

HWMR - CRYSTALLIZATION STUDY OF DEUTORONOMY, Week 11**Aspects of the Church Life under the Government of God**

Scripture Reading: Deut. 1:9-18; 15:10; 22:9; 25:13-16; 1 Cor. 10:6, 11

Deuteronomy 1:9	And I spoke to you at that time, saying, I am not able to bear you alone.
Deuteronomy 1:10	Jehovah your God has multiplied you, and now today you are as the stars of heaven in multitude.
Deuteronomy 1:11	Jehovah, the God of your fathers, add to you a thousandfold ones like you and bless you as He has promised you!
Deuteronomy 1:12	How can I alone bear the trouble and burden of you and your strife?
Deuteronomy 1:13	Choose for yourselves men who are wise and prudent and well-attested, according to your tribes, and I will make them your leaders.
Deuteronomy 1:14	And you answered me and said, The thing that you have said to do is good.
Deuteronomy 1:15	So I took the leaders of your tribes, men who were wise and well-attested, and I made them leaders over you, captains over thousands and captains over hundreds and captains over fifties and captains over tens and officials for your tribes.
Deuteronomy 1:16	And I charged your judges at that time, saying, Hear the cases between your brothers, and judge righteously between a man and his brother or the sojourner with him.
Deuteronomy 1:17	You shall not respect persons in judgment; you shall hear the small and the great alike. You shall not fear the face of man, for judgment is God's. And the case that is too hard for you, you shall bring to me; and I will hear it.
Deuteronomy 1:18	And I commanded you at that time all the things that you should do.
Deuteronomy 15:10	You must give to him, and your heart shall not be displeased when you give to him ; for on account of this matter Jehovah your God will bless you in all your work and in all your undertakings .
Deuteronomy 22:9	You shall not sow your vineyard with two kinds of seed , lest the full produce, the seed which you sow, be forfeited to the sanctuary, as well as the increase of the vineyard.
Deuteronomy 25:13	You shall not have in your bag differing weights , one heavy and one light.
Deuteronomy 25:14	You shall not have in your house differing measures , one large and one small.
Deuteronomy 25:15	A full and righteous weight you shall have, and a full and righteous measure you shall have, in order that your days may be extended upon the land which Jehovah your God is giving you.
Deuteronomy 25:16	For everyone who does these things, everyone who does unrighteousness, is an abomination to Jehovah your God.
1 Corinthians 10:6	Now these things occurred as examples to us, that we should not be ones who lust after evil things, even as they also lusted.
1 Corinthians 10:11	Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our admonition, unto whom the ends of the ages have come.

Day 1**I. The history of the children of Israel is a **type of the church**—1 Cor. 10:6, 11:**

- A. In His **administrative arrangement** **God chose the children of Israel**, the descendants of Abraham, and made them **His people as a type of the church**—Rom. 9:11-13; Acts 7:38:
 1. In the Old Testament the church is not mentioned in plain words, but there are **types that portray the church**—Gen. 2:21-24; 1 Chron. 28:11-19.
 2. The children of Israel, as the chosen people of God, are the greatest collective type of the church, in which we see that the **church** is **chosen** and **redeemed** by God, **enjoys** Christ and the Spirit as the life supply, **builds** God's habitation, **inherits** Christ as its portion, **degrades** and is **captured**, is **recovered**, and **awaits** Christ's coming.
 3. Paul applies the history of the children of Israel to the New Testament church life—1 Cor. 5:7-8; 10:1-13:
- C. Most of the second generation had not been present to hear the giving of the Ten Commandments, the statutes, and the ordinances at Mount Sinai; therefore, **God burdened Moses to respeak**, to **rehearse**, the **law**; this respeaking was a renewed **training** given to the new generation of the children of Israel after their long wandering, to **prepare them** to enter into the good land promised by God and inherit it as their possession—Exo. 3:8; Col. 1:12; 2:6-7.

