

### DEUTERONOMY

#### Lesson 7 - Chapter 5

We are now about 80% of the way through the Torah and we have absorbed an enormous amount of detail. As we begin our study of Deuteronomy chapter 5 today let's pause for just a few minutes to sort of gather our thoughts and gain some perspective. Allow me to take a few minutes to draw a picture of some of the foundational premises of Deuteronomy that we are expected to keep in mind at all times when studying this great book and the Bible in general.

**First**, the context of Deuteronomy is that the Laws being given to Israel (originally given at Mt. Sinai and now repeated and somewhat expounded upon here in Moab) are from Yehoveh. This notion of a set of laws coming from God sounds rather simple and easy for us to accept; but just as there being but **one** God in existence was a totally new concept to the world (and to Israel) so it was equally as revolutionary that **a god** (instead of that nation's king) would establish the laws and rules that governed any particular human society. Up to this point in history it was always a human KING whose prerogative it was to declare what was right and wrong, what was legal and what was criminal. For Israel, however, the common understanding of the SOURCE of societal laws would forever change.

**Second**, an additional context of Deuteronomy is that those to whom Moses is about to repeat these laws (laws beginning with the first series of 10 laws that we title the 10 Commandments), these people standing before him, were not present (except perhaps if they were young children at the time) when the Law was FIRST given almost 40 years earlier, because the first generation of the Exodus who had witnessed the awe of it all were now dead and gone and apparently had not passed the teaching of it along as they should have.

**Third**, we will notice as we move along in the coming chapters some slight variation in how these laws are to be viewed and applied **at this point in Israel's journey** versus how they were to be viewed and applied **40 years ago** at the beginning of their Wilderness journey. This is because the era of living in portable tents, eating the Manna that has been rained down from Heaven each and every day without fail, and moving from Oasis to Oasis was essentially at an end. Therefore Moses had to explain just **how** Israel was to observe these same laws and commands since Israel was about to become a settled sedentary people and stop living as a massive population of wandering Bedouins.

The context of their existence was changing for Israel, so Moses had to reframe some things; but the reframing at all times stayed within the boundaries of the Law as given on Mt. Sinai. This is a great principle that has been lost to us. It has been a common practice within Christianity to disregard the circumstances and the timeframe and the cultural norms of the Bible era, and rather to say that the words of the Bible have this mystical quality such that the thousands of verses and paragraphs it comprises can be severed away from their historical context and made to stand alone in any era.

Let me give you a brief example of what I mean: here we are meeting today in Florida, in the United States, the bastion of Western Culture. We're in the year 2009; our attention is focused on the controversial Iraq war, the never-ending unrest that revolves around Israel, and a global financial crisis that has thrown millions out of their jobs and homes. Islamic Fascism is attempting to reassert itself on a global level. Our economy and our national security dominate our every thought, and if one is a Christian fundamentalist your faith is under attack, you are now considered a threat to our government's goals, and you likely are certain that we are in the last days of human history and that what is going on around us is but the playing out of predetermined and inalterable prophetic events. Nearly one half of our churches now deny the deity of Jesus Christ; about one fourth of American Churches believe in Gay marriage and in ordaining homosexuals as Pastors and Bishops. Violence is increasing at every level of our society to unheard of levels, and what would have been considered X-rated programs and pornography a mere 20 years ago are now common fare on primetime Television.

Our American society is primarily English speaking, but increasingly Spanish has become a common second language; some want Spanish to become acceptable as an officially sanctioned ALTERNATIVE language of the US, while others vehemently insist that English remain as our one and only common national tongue and to undermine that would be to undermine our very social fabric. Our nation is approximately evenly divided between politically liberal and politically conservative minded people, but the middle ground has all but disappeared.

This is the historical context in which we live. This is the context from which all of our daily dialogue takes place. This context is unique for our time; it has not existed before, and it will change as time moves along, into what we do not know.

The point is that when our President gives a speech, or a new book is written about some major event or issue of our era, or a Preacher speaks to us about how to apply Scripture to our lives, if you are an American living in Florida in the year 2009 all that I have just stated about what our current circumstances are is the contextual given for that speech, or book or sermon. The speaker or author doesn't need to reiterate all of these circumstances that define our era because its common knowledge.

