

Introduction

In this section, the LORD continues to give Moses various instructions for the newly-formed nation.

1. Miscellaneous Commands, 23:1-9

These commands have to do with interactions between people, such as in the matters of justice, other people's property, bribes, handling of foreigners, etc. There are excellent principles here for us to implement in our lives, and to teach our children!

2. The Sabbath Year, 23:10-13

A pattern of seven years was to be observed in which the land was allowed to rest after six years of being worked. Poor people could take anything that grew by itself. The LORD would provide for the people in the other six years so that in the seventh, there would be enough. All of this was based on the pattern of the creation week and all following weeks which were to be the 6+1 pattern, with Saturday the day of rest.

It is interesting that not even the mention of the names of other gods were to cross the lips of the Israelites.

3. The Three Feasts, 23:14-19

- A. Feast of Unleavened Bread
- B. Feast of Harvest (Firstfruits)
- C. Feast of Ingathering

At each of these feasts, all the Israelite men had to appear before the LORD at the house of God – which would shortly be the tabernacle, and eventually the temple in Jerusalem. So, they had to travel three times per year. This would offer a good opportunity for them to meditate on their relationship with God. (Do you ever take some time out to do that sort of thing—or is vacation time for YOU only and not for God?)

4. The Land, 23:20-33

One subject considered in this paragraph is that the Angel of the LORD who would guide the people on their journey and conquest of the land.

A second point is that the people must stay pure from the gods of the people in the land. There are many such pagan deities that they are to completely destroy.

Another thing is the promise of God that if they serve God in this way, He will bless their food and offspring and will go before the people and give them victory. He said He would not drive the people out all at once, so that the land would not become overgrown in the absence of anyone while the Israelites were growing in numbers.

They were instructed specifically not to make a covenant with the people of the land, something that Joshua did not heed because he was too quick to covenant with the Gibeonites (Joshua 9).

5. The Response of the People, 24:1-8

Twice in this section the people responded that all that the LORD said they would do. They sealed their agreement to the covenant with blood.

6. Vision of God, 24:9-18

The Bible says that Moses, Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu went up into the mountain along with the 70 elders, and they saw the God of Israel. What a sight it must have been—as heaven itself!

After this, Moses was called up individually to be with God on the mountain. He was there for 40 days and nights in the midst of the presence of God. His glory rested on the mountain and the children of Israel saw it. How they could have reverted to the golden calf (ch. 32) is puzzling in a sense, but even with God's presence so assuredly near, human depravity is not eliminated.

Conclusion

What principles do you glean from this passage? Write some below.

MAP