Day 2 & Day 3**II. God has a government in the universe, and there is also a **government in the church**—Rev. 4:2; 5:6; Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5:**

- A. God desires to execute His government in the universe **through the church**—Eph. 1:10, 22-23.
- B. Among the children of Israel there was a situation full of God's government and administration; the **coordination** and **building** in Exodus and Numbers **were under God's administration and government**.
- C. The divine government among God's people is a **theocracy**—Rev. 4:2; 5:6:
 1. **Theocracy** is government by God **according to what He is**—Psa. 89:14.

2. God's administration among the children of Israel was a theocracy, **meaning that God Himself came to govern, to rule, to administrate**, the people directly yet through some agents; the agents were the priests and the elders working together for God's theocracy—Deut. 1:9-18.
 3. The theocracy among the children of Israel was a government according to **God's constant speaking**, as written in the law, and God's instant speaking, through the breastplate of the high priest by means of the **Urim** and the **Thummim**—Exo. 28:30; Lev. 8:8; Num. 27:21; Deut. 33:8.
- D. **God's government** in the administration of the church is **neither** autocracy nor democracy; autocracy is a kind of dictatorship, and democracy is government by the people according to the opinion of the people—Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5:
1. In the church life **we honor God's authority as our government**; thus, the government in the church is a theocracy—Eph. 1:10, 22-23; Col. 2:19.
 2. Today God's rule is based on the **Bible outside of us** and on the **Holy Spirit within us**—2 Tim. 3:16-17; Rom. 8:5, 14.
 3. **When the elders follow the Holy Spirit in discussing matters**, there is neither an autocracy nor a democracy but a **theocracy**, the rule of God.

GOD'S GOVERNMENT

Every elder should realize in a sober and profound way that the eldership is a matter of government in the church. We all know that another name for the elders is the overseers. The word elder refers to the person, and the word overseer refers to the office. As far as the person is concerned, these ones are the older and more mature ones. As far as their office is concerned, they work as overseers. **The office of overseership is a part of God's government in the universe. For this reason the elders must know about God's government.**

In the New Testament there are a few ministers of the word, each with his own characteristics. The center of Paul's ministry is the church. The center of John's ministry is the **house of God**. It deals with God as the Father and the saved ones as the children of God. Although Peter's Epistles are not as numerous as those of Paul or as the writings of John, he is nevertheless a great minister of the word. **Peter's ministry deals exclusively with God's government, which is God's administration.** Among the Lord's children today, many know that Paul's ministry is concerning the church, and many others know that John's ministry is about the house of God. But there are very few people who know that Peter's ministry is on God's government or administration.

Because the church has been degraded, whenever the word government or administration is mentioned, some begin to wonder immediately if this is Roman Catholicism. For this reason, among most Protestant Christians, and particularly among the more spiritual ones, there is a common concept that it is better to have no government and no administration than to have one. To them, as long as you understand that the church is the Body of Christ and the house of God, it is good enough. All that is needed is to help others to love the Lord and be spiritual. As long as others are helped to have the life of God and to walk before the Lord, everything is all right. To them, there is no need to have anything like government. But, brothers and sisters, **we are not more wise than God. In the universe there is such a thing as the government of God and the administration of God. This is something ordained by God, and we cannot neglect it.**

In the Bible the **kingdom** is a matter of **government**. **The kingdom of God is the government of God.** It is also the **administration of God**. Today the universe is in disorder because God's government **has not been honored**. The elders should not only see that in the universe there is God's salvation, God's church, and God's house; they must further see that in the universe there is God's government and God's administration. God is not a God of confusion. He is not a God without principle and rule. **God is a God with principles, rules, order, and discipline.** For this reason God **must establish His administration and government in the universe.**

(The Elders' Management of the Church, chapter 1, section 5)

Day 4

- E. A proper king among the children of Israel was one who was **instructed, governed, ruled, and controlled by the word of God**—Deut. 17:14-20:
1. The principle should be the **same in the churches today**—Acts 13:1-4a.
 2. In order to administrate the church, the elders **must be constituted with the word of God**—Col. 3:16:
 - a. As a result, they will be under **God's government, under God's rule and control**.
 - b. Spontaneously, **God will be in their decisions**, and **the elders will represent God to manage the affairs of the church**; this kind of management is theocracy.

