

Life-Study of Deuteronomy Summary - Messages 21–25

The Rehearsal of the Law – Going into Battle

Deuteronomy 20 is concerned with the children of Israel going forth into battle against their enemies. Today we are also in a war. In this war we are fighting for Christ and we are fighting to remain in Christ. When the children of Israel saw horses, chariots, and a people more numerous than they, they were not to fear them, for Jehovah their God was with them. Since the mighty One was fighting with them, they could be at peace.

Spiritually speaking, fighting and the birthright are related, for **only by fighting can we preserve our birthright**. Those who do not fight because they are concerned about their house, vineyard or spouse or because they are fearful will not share in the victory. **In fighting to preserve our birthright, we must learn to trust in God**. If we trust in ourselves, we will not have any assurance that we will be victorious in the warfare. The good land has been given to us by God, but we still need to fight against the enemies.

The Rehearsal of the Law – Taking Care of Others' Interests, and Losing the Right to Enter the Congregation of Jehovah

In Deut. 22, we have a word concerning taking care of others' interests. An Israelite was not to see his brother's ox or sheep straying and neglect them; he was to return them to his brother. The word *brother* indicates that, **in the sight of God, all the children of Israel were members of one family**. Among us today, **there should be the practice of caring for the interests of the brothers and sisters**.

Deuteronomy 23 is a word concerning the losing of the right to enter the congregation of Jehovah. **We need to be careful not to lose our right to enter the church**. Those who do not produce and bear fruit, will lose their right to enter the church life. Ammonites and Moabites could not enter the congregation of Jehovah because they did not come to meet the children of Israel with bread and water in the way when the people were coming out of Egypt. However, God remembered the Edomites and the Egyptians and allowed them to enter His congregation.

The Rehearsal of the Law – General Statutes and Judgments

In Deut. 26 we have a concluding word of this section. Here we see **that the condition for being God's personal treasure is that the people keep all His commandments**. In this section, five governing principles of our behaviour are implied: (1) toward God, to be sanctified and fearing; (2) toward oneself, to be righteous and pure; (3) toward others, to be kind and generous; (4) toward animals, to be sparing and sympathetic; and (5) toward the devil, to be rejecting and separated.

Warning (Implying Grace)

It is significant that when the blessings and the curses were about to be released, Moses charged the people to build an altar. This altar implies grace. Before the people took care of either the blessing or cursing, they built an altar. **The building of an altar is a great matter, for, after man's fall, what we first need with respect to God is an altar—the cross of Christ**.

Before we believed into Christ and were saved, we were cursed under God's commandments, statutes, and judgments. **Through Christ we have been redeemed "out of the curse of the law"**. God has provided an altar, the cross of Christ, and at the cross we take Christ as the burnt offering offered to God for His satisfaction. We also take Christ as our burnt offering and peace offering for God's satisfaction and our enjoyment with God.

If the children of Israel **listened** diligently to the voice of Jehovah their God and were certain to do all His commandments, Jehovah their God would set them high above all the nations, and **all the blessings would come upon them and overtake them**. If the children of Israel **did not listen** to the voice of Jehovah their God and were not certain to do all His commandments and His statutes, **all the curses would come upon them and overtake them**.

(Life-Study of Deuteronomy – Messages 21-25).