

**CALVARY PANDAN BIBLE-
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

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

**DHW BIBLE CLASS
LESSON 6**

**DEUTERONOMY
CHAPTERS 9 & 10**

INTRODUCTION

God's blessings can become a curse. The previous two chapters warned of how God's material blessings upon the children of Israel can change their attitude towards Him. Moses warned them of the sin of forgetfulness lest they should incur the wrath of God and suffer. This lesson continues in the same vein. Israel might become proud and boastful of her special status and position amidst the other tribal nations of the land.

Moses aptly taught and pointed out to Israel the snares to watch out for. There is a similar need for Christians today to learn these precious lessons so as to avoid being ensnared.

OUTLINE

A. The LORD Saw That Israel Were A Stiff-Necked People (9:1-29)

1. The LORD told Israel to pass over Jordan and possess the land (9:1-3).

2. The LORD told Israel why these nations in the land had to be destroyed (9:4-6).
3. The LORD exhorted them to remember their past history and not to provoke Him to anger (9:7-29).
 - a) In Horeb they made and worshiped a molten image (9:8-21).
 - b) At Taberah and Massah they complained against the LORD (9:22).
 - c) At Kadesh-barnea they rebelled against the LORD (9:23).
 - d) Moses interceded on their behalf and the LORD forgave them (9:24-29).

B. The LORD Replaced the Two Tables of Stone Containing the Ten Commandments (10:1-5)

1. The LORD told Moses to bring up to the mountain two tables of stone and to make an ark for the tables (10:1-3).
2. The LORD wrote the Ten Commandments on the tables of stone (10:4).
3. Moses put the tables of stones in the ark (10:5).

C. The LORD Separated the Tribe of Levi to Serve Him (10:6-11)

1. Aaron died and Eleazar, his son, succeeded him (10:6-7).
2. The LORD separated the tribe of Levi (10:8-11).

- a) The purpose was to serve the LORD (10:8).
 - b) The Levites were not permitted to have any inheritance of the land (10:9).
3. Moses interceded on their behalf so that the LORD would not destroy them. They were commanded to continue their journey (10:10-11).

D. The LORD's Requirements of Israel (10:12-22)

1. Israel was required to fear, love, and serve the LORD (10:12-13).
2. The LORD was faithful in His covenant promises to their forefathers (10:14-15).
3. Israel was to circumcise the foreskin of their heart and not to be stubborn (10:16).
4. The reasons for Israel to fear, love and serve the LORD (10:17-22).
 - a) The LORD alone is God. He is great and mighty and no respecter of persons (10:17).
 - b) The LORD cared and provided for the widows, orphans, and strangers (10:18-19).
 - c) The LORD had done great and awesome works before them (10:21-22).

COMMENTARY

Pride of Self-righteousness

Moses had already dealt with the pride of wealth and abundance

in Chapters 7 and 8. In keeping with His covenant promises, God told the children of Israel that He would bless them when they entered and possessed the land. Their population would increase and they would be blessed agriculturally. God would keep them in good health and none of the diseases of Egypt would affect them (7:12-15; 8:6-10). In Chapter 8, Moses had commanded them not to become presumptuous and proud and not to claim that they had achieved much through their own power and ability (8:17) when they received blessings from God. Now, Moses warned them yet again. God had told them that when they enter the land, they would be confronted by nations which were "greater and mightier" and who lived in fortified cities. These inhabitants of the land were great, tall, powerful and invincible – they were the children of the Anakims.

Moses declared rhetorically, "Who could stand before the children of Anak! (9:2)". Moses was trying to point out that Israel could not win the battle against these powerful and overwhelming forces *by themselves* – *they need the LORD to go before them*. With God on their side, they would prevail over their enemies. However, these successful military campaigns might cause Israel to think that God had destroyed the inhabitants of the land because of her self-righteousness.

In fact, God had destroyed the Canaanites because of (1) their wickedness, and (2) His covenant promise with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (9:5). God gave Israel the land not because they were righteous or upright – on the

contrary they were stiff-necked” (rebelliously stubborn and obstinate) (9:6). Israel was warned against this self-righteous attitude.

