

**CALVARY PANDAN BIBLE-  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

[Adapted from Bethel Bible- Presbyterian  
Church, 10 Downing St.  
Oakleigh, Vic., 3166]

**DHW BIBLE CLASS**

**LESSON 5**

**DEUTERONOMY**

**CHAPTERS 7 & 8**

**INTRODUCTION**

The next five chapters, namely, Chapters 7 to 11,

- 1) deal with Israel's relationship with God and with the inhabitants of the Promised Land which they were about to enter,
- 2) reveal the character and personality of God, and
- 3) reflect on Israel's past and remind them of who they were, the privileges and security they enjoyed, and the discipline and love of God towards them.

Moses repeated his exhortations and warnings to the children of Israel again and again. He believed in repetition as an important and effective part of the education process.

Two main themes dominate Chapter 7. Firstly, the LORD would lead Israel into the Promised Land which was already inhabited by seven tribes. Israel must know what to do as these tribes could be a snare leading them away from the LORD their God. Secondly, Israel must appreciate their privileged and special status before God. They must not be proud but learn that their privileged position as

the chosen people of God carries a great responsibility.

In Chapter 8, the LORD reminded Israel of His goodness in sustaining them through their wilderness experience. The LORD cautioned that when He had blessed them in the land, there was the danger on their part to forget Him and fall away.

Israel's wandering in the wilderness would soon end. They were going to be settled permanently in the Promised Land. It would be a different experience for them. Israel needed to be counseled and taught.

**OUTLINE**

**A. The Instructions of the LORD to Israel Upon Possessing the Promised Land (7:1-11)**

1. The relation of Israel with the seven Canaanite nations (7:1-5).
  - a) The Lord would bring Israel into the land (7:1).
  - b) Israel was commanded to destroy the seven nations that dwelt in the land (7:2).
  - c) Israel was forbidden to make any covenant or marriages with the nations (7:3-4).
  - d) Israel must destroy their altars and graven images (7:5).
2. The relations of Israel with God (7:6-11).
  - a) The LORD had chosen Israel to be a holy people unto Him (7:6).
  - b) The LORD chose Israel because He loved Israel. He was keeping His oath with their forefathers (7:7-8).
  - c) Israel must remember that the LORD is God (7:9-10).

- d) Israel must keep the LORD'S commandments (7:11).

### **B. The Assurances of Victory and Blessings (7: 12-26)**

1. Israel's well-being was dependent on her obedience to the LORD (7:12-16).
  - a) The call to obey the LORD (7:12).
  - b) The promise of the LORD'S blessings (7:13-15).
  - c) Israel must remember not to serve the gods of the other nations (7:16).
2. Israel should remember her past experiences and be courageous (7:17-26).
  - a) Israel should not be afraid to destroy the nations (7:17).
  - b) Israel should remember what the LORD did to Pharaoh and all Egypt (7:18-19).
  - c) The assurance of the LORD'S intervention in their battles (7:20-21).
  - d) The LORD would give Israel the victory gradually until all the enemies were destroyed (7:22-24).
  - e) Israel must burn their graven images, and refrain from desiring their gold and silver (7:25-26).

### **C. The LORD Called On Israel to Remember Their Experience in the Wilderness (8:1-10)**

1. Israel must keep all God's commandments (8:1).
2. Israel must remember the LORD'S purpose in their wilderness experience (8:2).
3. Israel must remember that man does not live by bread alone (8:3-4).

4. Israel must remember that the LORD treated them as a father would his son (8:5-6).
5. Israel would be abundantly provided by the LORD in the land (8:7-10).

### **D. The LORD Cautioned Israel against Forgetting Him (8:11-17)**

1. The LORD warned Israel to beware of forgetting Him (8:11).
2. Israel's blessings might cause them to be proud and they might forget the LORD (8:12-17).
  - a) Blessings of houses and provisions (8:12).
  - b) Blessings of livestock, silver and gold (8:13).
  - c) The temptation to have a haughty spirit (8:14-17).

### **E. The Consequences of Forgetting the LORD (8:18-20)**

1. Israel must remember the LORD'S greatness and goodness (8:18).
2. If Israel forgets the LORD and worships other gods, she would perish (8:19-20).

