

The Book of Deuteronomy

DETERMINANT THRESHOLDS.

Part 13: THE SUM TOTAL OF UNDERSTANDING.

#1 “The Lord will make you the head and not the tail, and you only will be above, and you will not be underneath, if you listen to the commandments of the Lord your God, which I charge you today, to observe them carefully”. v. 28:13.

#2 How is it that the Israelites could be endowed with such PARAMOUNTCY among all other nations? How could that nation hold such unequivocal IMPORTANCE?

#3 The answer is SPIRITUAL DETERMINANCY. Such PARAMOUNTCY was PASSIVE. No geo-political genius on their part could have achieved that splendid status.

#4. “The Lord will make you the head”...”, while”...the tail...” was reserved for the pagan peoples. Active careful observation of the revealed commandments was the LEVERAGING FACTOR.

#5 All thoughts, consideration, contemplation & discipline were to be marshaled to MAP REVEALED IDEAS ON TO NATURE, ECONOMICS, THE POLITICAL, THE BODY, THE SELF, EVEN METEOROLOGY. That was their charge given by the almighty. Theirs was a SUPERNATURAL REVEALED UNDERSTANDING & IT WAS A TOTALITY!

#6 No elective philosophy nor worldview, this, it was the effect of REVELATION. The word of God delivered, changes all impressions, all previous conceptions regarding just what has PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE. A specific language manifold has to grow out of & it would have to be organic to revealed truth.

#7 Individuals, families, the entire population could not afford to be ENVELOPED IN THE PURSUIT OF MUNDANE TEMPORALEXPERIENCE. For that is only proof of the loss of SPIRITUAL DETERMINANCY.

#8 THE SUM TOTAL OF UNDERSTANDING IS REVEALED; IT IS NOT RATIONALIZED!

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Part 14: THE SUM TOTAL OF UNDERSTANDING, 28:12-14.

#1 “and do not turn aside from any of the words which I command you today, to the right or to the left to go after other gods to serve them”, 28:14.

#2 The text is most unambiguous; there is a STIPULATED LANGUAGE MANIFOLD, distinct from all others.

#3 The words of God delivered were to serve as the FOUNDATION FOR COMPARISON. Meaning that the DETERMINANT THRESHOLD between God & men; between the mind of God & the mind of a man had been bridged by revelation.

#4 As direct & immediate consequence, the delivered words of God became the starting point for thought, speech & behavior.

#5 By the POWERS OF REVELATION the recharacterization of the self begins. As that takes hold, the character of the nation emerges into the world setting. The character of whole nations is shaped by the SUM TOTAL OF UNDERSTANDING.

#6 By the giving of the revealed TOTAL OF UNDERSTANDING, the Lord was putting Israel into a permanent state of clash & contradiction with the rest of the world.

#7 Warning was given about the EXCLUSIONARY NECESSITY. All variants to the revealed propositional truth were to be avoided; “and do not turn aside from any of the words...to the right or to the left...”,

#8 Turning aside from “any of the words,” is a reductive statement. Revelation as meaning reduces to words (the most basic common denominator of meaning). To turn aside from them is a PERFECTLY CONSCIOUS behavior. No inadvertence (neglect of attention).

#9 In other words a CONSCIOUS INATTENTION had to be recognized & foiled. The PREACHER PRIESTS were to watch for just such an eventuality. Israel was warned! THE CONTEMPORARY CHURCH BE WARNED!

#10 CONSCIOUS INATTENTION to the words “...which I command you today...”, is the opening of the drift into idolatry. The word of God is both HAMMER & ANVIL; it creates & it destroys!

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Part 15: CONTRADICTION TO RATIONALIZED FUTURE, 28:15.

#1 “But it shall come about, if you do not obey the Lord your God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes with which I charge you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you.”

#2 Accordingly, the PASSIVE FUTURE IS AN OPEN FUTURE. It is OPEN to SUPERNATURAL BLESSINGS & OPEN to INDUCED CURSES.

#3 Either outcome “...will come upon you and overtake you”. The OPEN FUTURE, to that degree, is UNDETERMINED.

#4 Posited here a contradiction between a PASSIVE/OPEN FUTURE & a RATIONALIZED FUTURE, which is one conceived by a man & then pursued according to natural means.

#5 Textual statements have the consequence, then, of restraining thought, conceptualization & action toward the OPEN FUTURE.

#6 In essential terms, the future is the province of the Almighty. Belief in the “commandments” & “statutes”, therefore, has a counter-intuitive effect. One who trusts in the PASSIVE/OPEN FUTURE wants no direct effect upon the future (rationalized effect). Rather one pursues the approval of God.

#7 Pursuit of the APPROVAL OF GOD & pursuit of a RATIONALIZED FUTURE are not the same thing.