A Stiff-Necked People

For the rest of the chapter, Moses reminded the children of Israel how stiff-necked they were – they had provoked and angered the LORD God since they departed from Egypt (9:7). Instead of patiently waiting when Moses was in the mountain (Horeb/Sinai) for forty days and nights, they corrupted themselves by making a golden calf for worship. And even at Taberah – Israel complained and fire from the LORD consumed them (Numbers 11:1-3); Massah – complained of no water (Exodus 17:7); Kibroth-hattaavah—Israel and mixed multitude complained of no meat to eat (Numbers 11:4-34); and likewise at Kadesh-barnea – ten of the twelve spies who came back and said that they could not enter the Promised Land because the Anakims were like giants and they were like grasshoppers (Numbers 13:3-26; 14:1); they provoked and rebelled against the LORD. Moses, who was with them throughout their journey in the wilderness, summarised thus, “Ye have been rebellious against the LORD from the day that I knew you” (9:24). In fact, the LORD had said that He wanted to destroy them and raise another generation of people through Moses but Moses interceded for the children of Israel (cf. Exod. 32:10).

Prayer That Moves God

Many a time we pray and ask but we do not receive because we pray amiss. We can learn how to pray the “effectual fervent prayer of

a righteous man” from Moses (9:25-29). Moses “fell down” before the LORD (9:25). We have been told by some that posture is not an important aspect of prayer. While this may be so, kneeling before God in supplication is appropriate and should be encouraged. We must never forget that we are in the presence of the Most High God. Today, many Christians have a low view of God – not kneeling to pray to Him may have imperceptibly and unknowingly breed this attitude.

In his intercessory prayer, Moses appealed to various aspects of God’s character. First, he appealed on the grounds that Israel was God’s people, whom He had redeemed and brought out of Egypt in a great and mighty way. Secondly, Moses appealed to God’s faithfulness in keeping His covenant promises to their forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Thirdly, Moses appealed to God’s honour and reputation. The Egyptians and others might say that God was unable to bring Israel to the land He had promised, and that He had brought them out of Egypt to destroy them because He hated them. Moses’ intercessory prayer was prayed in the will of God. He appealed to God’s integrity and faithfulness. Did God answer his prayer?

Relationship Restored

Moses’ intercession moved God. God did not destroy Israel. Prayers do change things if they are prayed in accordance to the will of God. For in prayer we move the arm of God Almighty who has the power to change all things to His glory. Chapter 10 shows that the covenant relationship made in Horeb (Sinai) was restored. God

told Moses to hew two more tables of stone. The phrases “like unto the first,” “the words that were in the first tables,” “two tables of stone like unto the first,” are significant. These phrases strongly suggest that the terms of the covenant were not changed and that the relationship was restored. Interestingly, the word “tables” occurs seven times in both 10:1-5 and in 9:9-17 (which describes the first writing of the two tables of stone in Horeb).

Moses gave further indications of the restored relationship between God and Israel. He reiterated the Aaronic priesthood and the services of the Levi. He repeated the basic requirements of the first covenant –the children of Israel ought to fear the LORD their God and walk in His ways, love Him, serve Him with all their heart and all their soul, and keep His commandments (10:12-13). Israel was reminded to “circumcise their heart” and not be stiff-necked. They were taught that a true covenant relationship with God is not just an outward but also an inward attitude. They were called to treat the fatherless and widows kindly – these were powerless, poor and weak with no one to protect or provide for them.

In this lesson, God revealed that the Israelites were stiff-necked and rebellious. They could not boast that it was their moral purity and righteousness that had gained the favour of God and the victories over the tribal nations of the land.
AMEN

DAILY READING & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Daily Readings

MONDAY: Deuteronomy 9:1-6;
Ephesians 2:1-9

TUESDAY: Deuteronomy 9:7-19;
Proverbs 8:13; 16:18; 1 John 2:16

WEDNESDAY: Deuteronomy 9:20-29;
Philippians 2:14-15; 1 Corinthians 10:10

THURSDAY: Deuteronomy 10:1-11;
Psalm 103:10; Ezra 9:13

FRIDAY: Deuteronomy 10:12-22;
Ephesians 5:2-10

3. What was the self-righteous attitude that the Israelites were in danger of assuming after their possession of the land? What reminder did God give in verses 4-6?

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What assurance is there of Israel's possession of the land?

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2. Compare the inhabitants of the land with the Israelites.

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4. Why did God destroy the inhabitants of the land?

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5. What was the one black spot in the character and conduct of Israel that caused them to provoke, rebel and turn away from God (9:6-13)?

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6. What was Israel told to remember and not to forget?

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7. Why did Moses pray to the LORD? What kind of prayer was it called?

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10. What are the nine commandments found in this passage (10:12-22)?

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8. What were the grounds on which Moses based his plea for the people?

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11. In your own words what do you think God wants us to understand about Him in these two chapters?

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9. What evidence shows that God answered Moses' plea and restored the relationship between Him and Israel?

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