

Deuteronomy 7 • Dealing with the Enemy

Introduction

In the first 6 chapters of Deuteronomy Moses focuses on reminding Israel of the events of the past; now he redirects them to the issues of the immediate future. For centuries the people had been slaves to their old life in Egypt and for the past 40 years had been a nomadic people. Now they were to settle their own land and needed to be aware of the dangers of the new environment and the expectations coming with their new life. There is a parallel spiritual meaning to these events in our own life in how we're supposed to go about establishing our new life in Christ as we forever forsake the old.

¹“When the LORD your God brings you into the land where you are entering to possess it, and clears away many nations before you, the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and stronger than you, ²and when the LORD your God delivers them before you and you defeat them, then you shall utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them and show no favor to them.

³Furthermore, you shall not intermarry with them; you shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor shall you take their daughters for your sons. ⁴For they will turn your sons away from following Me to serve other gods; then the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you and He will quickly destroy you. ⁵But thus you shall do to them: you shall tear down their altars, and smash their sacred pillars, and hew down their Asherim, and burn their graven images with fire.

[Read v.1-2]

Q: Is God being fair with the nations about to be removed by Israel? Why did God require their complete destruction?

A: First, these nations were wicked and ripe for judgment. (Gen. 15:16; Deut. 9:4-5) Second, if left in the land they would lead Israel into sin.

Point: God gave these nations the 430 years Israel was captive in Egypt to repent, and even an additional 40 years as Israel wandered in the wilderness between Egypt and Canaan. When people steadfastly refuse to respond to God and repent, time runs out and final judgment is experienced.

Q: What is the important application for us in how we're to deal with resolute, adherents of cults or other religions?

A: “You shall make no covenant with them”. (v.2) We are not to enter into any kind of relationship with them.

Application: How does this apply to Ecumenism (reconciliation with the Catholic church) or movements to incorporate all religions under one roof? How are we to treat them differently than pure “non-believers” who have little or no religious affiliations?

[Read v.3-5]

Q: If they'd intermarried and/or tolerated false religious practices, how would the Bible define the resulting spiritual condition?

A: Unclean or defiled.

Q: Why would a defiled Israel be a big problem?

A: A defiled Israel could never provide the world an example of what it means to be separate and wholly devoted to God; they would simply become like everyone else.

Q: To what degree were they to tolerate false religious practices?

A: It was a zero-tolerance policy. They were to destroy and remove all vestiges of false religion. In other words, they were to remove the influence of both the things and the people.

Q: How do these instructions go deeper still than the previous?

A: Whereas they were warned not to make a covenant with these nations, here they're warned against entering into personal relationships with them. They're being admonished not just to separate spiritually from bad groups, but from the individual members of those groups.

[Continued on the next page.]

Application: *We are not to simply resist the influence of bad groups or organizations, but of their individual members as well. It's most often that when personal relationships with people committed to a cult or false religion is allowed to fully blossom that we are in the greatest danger of being led astray ourselves.*

⁶For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. ⁷The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples, ⁸but because the LORD loved you and kept the oath which He swore to your forefathers, the LORD brought you out by a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

[Read v.6-8]

Q: What does it mean to be “holy”? What are the qualities of a “holy people”?

A: It means to be separately sanctified and pure according to the standards of God's Word, able to serve and worship in the very presence of God Himself. A “holy people” is visibly different to the rest of the world because of their exclusive devotion to God's Word and ways.

Q: What are some examples of the principle of separation found throughout Scripture?

1. God separated the light from darkness. (Gen. 1:4)
2. God separated the waters under the firmament from those above. (Gen. 1:7)
3. God called Abraham to found the Jewish nation and separated him from all the others around him.
4. God commanded Israel to be separate from the other nations. (Ex. 23:20-23; 34:11-16)
5. God promises blessings when His people are separated from sin. (Deut. 7:12-16)
6. God commanded the church to be separate from the world. (2 Cor. 6:14-7:1)

Q: Why does God remind them that they've been redeemed from slavery in Egypt?

A: Throughout the Bible Egypt typologically represents the old life. Once we come to Christ we're supposed to be forever changed going forward, never to return to the old life.

Application: *We live at a time when the church and the world have become so mingled together that it's difficult to tell who really belongs to Christ. Read John 15:16-27 as a reminder that we've been called out of the world as a testimony to the world.*

⁹Know therefore that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments; ¹⁰but repays those who hate Him to their faces, to destroy them; He will not delay with him who hates Him, He will repay him to his face. ¹¹Therefore, you shall keep the commandment and the statutes and the judgments which I am commanding you today, to do them.

[Read v.9-11]

Q: So what is the defining characteristic of a life exclusively devoted to Christ?

A: Obedience to His Word.

Q: What are the 3 things we're commanded to keep? What do they specifically describe?