#8 The APPROVAL OF GOD is the precondition for an OPEN FUTURE of supernatural blessings.

#9 The teaching about the PASSIVE/OPEN FUTURE makes known that only the Lord has direct effect upon the future. That is the permanent context of the whole of time.

#10 One’s faith directly affects the APPROVAL OF GOD. And with His approval the future takes shape. A remarkable trait of the future is that it is OPEN to the effects upon God of personal faith & behavior.

#11 THE PASSIVE/OPEN FUTURE is only an indirect effect of faith. It is the Lord, Himself, who authors the future.

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DETERMINANT THRESHOLDS.

Part 16: SCRIPTURE & "THE LAWS OF NAGTURE", 28:16-29.

#1 The Bible, being the word of God, we believe, is pre-scientific because it is pre-everything. Revelation is not time bound; tied to the social, cultural & eventfulness of the age(s) in which the language was rendered.

#2 Deuteronomy is redundant in its teaching about the relation of God to time. His relation is DIRECT & IMMEDIATE. And in consequence, time, all of it, is PASSIVE & OPEN before the Almighty.

#3 The Lord promised to bless Israel in the land if they were careful to obey His commandments & statutes. Then He promised to level curses upon them in the PASSIVE/OPEN FUTURE, if they turned to disobedience.

#4 UNIFORM DISRUPTION would follow, v. 16. FULL SWEEP FRUSTRATION, V. 16, 17, 18, 19. DIRECT CAUSALITY promises disruption of natural processes.

#5 The SPIRITUAL DISRUPTION OF NATURE explains the actual state of time called PASSIVE/OPEN.

#6 "The Lord will send", v. 20 "...will make...", v. 21, 24, "...will smite...", v. 22, 27-29, "...will cause...", v. 25.

#7 "LAWS OF NATURE", it has been asserted, have changed what we think & how we think. Science induced assumptions can cloud revealed truth. The "Laws of Nature" represent CONTEXT DEPENDENT REGULARITY. The context is nature.

#8 But the REAL LAW OF NATURE is beyond the "natural context". God, Himself, the will of God, word of God & the power of God are the only CAUSAL CONTEXT. Nature is not any kind of CAUSAL CONTEXT; nature, physics & physiology are only the TEMPORAL SETTING in which historical conditions are made by the Lord.

#9 Why? "The Lord will send upon you curses, confusion and rebuke, in all you undertake to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, on account of the evil of your deeds, because you have forsaken me", v. 20.

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DETERMINANT THRESHOLDS.

Part 17: HUMAN LIVED EXPERIENCE.

#1 Experience, being inevitable, it is considered to be the primary means of learning how to adequately deal with the world on its own terms. It represents a kind of faith itself. PROBLEM: Human experience, holds a dangerous characteristic; IT OBSCURES THE GREATER REALITY.

#2 It turns out that HUMAN EXPERIENCE presents a very strong impression: EXPERIENCE SEEMS MORE REAL THAN GOD! In the lee of such an impression, the word of God is pushed beyond serious contemplation.

#3 Deuteronomy counsels against the natural allure of the pursuit of EXPERIENCE. “yet you were not willing to go up, but rebelled against the command of the Lord your God; and you grumbled in your tents and said ‘Because the Lord hates us, He has brought us out of the land of Egypt to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites to destroy us”, 1:26, 27.

#4 Israel, largely, turned against the word of God & to faith in HUMAN LIVED EXPERIENCE. Moses told the Israelites about such convocations to be held between Mt. Ebal & Mt. Gerizim, chapter 27. Obedience to the commands of God stands always in direct contradiction to HUMAN LIVED EXPERIENCE.

#5 In other words, REVELATION COUNTERS EXPERIENCE. Reading the Bible from the unchallenged perspective of LIVED EXPERIENCE OBSCURES THE URGENCY OF REVEALED PROPOSITIONAL TRUTH.

#6 Language & meaning are usually SOCIALLY ACQUIRED. That is, by shared social experience & or by education, both formal & informal.

#7 But the word of God generates language NOT SOCIALLY ACQUIRED. Rather it creates language obligated to the expressed will of God; a language acquired from Scripture.

#8 One of the effects of this is that THE ENGINE OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IS NO LONGER SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & NOT HUMAN LIVED EXPERIENCE!

#9 Events can destroy belief! Jarring experience comes our way. If one is personally dependent upon HUMAN LIVED EXPERIENCE, then, there in is danger. Habitually & naturally we incline to the rigor of experience. PLENARY FAITH subsides.

#10 There is nothing natural about standing between Mt. Ebal & Mt. Gerizim.

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Part 18: "NORMALITY"? WHAT IS THAT?, 28:30-44.

