

THE PROMISE OF LIFE / Sunday School- August 30, 2009

Unifying Topic: GOD CALLS FOR DECISION

Lesson Text

I. Israel's Future Apostasy (Deuteronomy 30:1-6)

II. Promise of Prosperity (Deuteronomy 30:7-10)

The Main Thought: And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and that thy mayest live . (Deuteronomy 30:6 KJV).

Unifying Principle: People want to experience a satisfying life, to attain joy and prosperity. How do we get what we want out of life? Moses claimed that God wants us to love Him so much that we want nothing more than to obey him.

Lesson Aim: Students are encouraged to understand that God's promise of prosperity for the people of Israel was contingent upon the Israelites obedience to His commands.

Life aim: A foolproof way to enjoy a satisfying life, one filled with joy and prosperity, is to obey God.

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- 30:1 And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee,
- 30:2 And shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul;
- 30:3 That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee.
- 30:4 If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee:
- 30:5 And the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers.
- 30:6 And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.
- 30:7 And the LORD thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee.
- 30:8 And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the LORD, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day.
- 30:9 And the LORD thy God will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land, for good: for the LORD will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers:
- 30:10 If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law, and if thou turn unto the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.

HISTORY:

In **Deuteronomy Chapter 29** of the Bible, in the plains of Moab, Moses reviewed God's laws, which calls for commitment, urging the people to honor the Covenant at Mount Sinai, they had preciously made with God. This covenant was binding on the descendants of the Israelites. God promised to bless His special covenant people by making them the nation through whom the rest of the world could know God. The Israelites promised to love and obey God in order to receive physical and spiritual blessings and these blessings would come if they obeyed His commandments and curses would come if they did not.

Although God gave the Israelites eyes to see, Moses said, "God did not give you a heart to understand." Therefore, Moses himself led the Israelites through the wilderness where neither their clothes nor their shoes wore out. The children of Israel did not grow grain for bread or grapes for wine and strong drink, so that they would realize that it was the Lord their God who had been caring for them. God was the one that gave them the victories over other lands. The secret to their continued success was simply to obey God. **All** of the leaders, elders, men, women, children, slaves and even the stranger who was in the camp may enter into the Covenant relationship with God so that **He** could establish them as **His** people as He swore to their fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The Covenant was not only with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but all who were present that day, and all Israelites who would be born thereafter, at least until the Messiah came, who would bring about the New Covenant.

God is not playing in this Chapter. As they are about to enter the Promised Land, they would be seriously tempted

into the abominations of idolatry, because it was inhabited by people who worshipped idols of wood, stone, silver and gold. The Israelites understood what idolatry was because they witnessed it in the nations they passed through and in Egypt.

WARNINGS:

- Don't think you could still enjoy God's blessings while straying, moving casually to worship idols!
- If someone worshipped idols while pretending to worship only God, they were no different than a person who was drunk, but pretended to be sober.
- God would curse this person because such idolatrous practices offend God and His jealousy would burn against that person and every curse that is written would come upon him and God would blot out his name from under heaven.
- If any portion of Israel turned to worshipping idols, then God would cut these people out of Israel and separate them for great punishment, bringing all the curses that are written in the law upon the idol worshippers. Their punishment would be so horrible and notorious that the next generation and the foreigners would be struck by it.

NOTE:

When the nations of the earth see the land they will ask, 'Why has the Lord done this to this land? What does the heat of this great anger mean?' Then the people will answer, 'the Israelites were God's special covenant people. They entered into a covenant with God, they were not to worship idols, but they did, they have forsaken their God, and God's anger burned against them, and their land, and God brought every curse written in the book upon them, and their land. In His anger, God uprooted them from their land and cast them into another land.'

Moses finished this Chapter by saying, "The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law."

