

July 1

Scriptures: Read Deuteronomy 7 & 8

Key Verse: "... The Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments."(Deuteronomy 7:9)

Overview

In chapters seven and eight, Moses continues the lecture to the new generation of Israel regarding their covenant responsibilities to the Lord. It is again stressed that they are to obey all the Lord's commandments. The command emphasized here is a difficult one. In preparation for the establishment of God's Kingdom, Israel is to be used as instruments of His judgment upon the wicked and reprobate people who occupy Canaan, "... you shall conquer them and utterly destroy them (7:2)." This command was given not only to see the wrath of God accomplished upon those people who hated Him (7:10) and whose time of iniquity was now complete (Gen.15:16), but to protect the sanctity of Israel as a people separated unto Him. If they were obedient to the Lord's commands, then they would be blessed with fruitfulness in all areas of life (7:12-15).

Israel was weak and could easily be led astray into idolatry; therefore, measures were taken to prevent spiritual contamination. This included destroying anything connected with the heathen religion and forbidding intermarriage. For similar reasons, the New Testament tells the single believer, "do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (2 Cor.6:14). Those whom the Lord has chosen to be His own special treasure (7:6) are to safeguard themselves from the sinful ways of the world that they may remain pure and undefiled.

We thank God for His Holy Spirit who gives us the strength to remain consecrated to Him, even while we live in a corrupt and reprobate world. We must not allow sin to reign in our lives but be dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus; then God has promise that "sin shall not have dominion over you: (Rom.6:11-14). Just as the Israelites were promised victory and exhorted not to fear, we, too, can defeat sin in our lives and be courageous, knowing that Christ in us gives us the strength to be more than conquerors.

The Lord loves His people today, just as we read in this chapter that He loved His covenant people of old (7:7, 8) even though they were unworthy. It is not because of any merit on our part, but out of His own prerogative He has chosen us because of His faithfulness, mercy, and grace. The Bible says that He is a jealous God; His love for us is to be reciprocated, and He is to be our first love. If we put anything before Him, that is like idolatry.

In chapter eight, Moses warned Israel about two dangers—pride and forgetfulness. Pride could result because of their high calling and because of the wealth and power they were soon to attain. They needed to know that all this came only from God, and He alone was to receive the glory (8:18). Moses reminded them of God's goodness and how He had miraculously sustained them and led them for forty years in the wilderness. He explained that the wandering had been a time of chastening, as a loving father would discipline his son. God wanted to humble them, test them, and see the end result for their good (8:16). They were to learn to be dependent upon Him and know that all good things come from Him.

The chief thing Moses reminded them of was God's provision of manna to teach them that, "man shall not live by bread alone; but... by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord" (8:3; cf. Matt.4:4). Making has a great spiritual need, which is just nourishment can be supplied only by daily feeding upon the Word of God and by communion with Him.

Prayer

Help us, O Lord, to eat, partake, and make part of ourselves Your Word, today and every day. Amen.