

Deuteronomy 11:26-16:17

See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you today, and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside from the way that I am commanding you today, to go after gods that you have not known. Deuteronomy 11:26-28

I. Warning (Idols)

Discussion question: Do we have idols in our day and age? If so, how are idols in the 21st century similar/different from the idols during the time of Moses?

II. Direction (The Law)

Discussion Question - What is the Law? What is its purpose?

III. Prescription for Deliverance and Redemption (The Three Festivals)

“Freedom is often thought of as sovereign independence, personal liberty and democratic government – yet none of these ideas enters significantly into the Passover ideal. ... What matters is *volitional dedication* [relating to one’s will], and it is this and this alone that forms the theme of the Passover story. If Israel had gone forth out of Egypt, but not accepted the Covenant at Sinai, it would have achieved liberation – that is, mere release from bondage – but it would not have achieved *freedom*, in the Jewish sense of the term. For the only freedom, says Judaism, is the yoke of the Torah; the only true independence is the apprehension of God.” (Hayyim Schauss, *The Jewish Festivals: From Their Beginnings to Our Own Day*)

Discussion question: Do you agree there is a difference between liberation and freedom as Schauss suggests? If so, how would you describe the differences?

Discussion question: If God is omnipotent, why did the Israelites have to put blood on their doorposts?

*Moreover, by them [the law and commandments of the LORD]
is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward. Psalm 19:11*