But if one is living in England, or Turkey, or Mexico, or Russia the context is quite different and when a leader in any of those places speaks he or she does so in a context relative to their culture and current circumstances. Our American context is not only largely irrelevant to them it is not even comprehensible to their minds UNLESS they are somehow educated, familiarized, and brought up to date about American values, language, history, and interests.

It is no different with the Bible. That is why I spend so much time in Torah Class reminding you of that reality and painting a picture (as we go) of the geography, the language evolution, what people were thinking and concerned about, what certain words and phrases meant to them, what the major issues and challenges of the times were, what was taken for unchallenged common knowledge and what was completely unknown to them yet.

But just as it is with us today, society in the days of the Bible (at any given moment in time) was anything but uniform and monolithic; everybody was NOT the same nor was they all living under the same circumstances. Therefore (for example) in the New Testament we'll have Paul speaking to pagan gentiles in one of the new and progressive Roman cities using terms and illustrations they are familiar with. He'll speak to the gentiles in Greek, the language they used. When he ventured back to the Holy Lands he would speak to the unique culture of the Jews and the entirely different Jewish society (incalculably separate from the Roman world) within the context of their understanding that even varied from Galilee to Samaria to Judea; so he would speak to the various Jewish groups about issues and in terms that were of concern to them in Hebrew and Aramaic, the language of the Jews living within the Holy Land. Had Paul spoken to the Romans using Jewish cultural and religious terms they would have been clueless as to what he was talking about (and probably offended as well). Had he spoken to the Jews in Roman cultural terms the Jews would have turned they're backs and walked away or, as we read happened on not just a few occasions, run him out of town.

You see the world does not now (and never has) consisted of generic people living in generic societies under generic circumstances speaking a single generic language. Rather, we can ONLY gain any meaningful information from the Biblical texts (Old Testament or New), whether it be from Paul, or Jesus, or Moses, when we take it all inside of the historical and cultural context it occurred and then (in the ordinary sense it was meant at that time) reapply it to our new global, national, and local circumstances. Therefore since Deuteronomy 5 is primarily a restatement of the original 10 Commandments (as given 40 years earlier) let us take careful note that much time has passed, an entire generation has died out, and the context substantially different from when it was first declared:

It's around 1300 B.C. Abraham has been dead for around 500 years. Moses is but days from his death and new leader has been readied to replace him. He is standing on a hill in Moab and addressing the young generation of eager warriors who are about to engage in Holy War upon Canaan. The Law is well established and has been practiced, now, for 40 years. The Priesthood is fully functioning, the Wilderness Tabernacle is the recognized dwelling place of

God on earth, and Joshua has been introduced as Moses' successor.

Israel is currently a racially mixed nation of about 3 million people consisting of full-blooded Hebrews, foreigners of several races who have officially joined Israel, half-breeds (the result of intermarriage with these foreigners), and of non-Hebrew slaves. Thousands of aliens camp on the outskirts of the enormous Israelite encampment because these aliens choose to be friends with Israel, but not to join them as part of a Hebrew nation. Moses is speaking to ALL of these people, not just to some, even though those who are actually hearing his voice are but the people's representatives: the tribal elders and chieftains.

With that as a backdrop let's read Deuteronomy chapter 5.

### **READ DEUTERONOMY CHAPTER 5 all**

We find in this chapter that Moses is reestablishing the basis for claiming that he is the sole and unique Mediator between God and Israel; that is, he is saying bluntly that "these are the rules that ***I, Moses***, proclaim to you" (in verse 1) but then goes on to make it clear that he is but repeating to them what the Lord told him and what many of them heard as children from a frightening and thundering voice from above. Moses is also reestablishing a basis (to this new generation) for why Yehoveh is, and should be, Israel's God and that their loyalty is to be only to Yehoveh. And the reason that Israel should obey and worship Yehoveh is stated in the first commandment that is verse 6: "***I am YHWH your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt.....***"

I remind you that while it became the norm over the centuries to ignore the original 1<sup>st</sup> commandment (I am YHWH your God) and to take the 2<sup>nd</sup> commandment and break it apart and make 2 commandments out of it so that there was the appearance of 10 and not 9 commands, that this is a significant error that has had much to do with Christianity's historic bent to disinherit the Jewish people of their rightful place as God's favored people. It has also led to such an arrogant attitude of the Church towards Israel that the very people to whom God's Word was entrusted, the Hebrews, now feel totally alienated from their own Jewish Messiah. They have been thoroughly convinced by Christians that if they should believe upon Yeshua that it would be tantamount to accepting a gentile religion, validating the Church position that the Jews have now been rejected by the Lord and replaced with gentiles, and thereby they would be turning their backs on their special position given to them as His set-apart people.