#1 The future is PASSIVE & OPEN. The PASSIVE/OPEN FUTURE is not achieved; it is endowed or bestowed by the Lord upon the people of Israel. And that, in direct response to their "careful" obedience to (28:1-14) or to their negligence & disregard of "all His commandments" (28:15-44).

#2 Both "blessings & "curses" were SUPERNATURAL. Both "blessings & "curses" were the SUPERNATURAL CONDITIONING of historical circumstances, of individuals & of those of the collective. Therefore, those induced circumstances could not be represented as natural. This is a startling revelation.

#3 More than that, under the TEXTUAL TERMS ENUMERATED, the PASSIVE/OPEN FUTURE would encompass A SCOPE OF EXTREMES!

#4 Blessings would endow the PASSIVE FUTURE with EXTREME benefits & temporal advantages, beyond humanistic design. The curses registered in this text would generate the EXTREME of "horror", a "terrible proverb", a "taunt", 28:37.

#5 Either regime would result in EXTREMES, from the human point of view. This being the case, then, what does the term "NORMAL" mean?

#6 There was nothing "NORMAL" about this SCOPE OF EXTREMES! In other words, the PASSIVE/OPEN FUTURE is far from what human beings think of as "NORMAL"!

#7 One generalization from this, is that a life lived under REVEALED TEXTUAL TERMS cannot expect to be "NORMAL". In this world, the hope for a state of affairs usually referred to as "NORMAL", is empty. The SCOPE OF EXTREMES" ...will come upon you and overtake you...", 28:2, 15.

#8 How then, shall we cope with the SCOPE OF EXTREMES? Or how are we coping with this phenomenon?

#9 We are squeezed between two SUPERNATURAL EXTREMES. Perhaps we should see to the kind of faith that can stand up to that SCOPE OF EXTREMES?! How are you doing?

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DETERMINANT THRESHOLDS

Part 19: REVELATION PERSONIFIED, 28:45, 46

#1 “So all these curses shall come to you and pursue you and overtake you until you are destroyed, because you would not obey the Lord your God by keeping His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you. They shall become a sign and a wonder on you and your descendants forever”, 28:45,46.

#2 If the curses would “...come on you...pursue you...overtake you...” then, so would the blessings. This is the AGGRESSION of the Almighty against individuals. And this DIVINE PURSUIT was recorded as RELENTLESS. It would terminate with personal destruction, in the cause of disobedience.

#3 Interesting that the text dissolves any ambiguity about the act of PERSONAL OBEDIENCE. How does one obey? “...by keeping His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you”.

#4 OBEDIENCE was tied to the word of God. Therefore, obedience is not SUBJECTIVE (determined by human will). One is not permitted to define for himself/herself just what obedience is.

#5 We may refer to a TEXTUAL OBJECTIVITY. Revelation comes from outside of time, materiality & from beyond the self. It is OBJECTIVE. In consequence TEXTUAL OBJECTIVITY is elevated above PERSONAL SUBJECTIVITY.

#6 OBEDIENCE to God cannot be defined by the churches, it was not defined by Judaism, it cannot be defined by individual believers. OBEDIENCE will carry one beyond what is personally comfortable, beyond the self, beyond time, beyond human experience, beyond rational interpretation. It is the anti-rationalism!

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DETERMINANT THRESHOLDS

Part 20: REVELATION PERSONIFIED, 28:45, 46.

#1 OBJECTIVE OBEDIENCE IS A CONTINUUM. It begins with God→moves to the word of God→which enlightens the mind of a man→affecting personal will→resulting in→OBEDIENCE.

#2 OBEDIENCE is a continuum. Revealed propositional truth is indexed (joined, connected)→to HUMAN OBEDIENCE.

#3 Propositional truth is forced into human thought, speech & behavior. That being the case, then, revealed propositional understanding is spread over the chronological extent (time) of every man's life.

#4 The word of God→was expected to be personified in time, materiality & circumstance & that personification is called OBEDIENCE.

#5 OBEDIENCE becomes the man & the man becomes OBEDIENCE. The believer, man or woman, obeys the word of God, in order to personify it in the temporal universe. Such a PERSONAL PERSONIFICATION pushes or forces the revealed will of God into circumstance.

#6 OBEDIENCE is the instrument of God in the temporal. Unquestionably the prescribed personal behavior for all men, is OBEDIENCE to the "commandments" & "statutes".

#7 OBEDIENCE changes, alters, the self, the person. The self, reconceived by the word of God purposes to push the will of God into time & circumstance. The word is personified & that is what a believer is.

#8 No one in time is permitted to SUBJECTIVELY define OBEDIENCE; not churches, not believers, not governments, not societies, not culture. PROGRESSIVISM, in its political & religious robes constitutes the PERSONIFICATION OF SUBJECTIVISM!

