

Deuteronomy 13 Sermon Manuscript – Pastor Vince Pienski

Deuteronomy 13: If you have a New King James Bible you will notice that the translators have titled this next section Punishment of Apostates, what is an Apostate? I am glad you asked! An apostate is one who renounces their faith, they abandon their loyalty, in short: defection, sounds serious?! Yes, it is. And so beloved when one defects, walks away from the faith, denounces Christ, the easy explanation that always seems to surface is “that they were never saved to begin with.” The good news is that we have a Righteous Judge who knows the heart and will judge accordingly, God takes care of that part☺. Our part is to recognize it when it happens and pray for that individual. Now if this apostate tries to drag others along the same path, lead other sheep astray, then it is our job as shepherds to protect. This is one reason why we have church membership, this is why during the membership process we look at the key-non-negotiable doctrines of the faith, this way we know that we are in agreement, we are like minded, we are on the same page.

Bach in chapter 12 we saw Moses (as any good shepherd would) prohibiting his sheep to be involved in any type of idolatry. With that prohibition Moses now (in chapter 13) points out three ways in which the temptation to idolatry was likely to come, why?, because God used Moses to protect His sheep.

First, the false **prophet** (13:1-5):

¹ “If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder, ² and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, ‘Let us go after other gods’—which you have not known—‘and let us serve them,’ and so “A” under the false prophet: just because someone gives you a sign, wonder, or some sort of miracle that comes to pass does not mean it is of God. The devil is very handy in this area of deception. Deception has been, and is one of his life long power plays against mankind and if you don’t believe me ask your great-great-great grandparents Adam and Eve.

Beloved there is a ton of spiritual baloney out there today, especially under the claims of health, wealth and prosperity. Imagine that, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life.... Now there’s a new concept, I wonder where that came from?!?!? And so beloved, it is the responsibility of every believer to “**test all things**” (against Scripture 1 Thess 5:21) and “**abstain from every form of evil**” 5:22.

And when you test all things beloved, context is key!!! When someone gives you a bunch of baloney and attaches a verse to it, check the context, because the majority of the time, the Scriptures are tossed around and ripped out of context. Context is key: Context! Context! Context! And don’t ever be embarrassed to say “I need to go home and study the context of this passage.” It is much more God honoring to be a humble student of the Word rather than a prideful idiot. And so until you confirm, do not listen, look at v.3: ³ **you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the LORD your God is testing you to**

know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. ⁴ You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear Him, and keep His commandments and obey His voice; you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him. ⁵ But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has spoken in order to turn *you* away from the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of bondage, to entice you from the way in which the LORD your God commanded you to walk. So you shall put away the evil from your midst. And so beloved, before mankind was given the written Word of God, dreams were used in prophecy both legitimately (Num 12:6) and illegitimately (Jer 23:25). Moses warned that false prophets were being used by the Lord to test the people's love for him, the love here in the Hebrew language is a total love, total commitment love, and total commitment to the Lord. Beloved, God allows trials in the lives of His people today to strengthen the faith and draw His loved ones closer to Him.

False prophets were to be put to death so that the evil would be purged from among the people. And so here we see God, through Moses, protecting and purifying the flock. Same way it is our responsibility as shepherds here at Living Hope to protect the flock. Should someone find there way here to teach doctrines that we are not in agreement with we will ask them to stop, and if they choose not to, we will asked them to leave, we have no room here for one causing dissention or division. We have copies of our non-negotiable doctrines for the taking (F&M 2000), please do so, if you do not have a family Bible study this is a great one to work through, read the statement and then look up the passages and discuss.

Jesus warns us of the same, in Matthew 24:11 He says, “**many** false prophets will rise up and deceive **many**.” And many will say, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?" ²³ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness (Mt. 7:22)! And so the false prophets will claim that their deeds were done in the Lord's name, but their claim will not stand.