So, says Moses, the REASON Israel should look to Yehoveh and Yehoveh alone is because it is Yehoveh (and not some other god) that rescued Israel from Egypt through never-before-seen signs and wonders. Further, it has now been established that it is folly to bow down to

other gods because they don't really even exist. They are false gods NOT in the sense that Yehoveh is a better god, but rather in the sense that they are but figments of men's foolish and evil inclinations that so easily accept elemental spirits and a myriad of created objects as gods or things to be worshipped.

We studied the so-called 10 Commandments in great detail when we examined Exodus 20 quite some time ago, so we'll NOT go into detail as those same commandments are but reiterated here in Deuteronomy 5. Instead, I'll only highlight the main points or indicate places where the wording of Deuteronomy 5 differs every so slightly from Exodus 20.

From a panoramic viewpoint we see that the 10 Commandments (the 10 guiding principles of the 603 Laws that will follow) are divided into 2 obvious groupings: the first 4 commandments speak of man's obligations to God, and the remaining 6 concern relationships among and between our fellow men. Please note something that I hope has become, or is becoming, apparent: NOWHERE in the 10 Commandments (or anywhere in the Law for that matter) does the issue of Salvation (as we think of it today) come up. The Law simply doesn't deal with it BECAUSE that was never its primary purpose or function. And, despite what you might have been told, the Hebrews did NOT look to the Law for Salvation because it wasn't there and they didn't think it was there. So when we see Paul explaining that the Law was not able to save, he was simply telling his uninitiated gentile listeners NOT to go seeking out the Law as an alternative to do what ONLY the Messiah could do. Since Christ was a Jew, and it was ONLY within the religion and covenants of the Jews that the advent of a Messiah had any meaning at all, then it was the natural assumption of converted gentiles to mimic what the Jews did: obey the outward rituals of the Law. The problem is that Paul knew that (if they were not taught otherwise) the gentiles would mistakenly think that it was those acts and behaviors that brought them their Salvation. And when Paul was saying similar things to the Jews, he was simply telling these Hebrews that while obedience to the Law was good and important, the Messiah was doing something that obedience to the Law could never do.

It's NOT that in the NT we have Paul, or Jesus, or any other writer saying that Christians should be antinomian (a 50 cent word meaning anti-Law). Rather it was that they should take advantage of Christ's ministry for Salvation rather than mistakenly assume they had an option B, which was to obey a series of rules and laws in order to accomplish the same thing.

Look: when we come to Christ we don't stop eating food. We don't stop learning Scripture. Eating food doesn't bring us Salvation, but that doesn't make eating a bad thing. Learning Scripture doesn't earn us Salvation, but studying the Word isn't outdated and unnecessary once we have accepted Salvation. Rather each of these acts has an ongoing purpose; we eat because our physical bodies require physical nourishment. We read Scripture so that once we have been redeemed by faith in Yeshua we give our minds and souls spiritual nourishment, and so that we know what our expected response to God's grace and favor towards us is. Christ says He is the Bread of Life: but no one would seriously take that to mean

that as Saved People we no longer need to eat food. He also says that the Torah will be written on our hearts; but that in no way meant that we are to stop learning God's ways from His written Word. In the same way when we, in faith, accept Yeshua as our Savior we don't now turn against the very rules and ordinances that the Lord set up to demonstrate His character and to instruct us on how to live the redeemed life.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> commandment is re-stated in verses 8-10; and it makes it clear that Israel is NOT to attempt to establish a relationship with any other god. That's pretty straightforward and I'll not comment further on that. What I DO want to point out is the relationship nature of the Covenant of Moses between God and Man. I talked last week about this unscriptural false dichotomy that has been set up in modern Christianity that demands that we see the OT as about the establishment of a legal code, and the NT as introducing Grace into the world. Part and parcel to this is the typical outlook that the Old Testament was set up as a dictator/King giving out impersonal orders that had to be obeyed or else; and alternately that the NT is all about a relationship between God and man that sets no obligations upon us, the saved.

