; they prophesied by the means of an angel, and saw what they did in parables and dark sayings; but Moses not by means of an angel, but the Lord spake to him face to face; they trembled and astonished, but not so Moses; they could not prophesy when they would, but he at any time, nor did he need to dispose and prepare his mind for it; some of which will not hold good, especially the last; the instances in which he really exceeded them follow: *whom the Lord knew face to face*; owned, took notice of, and familiarly conversed with face to face, as a man with his friend; none

were permitted to such familiarity with God as he; (see Numbers 12:6-8 Exodus 33:11); the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem paraphrase it, "whom the Word of the Lord knew."

**DEUT. 34:11. *In all the signs and the wonders which the Lord sent him to do,*** The same Targums also paraphrase here, "which the Word of the Lord sent him to do;" for he it was that appeared to him in the bush, and sent him to Egypt to work miracles, which he did by him: ***in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all his land;*** to whom they were visible, and who were all affected by them more 500 or less: this respects chiefly the ten plagues inflicted on the Egyptians: the Jews observe that the superior excellency of Moses to the rest of the prophets lay chiefly in his superior degree of prophecy rather than in miracles, and not so much in the nature or the quality of the miracles; the stopping of the sun by Joshua, and the raising of the dead to life by Elijah and Elisha, being greater than his; but either in the duration of them, as the manna which continued near forty years; or especially in the quantity of them, he working more than

all the rest put together: Manasseh Ben Israel has collected all that the prophets wrought or were wrought for their sakes, and they came to seventy four; but those that were wrought by Moses or on his account make seventy six; but whether this is a just account I will not say.

**DEUT. 34:12. *And in all that mighty hand,*** In all done by his hand, which he stretched out over the sea and divided, to make a passage through it for the Israelites, and with his rod in it smote the rocks, and waters gushed out for them: ***and in all that great terror which Moses showed in the sight of all Israel;*** meaning either the terror the Egyptians were struck with by him, in the sight of all Israel, when he publicly and before them wrought the wonders he did in the land of Ham, which often threw them into a panic, especially the thunders and lightning, the three days darkness, and the slaying of their firstborn; (see Psalm 78:49-51 105:38); or the terror the Israelites were in at the giving and receiving of the law, (Exodus 19:16 20:18-20).