III. God's word spoken through Moses describes **aspects of the church life under the government of God**—Deut. 1:1:

- A. In exercising His government, **God required the children of Israel to worship Him in the unique place**—Jerusalem—the worship center chosen by Him; **they did not have the right to select a place according to their concept**—12:1-12:
1. Only the place **where God put His name** could be the **worship center of His people**—v. 5.
 2. God's people were to come to Mount Zion, the unique place **chosen by God** for corporate worship.
 3. God chose the **unique place** of worship for the **purpose of keeping the oneness of His people**—Psa. 133:1.

Day 5

- B. God takes care of the needs of **all those who are part of His expression**—Deut. 12:19; 14:27-29:
1. In **New Testament** terms, this means that **Christ takes care of every member of His Body**—1 Cor. 12:14-27; Phil. 4:14-20.
 2. In the church life we should **love the Lord Jesus, love His Body, and take care of the needs of all the members**—2 Cor. 8:1-15.

- C. If God's people would give to the poor, **God would bless them in all their work and in all their undertakings**—Deut. 15:10:
1. In the church life today **we should be happy when giving to the poor**, knowing that God will bless us—2 Cor. 9:1-12.
 2. The dealing with mammon and the offering of material possessions are related to God's administration among the churches in resurrection—1 Cor. 16:1-3:
 - a. The fact that material things are offered on the first day of the week indicates that **they should be offered in resurrection**, not in our natural life—vv. 1-2; Matt. 6:1-4.
 - b. If we know **resurrection life** and the **resurrection power**, we will overcome money and material possessions, and **what we have will be used for God's administration among the churches**—1 Cor. 16:1-2; Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-35; Rom. 15:26.

Day 6

- D. Deuteronomy 25:13-16 is the ordinance concerning differing weights and measures:
1. The **dishonest practice** of having differing weights and measures **is a lie and is surely from Satan**—John 8:44.
 2. In spiritual application, to condemn a certain thing in others while justifying the same thing in ourselves indicates that **we have different weights and measures**, that is, different scales—**one scale for measuring others and a different scale for measuring ourselves**.
 3. In the **house of God**, the church (1 Tim. 3:15), **only one scale should be used to weigh everyone**.
 4. If we have only **one scale**, we will be **fair, righteous, and just**, even as God is, and we will **keep the oneness and one accord** in the church—Matt. 7:1-5.
- E. The prohibition against **sowing two kinds of seed** in one's vineyard may typify the **prohibition against teaching differently** in the church—Deut. 22:9; 1 Tim. 1:3-4; 6:3; cf. Luke 8:11:
1. The **church is God's vineyard**, and in this vineyard only **one kind of seed, one kind of teaching**, should be sown—1 Cor. 3:9b; Acts 2:42.
 2. If we teach **differently**, sowing more than one kind of seed, the "produce" in the church will be **forfeited**.
 3. The apostles **taught the same thing to all the saints** in all the places and in all the churches—1 Cor. 4:17; 7:17; 11:16; 14:33b-34:
 - a. **We also must teach the same thing** in all the churches in every country throughout the earth—Matt. 28:19-20.
 - b. There is no thought in the New Testament that a teaching is good for one church but not for the other churches; rather, the New Testament reveals that **all the churches were the same in receiving the teachings**—Titus 1:9.
- F. **Only by faith** can we **live the church life under the government of God**—Eph. 1:22-23; 4:15; Col. 2:19; Gal. 2:16; 3:2, 5-9, 14:
1. God wants His people to do whatever He requires not by self-effort but by **faith**—Heb. 10:39—11:1, 6, 9-12; 12:2; 1 Pet. 1:7-8.
 2. God's economy is in faith, and **faith is the unique way for God to carry out His economy**—1 Tim. 1:4; Gal. 2:20; 2 Cor. 5:7; 4:13.
 3. The church is "the **household of the faith**"—Gal. 6:10:
 - a. The household of the faith is composed of **all who are sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus**—3:26.
 - b. All the believers in Christ together constitute a **universal household**, the **great family of God**—a family that believes in God—6:10; Heb. 11:6.