We have all heard Pastors correctly say that Christianity is not a religion, it is a relationship. Well that exact same thing was true from the beginning. It is a fundamental Biblical axiom that the covenants between God and man are relationship based. Therefore we get the relationship formula in OT phrases like "I will take you to be My people, and I will be your God" (Ex 6:7). Or in Lev. 26:12, "I will be your God and you shall be My people". Notice the equation: God says this is what I will be to you, and consequently this is what YOU will be to me. And that while God offers this prospect of a harmonious relationship it is up to you to accept it or reject it. THAT is the very definition of a relationship and it has the same basis to it as our human marriage vows (that were always meant to be a **physical and visible** illustration of our **spiritual and invisible** relationship with the Lord). Notice that in a marriage ceremony the question is asked to the Bride, "will you take this man to be your husband", and to the Bridegroom, "will you take this woman to be your wife?" Both sides must agree to freely enter into this relationship. In the case of God establishing that Israel will be His people and in return He will be their God, and in the case of human marriage, both parties MUST agree, both parties HAVE obligations, and both parties have legal standing. If the Lord only said, "I'll be your God" and Israel was given no choice in the matter, then the quid-pro-quo is missing and hence there is no relationship there is but servitude. If at a marriage ceremony the man declared, "you will be my wife", but the woman was not asked if she wanted to be married to this man, then there is no relationship there is but subjugation.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Commandment is that the Lord's Name is not to be misused. This may be the most mischaracterized commandment of the 10. This command is primarily about one thing: not invoking the name of God as surety in an oath that is either false on it's face or one that you have NO intention of keeping. This modern idea of accidental mispronunciation of His formal name (YHWH) as the point of this command; or that we are to refrain altogether from saying His holy name is Scripturally groundless. The Talmud makes it clear that the prohibition that the Jews eventually adopted (starting around 300 B.C.) of NOT uttering the holy name YHWH



had NOTHING to do with this 3<sup>rd</sup> Commandment. Rather it came to be considered a matter of proper reverence. There are various reasons stated in the Talmud, and also in writings by Philo and Josephus, as to WHY it came to be considered irreverent to say God's formal name and while there is no single definitive reason stated, in general it had to do with a Middle Eastern custom that it was not respectful for a son or daughter to pronounce their parents' names. By extension it was carried over to the Lord's name because the Lord was recognized as Abba, the Hebrews' heavenly father. Let me state emphatically: what I am telling you is NOT my opinion, it is simply history recorded in Jewish documents for anyone who has the time or interest to find and read for themselves.

In ancient times the invoking of vows and oaths were common events; by definition a vow or oath involved the use of the name of one god or another. If a god's name was not invoked, there WAS no legally binding oath or vow. The primary intent of this 3<sup>rd</sup> commandment is that the Lord's name is not to be invoked carelessly or frivolously when making vows and oaths. And in later books of the OT and the even later NT writings, advice is given that all-in-all it is better not to make vows and oaths at all (wherever possible) because if a person DOES invoke the Yehoveh's name in a vow or an oath the Lord fully expects the terms to be completed regardless of the content or intent. One of the most infamous stories in the bible is about a fellow named Jephthah who made his own daughter a burnt sacrifice due to a rash vow he had made to Yehoveh, not expecting this horror as a result. BTW: it was a vow for which Jephthah approached the Lord AND set the terms; the Lord certainly didn't ask for, nor does He condone, a human life as a sacrifice.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Commandment is to observe the Sabbath Day. I've flogged you all sufficiently on this matter so I won't go into depth. Please note that Sabbath is the proper name of a specific day. In fact in any good translation the wording is "observe the Sabbath day". While that is acceptable, it still misses the mark a tad because literally it reads, "observe the Shabbat". The point is Shabbat is not just any day it is a specific day that the Lord has ordained as holy. Two things: it is defined Biblically as the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the week, not the final day of any rolling 7 day period of OUR choosing. Nowhere in Scripture does it make it any other day. Further it is the HOLINESS of the day that is key. The Lord has set this particular day apart from all others and made it holy. Question: who makes something holy? Can YOU declare something to be holy? Can YOU take something ordinary and by the "power vested in you" make it holy? How about your Pastor; can he make something common into something holy? Of course not. Making something.....anything.....holy lies solely within the province of God.