## **COMMENTARY**

### **Israel Among Other Nations**

The LORD God would bring Israel into the Promised Land. Seven tribes were already living in the land, namely, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites (7:1). It was God's purpose that they be destroyed. These seven tribal nations were greater and mightier than Israel but God promised to give Israel the victory. Israel was called to "utterly destroy" these

nations. They must not show any mercy nor make any covenant or engage in inter-marriages with them. They must tear and break down their graven images, and burn them. Any covenant made with these tribes would lead Israel away from worshipping and serving the LORD their God, thereby incurring His wrath.

God called Israel “an holy people unto the LORD.” He had chosen them to be “a special people unto Himself.” Israel was treasured above all the other people on the surface of the earth. This was not because Israel was greater in number, stronger or mightier. The opposite indeed was true – they were few and weak (serving as slaves in Egypt). God chose Israel because He loved Israel and had given an oath to their forefathers that He would deliver them out of their bondage in Egypt (7:6-8).

God’s command to Israel to utterly destroy the inhabitants of the land is seen by many as being inconsistent with a God of love. It is important for us to realise that our knowledge, wisdom and understanding are limited and we cannot fully comprehend the mind of God. God declared through the prophet Isaiah (55:8-9):

*For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.*

The purpose for destroying the inhabitants of the land was given – these nations would lead Israel to worship and serve their man-made gods. Their presence threatened Israel’s spiritual and physical well-being. Another reason, not explicitly mentioned here, is God’s

condemnation of sin. In Genesis 15:16, God said to Abraham that the sins of the Amorites/Canaanites were not yet full. When their sins were full (in the days of Joshua), the judgement of God was to utterly destroy every inhabitant in the land. Furthermore as God’s representative on earth, Israel must bear the correct image of God before all the nations that others may see God in their lives. God has every right, as the Creator, to destroy every inhabitant on earth today, and He is still just and righteous since all are sinners. So, let us not judge God presumptuously and summarily. We need to be humble before our Creator and repent for it is appointed unto man once to die and after that the judgement.

### **Israel’s Blessings from God**

As God’s chosen people, it is not only natural but also imperative that Israel worships and serves God. Israel must keep the commandments of God just as God keeps the covenant He made with their forefathers (7:12). In so doing, Israel would be blessed (7:13-26). Her population would increase, she would be agriculturally productive and prosperous. She would be a healthy nation, militarily powerful and God would ensure her victories in war. This would be done “little by little” (7:22), that is, gradually. In this way, the land would not be turned suddenly and completely chaotic; and Israel would learn to depend on the LORD and not be proud.

Israel’s spiritual, physical and national well-being is tied to her commitment to obey the LORD God. God says, “Obey, and I will bless.” However, one cannot turn around and demand, “I will obey, if You bless me.” We obey God because He is God. God reserves the right to bless

or otherwise. He chose Israel to be His very own treasured possession through whom the Messiah would ultimately come just as He has chosen many today as His own in Christ Jesus unto personal salvation! He wants the best for His people. He is true to His covenantal promises.

### **The Danger of Blessings**

God commanded Israel to obey Him that she might live, multiply and possess the land (8:1). But the procurement and enjoyment of blessings can also mean harm and danger to the people of God. God exhorted Israel to do two things in order that she might continue to be blessed. They must constantly remember their past history and experiences with God. They must not ever forget the Lord their God.

#### **Remember**

Moses exhorted Israel to remember the LORD God who led them through their forty years of journey in the wilderness (8:2). God's purpose was to humble them, test them, and find out whether they would keep His commandments. God humbled Israel by permitting them to be hungry but He gave them manna so that they would realise that *"man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live"* (8:3). This portion of Scripture was used by our Lord Jesus Christ when he was tempted by the devil in the wilderness. The essence is that man ought to trust and depend on God for his life. It does not say that we should forfeit our meals and just read the Word of God. The spiritual lesson is that man must depend on God if he wants to live.