And so Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. (1 John 4:1). And abstain from every form of evil (1 Thess 5:22). Because some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons (1 Tim 4:1).

#1 the false prophet, #2 **temptation to idolatry can come from a loved one**
Beloved, if I have not convinced you of the seriousness of this as of yet, look at vv.6-11: ⁶ “If your brother, the son of your mother, your son or your daughter, the wife of your bosom, or your friend who is as your own soul, secretly entices you, saying, ‘Let us go and serve other gods,’ which you have not known, neither you

nor your fathers, ⁷ of the gods of the people which *are* all around you, near to you or far off from you, from *one* end of the earth to the *other* end of the earth, ⁸ you **shall not** consent to him or listen to him, nor shall your eye pity him, nor shall you spare him or conceal him; ⁹ ***but you shall surely kill him***; your hand shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. ¹⁰ And you shall stone him with stones until he dies, because he sought to entice you away from the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. ¹¹ So all Israel shall hear and fear, and not again do such wickedness as this among you. Well, what was Moses thinking, that wasn't a very seeker sensitive message?! And here you see the seriousness of the issue and the very **heart** of God concerning His chosen nation... **and** His heart concerning sin. And while we do not put those to death today that practice idolatry, God is unchanging, that is one of His chief attributes, He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. God is infinitely unchangeable and **He hates sin**. And so those who practice lawlessness God will allow them to have it their way. God will take His protective hand off of them and turn them over (Romans 1:24) to their own lusts, and that applies today. Now concerning stoning, for someone to say that this is a Biblical method of punishment that ought to be practiced today is the most ridiculous thing I've ever heard. Please understand beloved that The Church is distinct from Israel. The church does not **replace** or **continue** Israel, and is never referred to as Israel. The church did not exist in the Old Testament and did not begin until Acts chapter 2. Old Testament commands and promises to Israel cannot be applied **nor** entirely fulfilled with the church.

#1 a false **prophet**, #2 a **loved one** #3 **revolutionaries or radicals**, talking about those who had been successful in leading an entire town into apostasy (vv. 12-18):
¹² “If you hear someone in one of your cities, which the LORD your God gives you to dwell in, saying, ¹³ ‘Corrupt men have gone out from among you and enticed the inhabitants of their city, saying, “Let us go and serve other gods”’— which you have not known— and so now we have the idea of “everybody is doing it”, we have a large visible number, and so it must be ok.... Well no, it's not ok, it may be easier.... Jesus said: ¹³ “Enter by the narrow gate; for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. ¹⁴ Because narrow *is* the gate **and difficult** *is* the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it. And so wide gate theology is easy, and unfortunately we will see many headed down that path, but do not fall into the **trap** or **the flow** of the majority, **test all things, and abstain from every form of evil**. When you see something like this happening you flee from it, “run away” get out of town, c-y-a-bye. Now as for Israel, they were to **inquire, search out, and ask diligently** (v.14). **And if it is indeed true and certain that** such an abomination was committed among you, ¹⁵ you shall surely strike the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying it, all that is in it and its livestock—with the edge of the sword. ¹⁶ And you shall gather all its plunder into the middle of the street, and

completely burn with fire the city and all its plunder, for the LORD your God. It shall be a heap forever; it shall not be built again.¹⁷ So none of the accursed things shall remain in your hand, that the LORD may turn from the fierceness of His anger and show you mercy, have compassion on you and multiply you, just as He swore to your fathers,¹⁸ because you have listened to the voice of the LORD your God, to keep all His commandments which I command you today, to do *what is right in the eyes of the LORD your God*. And so the instruction for Israel was to heap it up and utterly destroy it, and this is not a command for the New Testament Church. However beloved, we are to heap up and utterly destroy the sin in our lives, each one, personally, with an attitude of gratitude for our Lord and Savior so that His light may shine brightly through us. Not to show the world what we have accomplished, but to show the world what HE has accomplished for us!