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DETERMINANT THRESHOLDS

Part 21: REVELATION PERSONIFIED, 28:45, 46.

#1 OBEDIENCE, is not to be reduced to rule-keeping. OBEDIENCE stands between the word of God & personal behavior in human circumstances.

#2 OBEDIENCE adds what we may call the X-FACTOR into OBJECTIVE CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR, And that factor changes the nature of any situation.

#3 The X-FACTOR (a) generates a considerable expansion of one's understanding of any situation, (b) it pushes a corrective into the circumstance or material condition, (c) it carries one beyond appearances & human experience.

#4 In any kind of situation or temporal circumstance, a believer, being perplexed, may ask himself/herself: "WHAT DO I DO"? The answer has been prescribed by revealed truth: OBEY THE WORD OF GOD.

#5 Queen Esther took the advice of Mordecai & did just that in dangerous & uncertain circumstances.

#6 "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age", Matthew 28:19, 20.

#7 Jesus' Great commission suggests, to some, the idea of geography & that may conduce to a sense of personal detachment; however, BIBLICAL OBEDIENCE moves one from geography→to circumstance.

#8 All kinds of human circumstance wherein OBEDIENCE (personal) forces the contradiction of cultural lines, social lines & especially, personal lines.

#9 Without BIBLICAL OBEDIENCE, all that is left is cultural, the society & the PERSONAL SUBJECTIVE.

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DETERMINANT THRESHOLDS

Part 22: REVELATION PERSONIFIED, 28:45, 46.

#1 BIBLICAL DECLARED OBEDIENCE is presented as not just a PRIORITY; it is rather THE PRIORITY.

#2 Preachers are sometimes forced to consider declaring revealed truth in their teaching, without regard to their employment.

#3 A rich young man came to Jesus one day (Luke 18:18-27). He had no confidence in REVEALED TRUTH & no belief in the PASSIVE/OPEN FUTURE. That man preferred what he believed to be a financially or humanly secured future.

#4 A CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL DOCTRINE tries to separate sex from gender. That attempted distinction is PURELY SUBJECTIVE, It may be a pinnacle, what T. Dalrymple calls "TOXIC SENTIMENTALITY" (unbridled subjectivity).

#5 One's feelings have no meaning but they can become a PRELUDE TO BEHAVIOR. Jesus did not want to die on the cross, yet He OBEYED God & did (Matthew 26:36-46)!

#6 WE ARE NOT SAVED BY HOW JESUS FELT; WE ARE SAVED BY WHAT HE DID! Daniel in the lion's den (Daniel 6); Joseph languished in Egypt for years (Genesis 37-41); Paul's thorn in the flesh (2 Corinthians 12); the parable of the soils (Matthew 13); all teach believers to DEFY THE DICTATES OF EMOTION, FEELINGS, ROMANTICISM & SENTIMENTALITY!

#7 SUBJECTIVE IS REAL, BUT IT MUST BE PUSHED DOWNSTREAM FROM OBEDIENCE!

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DETERMINANT THRESHOLDS

Part 23: THE COSMOLOGICAL SPIRITUAL ARRANGEMENT, 28:47.

#1 “Because you did not serve the Lord your God with joy and a glad heart, for the abundance of all things”.

#2 A COSMOLOGY is the term referring to the way things are in the universe. The Bible, in general, & Deuteronomy, in particular, defines that COSMOLOGY as A SPIRITUAL ARRANGEMENT.

#3 The ARRANGEMENT is between “the Lord your God”→& the world of “all things”. It is SPIRITUAL precisely “Because” God is the determinant member of the ARRANGEMENT.

#4 Immediately inferred is the idea that PROBABILISTICS & STATISTICS are meaningless in just such a COSMOLOGY as that.

#5 “...the abundance of all things” had no natural explanation. That “abundance” was an EFFECT. THE SPIRITUAL ARRANGEMENT links the SPIRITUAL→to the MATERIAL; links the WILL OF GOD→ to TIME.

#6 Israel was to recognize that their greatest & most compelling need was for this COSMOLOGICAL SPIRITUAL ARRANGEMENT! This ARRANGEMENT is a CAUSE→to EFFECT RELATION.

#7 Biblical faith is to submit one’s life, possessions & materiality to the COSMOLOGICAL SPIRITUAL ARRANGEMENT. Faith is more than subscription to selected doctrine. It is a way of understanding the relation between the Almighty→& time.

#8 Israel would eventually, by their thought, speech & behavior, BREAK THE HOLD OF THE SPIRITUAL COSMOLOGY ON THEIR REASONING.”...you did not serve the Lord your God..”; Israel would abandon the word of God; they would come to resent the will of God; they would despise His authority. The SPIRITUAL ARRANGEMENT gave them no “joy”, no “glad heart”.