

Thursday, March 28

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Deuteronomy 9:1 - 10:22

9 1 “Listen, O Israel! Today you are about to cross the Jordan River to take over the land belonging to nations much greater and more powerful than you. They live in cities with walls that reach to the sky! **2** The people are strong and tall—descendants of the famous Anakite giants. You’ve heard the saying, ‘Who can stand up to the Anakites?’ **3** But recognize today that the LORD your God is the one who will cross over ahead of you like a devouring fire to destroy them. He will subdue them so that you will quickly conquer them and drive them out, just as the LORD has promised. **4** “After the LORD your God has done this for you, don’t say in your hearts, ‘The LORD has given us this land because we are such good people!’ No, it is because of the wickedness of the other nations that he is pushing them out of your way. **5** It is not because you are so good or have such integrity that you are about to occupy their land. The LORD your God will drive these nations out ahead of you only because of their wickedness, and to fulfill the oath he swore to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. **6** You must recognize that the LORD your God is not giving you this good land because you are good, for you are not—you are a stubborn people. **7** “Remember and never forget how angry you made the LORD your God out in the wilderness. From the day you left Egypt until now, you have been constantly rebelling against him. **8** Even at Mount Sinai you made the LORD so angry he was ready to destroy you. **9** This happened when I was on the mountain receiving the tablets of stone inscribed with the words of the covenant that the LORD had made with you. I was there for forty days and forty nights, and all that time I ate no food and drank no water. **10** The LORD gave me the two tablets on which God had written with his own finger all the words he had spoken to you from the heart of the fire when you were assembled at the mountain. **11** “At the end of the forty days and nights, the LORD handed me the two stone tablets inscribed with the words of the covenant. **12** Then the LORD said to me, ‘Get up! Go down immediately, for the people you brought out of Egypt have corrupted themselves. How quickly they have turned away from the way I commanded them to live! They have melted gold and made an idol for themselves!’ **13** “The LORD also said to me, ‘I have seen how stubborn and rebellious these people are. **14** Leave me alone so I may destroy them and erase their name from under heaven. Then I will make a mighty nation of your descendants, a nation larger and more powerful than they are.’ **15** “So while the mountain was blazing with fire I turned and came down, holding in my hands the two stone tablets inscribed with the terms of the covenant. **16** There below me I could

see that you had sinned against the LORD your God. You had melted gold and made a calf idol for yourselves. How quickly you had turned away from the path the LORD had commanded you to follow! **17** So I took the stone tablets and threw them to the ground, smashing them before your eyes. **18** “Then, as before, I threw myself down before the LORD for forty days and nights. I ate no bread and drank no water because of the great sin you had committed by doing what the LORD hated, provoking him to anger. **19** I feared that the furious anger of the LORD, which turned him against you, would drive him to destroy you. But again he listened to me. **20** The LORD was so angry with Aaron that he wanted to destroy him, too. But I prayed for Aaron, and the LORD spared him. **21** I took your sin—the calf you had made—and I melted it down in the fire and ground it into fine dust. Then I threw the dust into the stream that flows down the mountain. **22** “You also made the LORD angry at Taberah, Massah, and Kibroth-hattaavah. **23** And at Kadesh-barnea the LORD sent you out with this command: ‘Go up and take over the land I have given you.’ But you rebelled against the command of the LORD your God and refused to put your trust in him or obey him. **24** Yes, you have been rebelling against the LORD as long as I have known you. **25** “That is why I threw myself down before the LORD for forty days and nights—for the LORD said he would destroy you. **26** I prayed to the LORD and said, ‘O Sovereign LORD, do not destroy them. They are your own people. They are your special possession, whom you redeemed from Egypt by your mighty power and your strong hand. **27** Please overlook the stubbornness and the awful sin of these people, and remember instead your servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. **28** If you destroy these people, the Egyptians will say, “The Israelites died because the LORD wasn’t able to bring them to the land he had promised to give them.” Or they might say, “He destroyed them because he hated them; he deliberately took them into the wilderness to slaughter them.” **29** But they are your people and your special possession, whom you brought out of Egypt by your great strength and powerful arm.’

10 1 “At that time the LORD said to me, ‘Chisel out two stone tablets like the first ones. Also make a wooden Ark—a sacred chest to store them in. Come up to me on the mountain, **2** and I will write on the tablets the same words that were on the ones you smashed. Then place the tablets in the Ark.’ **3** “So I made an Ark of acacia wood and cut two stone tablets like the first two. Then I went up the mountain with the tablets in my hand. **4** Once again the LORD wrote the Ten Commandments on the tablets and gave them to me. They were the same words the LORD had spoken to you from the heart of the fire on the day you were assembled at the foot of the mountain. **5** Then I turned and came down the mountain and placed the tablets in the Ark of the Covenant, which I had made, just as the LORD commanded me. And the tablets are still there in the Ark.” **6** (The people of Israel set out from the wells of the people of Jaakan and traveled to