Deuteronomy 30:1-6 Israel's Future Apostasy

Moses told the Israelites of a **prophecy**, which was also a conditional promise. Moses, foreseeing in the future, told the Israelites that after God blessed them, and cursed them as written in the Book, and when they **remembered** what was written therein, then they would **return** to the Lord God, and obey His voice. *Once the Israelites and their children turned to God with all their heart and with all their soul, then God would have compassion on them and deliver them from captivity. God would then gather the Israelites together from all the nations of the earth even from the farthest parts under heaven where the Lord, God had scattered them.

TERM:

APOSTASY: renunciation of faith, turning away, turning back, backsliding, faithless, waywardness.

NOTE:

The first symptom of apostasy was Israel departing from God's Word (Hos.8:1-7) which was evidenced by her deeds. The second symptom of apostasy was Israel defiled herself with the world (8:8-10). A third and final symptom of apostasy was that Israel deceived herself with her works (8:11-14). I will heal their apostasy, I will love them freely, For My anger has turned away from them (Hos.14:4 NAS).

**Although the Israelites would be punished for their sin, made captive, and exiled to distant lands, God will let them return one day to their homeland. This prediction was fulfilled in part when many Israelites returned from 70 years of captivity in Babylon (Ez.1:2).*

Knowing God would bring the Israelites into the land which their fathers possessed and they would possess it, shows that there had to be true repentance, and God would then prosper and multiply them more than their fathers. God would then circumcise their hearts and the hearts of their descendants to love the Lord God with all their hearts, and with all their souls, and they will live (v6).

TERMS:

CIRCUMCISION: is the sign of separation. Similarly, the circumcision of Christ, which is made without hands, is a putting off, a separation from the sins of the flesh, a participation in the grave, and burial of Christ (Col. 2:12).

We must be separated from the spirit and temper of the world.

REPENTANCE: is to change life's direction, trust God, and obey Him. Repentance leads to Salvation.

Deuteronomy 30:7-10 Promise of Prosperity

God would then curse Israel's enemies who hated and persecuted them. The Israelites would then obey God's voice including all His commandments. God would bless the works of their hands, their children, their livestock, and the produce of their land. God would again rejoice over Israel for good as He rejoiced over their fathers, but they must obey God's voice, and keep His commandments, and His statutes, which are written in the Book of the Law, and they must turn to the Lord with all their heart and all their soul.

POINT:

If they repent and are converted, they shall have their sins pardoned, and be restored to God's favour. All the things that had been on Israel because of their disobedience, gets dumped on their enemies when they turn back to the Lord.

SUMMARY

Moses was prophesying concerning Restoration. The children of Israel broke the Covenant with God. They forfeited the Covenant Promises. All the curses of the Covenant came upon them. God in His wrath turned His face from them, but He did not forget His Covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He did not change His plan and purpose to have a Covenant people. So, this was a reaffirmation of the Covenant at Mount Sinai because they knew what God could do, and hearing it over again, they would be without excuse.

Because of the grace of God, a promise of restoration is offered to the nation of Israel if the people will return whole-heartedly to the Lord. There were blessings in returning to God in obedience. "And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart, and the heart of your seed, to love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, that you may live." In this verse, Moses was speaking of the blessings which would one day come upon His people as a result of them entering into the New Covenant where their hearts would be circumcised so they would love and obey God with their whole heart. Restoration is coming to the Jewish nation and the church – God's spiritual Israel.

NOTE:

The Promise ¹→ Conditional →Unfaithfulness →Restoration →Blessings

God punishes His people when they are unfaithful but He never forgets His promise. He seeks to restore and renew the people, and as a sign of His restoration, is renewed blessings-The Promise of Life.

APPLICATION:

You can't see the Promise unless it is revealed. You can't receive the Promise unless you are a child of God. If God said it, He wants to give it, whatever it is! A spiritual change in you brings a teachable and receptive heart. Rehearsing God's Promises keeps us choosing Life!

¹ God Himself would work in the hearts of the Israelites, so that they would Love Him with all their heart, their soul, and live, a total regeneration of the heart. Also found in Ez.36:26-27.