1. **Commandments.** Those things which God has spoken which detail the responsibilities of human beings to live in a covenant relationship with Him. Especially in the Old Testament, commandments defined how Israel was to live in a covenant relationship with God, this being expanded on in the New Testament.
2. **Statutes.** These are specifically prescribed tasks or boundaries. These are things required (eg., sacrifices, feasts, etc.) or establishing limits (eg., whom to marry or associate with).
3. **Judgments.** Things that have been pre-ordained or declared from the outset which will result in a final outcome. For instance, those who do

not accept God are already judged “dead” because their actions are leading to hell. It’s a very strong set of boundaries and rules set by the Creator of the universe which provides the basis for all that follows.

Point: *Commandments are obedience in our relationship with God, statutes are obedience to God through our personal relationships with others, and judgments are the ultimate result of our obedience or disobedience.*

Application: *So how can you discern which people attending church are still actually committed to Christ and which are compromised by the world? By the quality of their obedience to God’s Word.*

¹²“Then it shall come about, because you listen to these judgments and keep and do them, that the LORD your God will keep with you His covenant and His lovingkindness which He swore to your forefathers. ¹³He will love you and bless you and multiply you; He will also bless the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground, your grain and your new wine and your oil, the increase of your herd and the young of your flock, in the land which He swore to your forefathers to give you. ¹⁴You shall be blessed above all peoples; there will be no male or female barren among you or among your cattle. ¹⁵The LORD will remove from you all sickness; and He will not put on you any of the harmful diseases of Egypt which you have known, but He will lay them on all who hate you. ¹⁶You shall consume all the peoples whom the LORD your God will deliver to you; your eye shall not pity them, nor shall you serve their gods, for that would be a snare to you.

[Read v.12-16]

Q: How do you see these verses applying to the church as it operates today in the Western world?

A: During times of obedience to His Word there have been corresponding times of blessing; during these latter times of disobedience to His Word there has been corresponding hardship and trial.

Q: What is the source of the hardship? From where did it originate?

A: It’s not so much the result of being persecuted by the world for being separated unto Christ, but the inevitable result of our compromise **WITH** the world and choosing **NOT** to be so separated.

Application: *The context of what is being taught through Moses is not the inevitable hatred of the world against God’s people, but how God’s people in rejecting His Word and ways bring trials and hardship upon themselves by their own disobedience.*

¹⁷“If you should say in your heart, ‘These nations are greater than I; how can I dispossess them?’ ¹⁸you shall not be afraid of them; you shall well remember what the LORD your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt: ¹⁹the great trials which your eyes saw and the signs and the wonders and the mighty hand and the outstretched arm by which the LORD your God brought you out. So shall the LORD your God do to all the peoples of whom you are afraid. ²⁰Moreover, the LORD your God will send the hornet against them, until those who are left and hide themselves from you perish. ²¹You shall not dread them, for the LORD your God is in your midst, a great and awesome God.

[Read v.17-21]

Q: What is supposed to come about in people who are obedient and devoted to God’s Word?

A: Faith in God to complete the work He’s called them to.

Q: And what is the work to which God has called ALL of His people?

A: To completely remove all the false spiritual organizations, movements, and influences. God does not desire tolerance of alternative religions.

Q: How would you apply this to our situation today?

A: We’re not supposed to merely be content that Christianity is “accepted” or that we’re on an equal footing with everyone else; we’re supposed to overcome and remove false spiritual influences.

²²“The LORD your God will clear away these nations before you little by little; you will not be able to put an end to them quickly, for the wild beasts would grow too numerous for you. ²³But the LORD your God will deliver them before you, and will throw them into great confusion until they are destroyed. ²⁴He will deliver their kings into your hand so that you will make their name perish from under heaven; no man will be able to stand before you until you have destroyed them. ²⁵The graven images of their gods you are to burn with fire; you shall not covet the silver or the gold that is on them, nor take it for yourselves, or you will be snared by it, for it is an abomination to the LORD your God. ²⁶You shall not bring an abomination into your house, and like it come under the ban; you shall utterly detest it and you shall utterly abhor it, for it is something banned.

[Read v.22-26]

Q: How will victory come about?

A: It will come about in stages so that they might possess the land safely.

Point: *It's actually a series of battles conducted on the local and individual levels until the overall victory is ultimately achieved. You probably can't overcome a religious institution in a single day, but over time you can obliterate it by overcoming each of its adherents one at a time.*

Q: What is the difference in the roles assigned to God vs. His people?

A: God will do the delivering but His people must undertake the destroying. They must eliminate anything which could possibly become a snare leading them into sin.

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

2 Corinthians 7:1

But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.

Romans 13:14

Application: *It's not just a battle for the physical land but the spiritual security of every heart, mind, and soul within it.*

Overall Application

Discuss the highlights of this lesson in contrast with the church today and the following Scripture:

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Ephesians 6:12

- *Is your church fellowship biblically “separated” unto the Lord or merely isolated from the rest of the world?*
- *To what degree are you winning the battle in stages? What might you need to change to begin doing so?*
- *How is your success or failure directly related to your commitment to God's Word?*