Moserah, where Aaron died and was buried. His son Eleazar ministered as high priest in his place. **7** Then they journeyed to Gudgodah, and from there to Jotbathah, a land with many brooks and streams. **8** At that time the LORD set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the Ark of the LORD 's Covenant, and to stand before the LORD as his ministers, and to pronounce blessings in his name. These are their duties to this day. **9** That is why the Levites have no share of property or possession of land among the other Israelite tribes. The LORD himself is their special possession, as the LORD your God told them.) **10** "As for me, I stayed on the mountain in the LORD 's presence for forty days and nights, as I had done the first time. And once again the LORD listened to my pleas and agreed not to destroy you. **11** Then the LORD said to me, 'Get up and resume the journey, and lead the people to the land I swore to give to their ancestors, so they may take possession of it.' **12** "And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you? He requires only that you fear the LORD your God, and live in a way that pleases him, and love him and serve him with all your heart and soul. **13** And you must always obey the LORD 's commands and decrees that I am giving you today for your own good. **14** "Look, the highest heavens and the earth and everything in it all belong to the LORD your God. **15** Yet the LORD chose your ancestors as the objects of his love. And he chose you, their descendants, above all other nations, as is evident today. **16** Therefore, change your hearts and stop being stubborn. **17** "For the LORD your God is the God of gods and Lord of lords. He is the great God, the mighty and awesome God, who shows no partiality and cannot be bribed. **18** He ensures that orphans and widows receive justice. He shows love to the foreigners living among you and gives them food and clothing. **19** So you, too, must show love to foreigners, for you yourselves were once foreigners in the land of Egypt. **20** You must fear the LORD your God and worship him and cling to him. Your oaths must be in his name alone. **21** He alone is your God, the only one who is worthy of your praise, the one who has done these mighty miracles that you have seen with your own eyes. **22** When your ancestors went down into Egypt, there were only seventy of them. But now the LORD your God has made you as numerous as the stars in the sky!

Luke 8:4 - 21

8 4 One day Jesus told a story in the form of a parable to a large crowd that had gathered from many towns to hear him:**5** "A farmer went out to plant his seed. As he scattered it across his field, some seed fell on a footpath, where it was stepped on, and the birds ate it. **6** Other seed fell among rocks. It began to grow, but the plant soon wilted and died for lack of moisture. **7**Other seed fell among thorns that grew up with it and choked out the tender

plants. **8** Still other seed fell on fertile soil. This seed grew and produced a crop that was a hundred times as much as had been planted!" When he had said this, he called out, "Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand." **9** His disciples asked him what this parable meant. **10** He replied, "You are permitted to understand the secrets of the Kingdom of God. But I use parables to teach the others so that the Scriptures might be fulfilled: 'When they look, they won't really see. When they hear, they won't understand.'" **11** "This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is God's word. **12** The seeds that fell on the footpath represent those who hear the message, only to have the devil come and take it away from their hearts and prevent them from believing and being saved. **13** The seeds on the rocky soil represent those who hear the message and receive it with joy. But since they don't have deep roots, they believe for a while, then they fall away when they face temptation. **14** The seeds that fell among the thorns represent those who hear the message, but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the cares and riches and pleasures of this life. And so they never grow into maturity. **15** And the seeds that fell on the good soil represent honest, good-hearted people who hear God's word, cling to it, and patiently produce a huge harvest. **16** "No one lights a lamp and then covers it with a bowl or hides it under a bed. A lamp is placed on a stand, where its light can be seen by all who enter the house. **17** For all that is secret will eventually be brought into the open, and everything that is concealed will be brought to light and made known to all. **18** "So pay attention to how you hear. To those who listen to my teaching, more understanding will be given. But for those who are not listening, even what they think they understand will be taken away from them." **19** Then Jesus' mother and brothers came to see him, but they couldn't get to him because of the crowd. **20** Someone told Jesus, "Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, and they want to see you." **21** Jesus replied, "My mother and my brothers are all those who hear God's word and obey it."

Psalm 69:19 - 36

69 19 You know of my shame, scorn, and disgrace. You see all that my enemies are doing. **20** Their insults have broken my heart, and I am in despair. If only one person would show some pity; if only one would turn and comfort me. **21** But instead, they give me poison for food; they offer me sour wine for my thirst. **22** Let the bountiful table set before them become a snare and their prosperity become a trap. **23** Let their eyes go blind so they cannot see, and make their bodies shake continually. **24** Pour out your fury on them; consume them with your burning anger. **25** Let their homes become desolate and their tents be deserted. **26** To the one you have punished, they add insult to injury; they add to the pain of those you have hurt. **27** Pile

their sins up high, and don't let them go free. **28** Erase their names from the Book of Life; don't let them be counted among the righteous. **29** I am suffering and in pain. Rescue me, O God, by your saving power. **30** Then I will praise God's name with singing, and I will honor him with thanksgiving. **31** For this will please the LORD more than sacrificing cattle, more than presenting a bull with its horns and hooves. **32** The humble will see their God at work and be glad. Let all who seek God's help be encouraged. **33** For the LORD hears the cries of the needy; he does not despise his imprisoned people. **34** Praise him, O heaven and earth, the seas and all that move in them. **35** For God will save Jerusalem and rebuild the towns of Judah. His people will live there and settle in their own land. **36** The descendants of those who obey him will inherit the land, and those who love him will live there in safety.

Proverbs 12:2 - 3

12 2 The LORD approves of those who are good, but he condemns those who plan wickedness. **3** Wickedness never brings stability, but the godly have deep roots.