We cannot choose any day we wish and then by our own authority declare it to be holy. The Sabbath is FAR MORE than a day of rest. If it were merely a day of physical rest then certainly it would not have the holy character YHWH has given it. Conversely any time we take a day off of work....for whatever reason.....doesn't make that day The Sabbath day. The pagan world had days off, and the government usually controlled which day that might be. They had days off to celebrate the winter and Summer solstices; they had days off to celebrate the inauguration of a new King; they had days off to celebrate and worship their numerous gods; they had days off

to celebrate the end of the harvest season. They were rest days but they were not THE Sabbath. The Sabbath is a weekly observance of the miracle of Creation.

Look, it is rightly quoted that Jesus said that the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. But the point is NOT that the sole PURPOSE of the Sabbath was so man would be able to take off a day of work, it was so man could enjoy and refresh his relationship with God. The time off was indeed helpful for man and animal to physically rejuvenate, but mostly it was so man could REMEMBER what the Lord has done for him by redeeming Him and by creating everything around man that sustains us. It does NOT do something for God that we rest; it honors God that we reflect upon Him and obey Him by observing the day that He has removed from the common days of the week and set it apart and blessed it as special.

We've now reviewed the Commandments (1<sup>st</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup>) that have to do with God's expectation that we (as His worshippers) acknowledge His name, His nature, His identity, and His holy day. With Commandment number 5 there is a shift to what the Lord demands of human-to-human oriented relationships; and these will specifically cover the obligation of children to their parents, and how one is to honor and protect the life, person, property and reputation of our neighbors and society at large. One could reasonably say that these are the humanitarian rules set down by the Lord.

The 5<sup>th</sup> commandment then is to describe our proper relationship to the most important humans in our life, our parents. Just as in Leviticus 19 where the priests are admonished to revere their parents, so do the 10 Commandments make it a duty not just for the priestly class but for ALL who wish to be part of Israel to recognize that among human relationships obligations to ones parents reigns supreme. Interestingly this command is usually used to gain the attention of school-aged children when it comes to being obedient to their mothers and fathers but that isn't how it was looked at during the various Biblical eras. Rather this more about how grown children were to care for their parents when they needed it and about how grown children were to continue to show deference to their elders. It is interesting that this issue is so high on God's list that in Leviticus 19:3 He essentially puts showing proper respect to one's parents as a human societal obligation on the same level as observing Shabbat is our obligation to God. For that verse says, "You shall each revere his mother and father, and keep My Sabbaths; I am YHWH your God". Earthly parent and heavenly parent are to be honored and obeyed.

Another interesting subtly to note is that quite often in Scripture the phrase used to denote one's parents is "your mother and father", putting the word "mother" first. It's not that the intent is ever to put mother above father; rather it is to put mother and father on an **equal footing** in what was a male dominated society. Since God does not value one sex above the other, neither should a child put the needs of one parent above the other. They are equal in the Lord's eyes and should therefore be equal in the child's eyes. The Rabbis fully subscribed to this view and much is written in the Talmud to this effect.



It is also interesting to note that of all the 10 Commandments, this one concerning the instruction to honor one's parents is the ONLY one that promises a reward for all who obey it; it says that by doing so one's life will be prolonged on earth and that one will "do well" or better, "have well-being".

The 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> commandments are very brief and all contained in one verse. The 6<sup>th</sup> commandment is that one should not *ratsach*. *Ratsach* is Hebrew for murder. It does NOT mean to kill. One would not go hunting, for instance, and *ratsach* (murder) a deer. The purpose for this commandment is very limited in scope and it specifically means that a man is not to UNJUSTLY kill another human being. Legal executions are NOT a concern of this command. Death in battle is NOT a concern of this command. Even manslaughter (in the sense of there not being an intention to kill someone, nor is the death the result of gross negligence) is NOT a concern of this commandment. The keyword is "unjust". And by the way, legal retribution by executing a person who has committed an unjust killing is EXPECTED and DEMANDED by the Lord.

The 7<sup>th</sup> commandment is that one should not engage in adultery. Biblical adultery means consenting sexual relations between a married person and another person outside of that marriage. It could also mean a wife taking the side of a man against her husband in a serious disagreement. The Middle Eastern societies of this era ALL generally held extra-marital relations to be a very bad thing and most of these same societies punished the perpetrator severely, usually with death. In reality a law similar to the 7<sup>th</sup> commandment was quite usual and customary among most societies in this era.