In their sojourn in the wilderness, there were many times that the LORD

chastened and disciplined them. They must remember that the LORD treated them thus because He loved them and wanted the best for them. They must remember to be humble. The fact that Israel was the chosen nation above all other nations could easily make them proud and arrogant.

God was going to bring them into the Promised Land. The land was good for it had rivers, fountains and springs in the valleys and hills. It was full of wheat, barley, vines, fig trees, pomegranates, olive oil, and honey—seven wonderful produces (8:7-8)! In their enjoyment of the plenteous blessings, Israel must remember the LORD God, learn to keep His commandments, walk in His ways, and fear Him.

#### **Forgetfulness**

However, in good times, there was the danger on the part of Israel to forget God, her provider and sustainer. Israel might become proud, arrogant and self-exalting: *"My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth* (8:17)." The only way for Israel to prevent such a thing from happening was to remember that it was the LORD who gave her everything. Israel must keep her part in the covenant God made with her forefathers. If Israel forgets God and turns to other gods, she would surely perish (8:19, 20).

#### **SUMMARY**

There are many precious lessons we can learn from Moses' words to all Israel. There is a parallel between Israel and us in our spiritual life. All kinds of sin that takes residence in our life must be destroyed when we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. This is because we are holy to God and we are His treasured possession,

citizens of the kingdom of the Most High God. We turn our back on sin not because we are required to earn our acceptance into the kingdom of God but because we are Christians.

In our journey of life in this troubled and torn world we experience both happy and sad times. Just as the LORD put Israel through their journey in the wilderness to humble them, to test them, and find out whether they would love and serve Him, the LORD does the same to us. He wants us to always trust Him for He loves us and wants the best for us. The LORD will provide for our needs and protect and preserve us if we trust and obey Him. Many Christians have been blessed by God. But sadly, there are those who forget to give God the honour and glory. They boast that they are self-made men. It is very important that while we desire blessings from the Lord, we must remember that He is our Redeemer, Saviour, Provider, Preserver, Defender and Refuge. We ought to acknowledge that who we are and what we possess today are from God. We should have the same heart and mind as King David, who said:

*Blessed be thou, LORD God of Israel our father, for ever and ever. Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name. But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and*

*of thine own have we given thee (1 Chronicles 29:10-14).*

Count your blessings and name them one by one. Bless the Lord. Worship and serve Him only. Be humble and keep His commandments. God has promised to bless His children whom He has bought with the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, His Son. Know that we are His treasured possession. Remember His goodness and greatness and His loving kindness and tender mercies toward us. Do not forget Him and all His benefits toward us.

AMEN.

**DAILY READING & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

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**Daily Readings**

**MONDAY:** Deuteronomy 7:1-11;  
2 Corinthians 6:14-18; 1 Peter 2:9-10

**TUESDAY:** Deuteronomy 7:12-26;  
Ephesians 1:3-9; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5.

**WEDNESDAY:** Deuteronomy 8:1-10;  
Romans 15:4; Matthew 4:4

**THURSDAY:** Deuteronomy 8:11-17;  
1 Corinthians 10:11-13; Acts 11:22-23

**FRIDAY:** Deuteronomy 8:18-20;  
Romans 8:1-6

3. Give reasons why Israel should be wholeheartedly obedient to God. How does this apply to us?

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4. What are the ways to keep Israel from ungodly forms of worship and behaviour? How about us?

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**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. God required Israel to have an uncompromising attitude towards the people of the land. How do we apply this in our Christian life today?

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2. Give reasons why Israel should be wholeheartedly obedient to God. How does this apply to us?

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5. What quality of life does God want His people to experience?

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6. What is the major point that God is teaching in Chapter 7?

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7. What threefold purpose did God have in leading Israel through the experiences of the wilderness?

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11. How can God's people prevent God's blessings from becoming a curse?

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8. How good is the land which God gave to Israel? Can you draw any parallel from your own experience of God's leading in your life?

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12. In view of chapters 7 and 8, what is the most powerful and effective way to improve our lives?

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9. What did God remind them to do when they are blessed?

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13. In your own words what has God revealed to you about Him in these two chapters?

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10. In what way may God's blessings upon His people become a curse?

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