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MINISTRIES

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Parashah Points: Devarim – Judge Righteously

Welcome to another episode of Parashah Points—short thoughts from the weekly Torah Portion.

This week’s Parashah Point comes from Devarim, which is Hebrew for “words,” and it goes from Deuteronomy 1:1 to Deuteronomy 3:22

In this Torah portion, Moses recounts several events in Israel’s wilderness journey. It tells of Moses appointing elders and leaders, Israel’s refusal to enter the land because of the report of the ten spies, and the defeat of King Sihon and King Og.

There’s a lot we can talk about in this Torah Portion. Today we’re going to talk about righteous judgment.

Deuteronomy 1:16-17

And I charged your judges at that time, ‘Hear the cases between your brothers, and **judge righteously** between a man and his brother or the alien who is with him. **You shall not be partial in judgment.** You shall hear the small and the great alike. You shall not be intimidated by anyone, for the judgment is God's. And the case that is too hard for you, you shall bring to me, and I will hear it.

God commanded the judges of Israel to hear cases among the people and judge righteously. This was a very serious job. The judges needed to be impartial and fair in their rulings. They were not to be “intimidated” by anyone. They were to stand for what is true and just.

While these instructions applied specifically to the judges of Israel, there are principles that we can apply to our lives today beyond the courthouse. Like the judges, we must make righteous judgments. How do we do that?

First, the Torah commands judges to be impartial. We must base our judgments on facts, not feelings or whatever is popular. We must be after the truth.

This principle applies to many different areas in life, but consider theology as an example. Do we base our beliefs on what Scripture teaches? Or do we go with what's popular or by what some teacher we like says? If we care about truth, we have a responsibility to study the Word of God for ourselves and do what it says, regardless of how unpopular something might be.

Second, the Torah commands judges not to be intimidated by anyone. Again, this can apply in many different ways, but let's consider theology once again. How many of us have backed off from proclaiming an unpopular truth because we felt intimidated by culture? For example, many believers are afraid to openly affirm the Bible's teachings about sexual morality out of fear of retaliation or being shunned by their friends.

While culture and trends change, God never changes (Malachi 3:6). May our Father give his people the wisdom to judge righteously and the courage to stand up for the truth.

Thank you for joining us for another Parashah Point!

We pray you have been blessed by this teaching. Remember, continue to test everything. Shalom! For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at www.testeverything.net

Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.

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