The 8<sup>th</sup> commandment is that one should not steal. This means it exactly the way we think of it today; we should not take something from someone that doesn't rightfully belong to us. Some Rabbis said that this commandment included kidnapping (the unlawful taking of a human being) although that is a bit of stretch. Rather this is about personal property and the prohibition against someone having their property unjustly taken from them.

The 9<sup>th</sup> commandment is that one should not bear false witness against another. In our modern vocabulary this is referring to perjury. It does NOT generally mean to avoid telling a "lie" in a conversation. Rather this is more about making a false accusation of wrong doing against someone that could lead to a criminal penalty, and it's about not telling the truth in a court of law that could either acquit the guilty or convict the innocent.

Now the 10<sup>th</sup> commandment is somewhat unique because while all the others speak of concrete actions and outward behaviors, this one that says that a person should not "covet" something that belongs to someone else; so this is all about A STATE OF MIND. Covet means to have secret designs to make something yours that you have no right to. So certainly such a

state of mind could eventually be manifest into an action to wrongly acquire what is being coveted but that's NOT the point of this commandment.

The first thing one is not to covet is your neighbor's wife; that is one is not to look in lust upon a married women and want her for your own. The next thing that is not to be craved or plans made to wrongly acquire it is your neighbor's house. This does NOT mean your dwelling place: the tent or hut or building one lives in. House, as used here, is in the sense of "household", the people that form your extended family. I've shared with you that it was the common mode of operation in most of the Biblical eras for a clan or a tribe to increase their power and wealth by forcibly taking people, often entire households. We had a direct example of this when Jacob's sons did this exact thing when they stayed for a time at Shechem, and they took people in retribution for the rape of Jacob's daughter Dinah. This dramatically increased the size of Jacob's tribe overnight because the Israelites' acquired entire households of people.

The reiteration of the 10 Commandments is now complete and Moses reminds the people that it was THESE 10 Laws that the people heard directly from God, with their own ears. The 603 laws that came afterword were given to Moses and then he passed them along to the people. Moses also reminds the people that God was willing (and Moses would have been perfectly happy) to continue giving His Torah directly to them from His own divine voice for all to hear, but their fear of the Lord's awesome presence drove them to beg Moses to ask God to STOP speaking to them and instead for Moses to behave as their Mediator.

The next couple of verses, 25 and 26, add some interesting information; they say that Yehoveh actually **commends** Israel for their attitude of preferring Moses to receive the Law, to their standing in God's presence and hearing the laws from the Lord. This is important because the Lord didn't see Israel as weak or superstitious or unworthy to hear His voice; rather He saw their request to get the laws through Moses as the PROPER response to His awesomeness and an agreement with God that Moses was His authorized Mediator. Israel had gained a healthy fear and reverence for Yehoveh and as long as they retained it and obeyed the Torah commands then "it would go well with you and your children, forever!"

There are a couple of fundamental God-principles contained in that rather innocuous statement: first, the Lord will bless greatly those who determine to show Him proper respect and follow Him in obedience. Second, is that man DOES have a choice; the Lord is NOT going to force anyone to obey or to be forced into service to Him. Generally speaking the Lord does NOT control a man like a puppet, not a man's mind or a man's actions.

Since in verse 27 the people wanted Moses to receive the remainder of the Torah in their stead, Yehoveh told Moses to dismiss the people to go home to their tents. Understand they were NOT sent away except that they had ASKED to be released. Also they were not put

under some kind of house arrest; they were NOT ordered to go and STAY in their tents while Moses received the Law. Rather the people were simply permitted to go back to their desert abodes and not required to stay and hear God's words.

And of course along with the instruction for the people to be dismissed, Moses was told to remain where he was so that the Lord could finish what He started.

This portion of Moses' address to the people ends with the main point of this entire sermon: it is that what must be learned (and hopefully not repeated) from what happened at Mt. Sinai, and then all the misadventures that occurred afterwards that caused the deaths of scores of thousand of Hebrews, is that the Torah that Moses is in process of teaching to this new generation of Israelites MUST be followed and obeyed OR this new generation can expect similar consequences as their parents received.

Next week we'll start chapter 6.