

Date : 1 October 2023

Theme : Possessing our Inheritance

Topic : Learn His Kingdom laws for our well-being

Passages : *Deuteronomy 4, 5*

Key Verse : *...Oh, that their hearts would be inclined to fear Me, and keep all My commands always, so that it might go well with them and their children forever!*
Deuteronomy 5:29

Introduction

Deuteronomy 5:1 begins with the instruction to learn and keep God's statutes and judgements. This instruction is in harmony with what Jesus taught in the New Testament

...He who has (learnt) My commands and keeps them is the one who loves Me... John 14:21.

In *Deuteronomy 5:29*, God bares His heart's desire for His people's well-being. They had just pledged to learn and obey the laws of His Kingdom and this pleased God. He wanted them to possess the Promised Land as their inheritance. Those who trust Him enough to obey Him will take possession of their inheritance.

...the Lord your God has blessed you in all the work of your hands. He has watched over your journey through this vast desert. These 40 years the Lord your God has been with you, and you have not lacked anything ... Deuteronomy 2:7.

But alas! the old generation failed to take possession of their inheritance. The starting point for success of the new generation was for them to learn the divine laws which would determine their success. The heart of the matter is a matter of the heart. Hearts filled with His commandments will be inclined towards the Lord.

Who are those whom God longs to bless?

1. Those whose hearts are inclined to fear Him

9 times Moses mentions to fear the Lord in Deuteronomy.

To fear the Lord is to treat Him with reverence, respect and honour.

To treat His word and commandments as weighty matters.

- The One we have to fear

...Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments... Deuteronomy 5:29

- The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

2. Those who learn and keep all of God's laws and judgements.

The instruction to learn and observe the laws and judgements recur throughout Deuteronomy.

Laws are decrees given as God's commandments.

Judgements are God's rulings in response to human behaviour; very much like case laws, they are real-life examples to illustrate what God means in the outworking of His laws.

a) Why should we make learning God's laws the highest priority?

There is nothing more important to God than that we learn and teach His laws and judgements. Learning His laws imparts wisdom. *Deuteronomy 4:7-8* say that the wisdom from God's laws projects greatness to a nation because of the righteousness of its laws.

...what other nations is so great as to have their gods near them the way the Lord our God is near us... and what other nation is so great as to have such righteous decrees and laws as this body of laws I am setting before you...

- Learning as a lifelong habit keeps our minds filled with the wisdom of God and makes us champions in this world, for example, William Wilberforce (1759-1833), British politician and philanthropist, championed for the abolition of slavery because the word of God grounded his evangelical convictions. Peter Tsukahira made a remark, some years back, that Singapore had prospered because of her rule of law. Indeed, no nation can be great without having righteous laws to which its people would obey and teach to the young generation.

b) Effective learning involves remembering.

Take note of God's repeated warnings in *Deuteronomy ...forget not...*

Today, we understand God gives this out of concern for our mental health. When we fail to exercise our minds to remember, memory problems occur. When we forget, it is like losing important pieces of ourselves and it can impair every aspect of our lives; example, Alzheimer's disease, one of the most feared diseases, is associated with memory loss.

Dr Daniel Amen, a neurosurgeon who specialises in healing dementia patients, urges that this learning habit be kept up all our lives. He showed how our brains would shrink once we stop learning new things.

We must also develop the habit of review.

Scripture memory is a powerful tool to sharpen our mind.

c) Effective learning/teaching God's laws determines the quality and security of our homes. (God's laws bring promises of security... *it will be well with you and your children (secure future). ...you will prosper and prolong your life*).

God's commandments act as the building blocks for a God-fearing nation. They are a framework for peace and prosperity. Learning/teaching God's laws produce virtuous children, teachers, orators and statesmen, as seen in the lives of godly men.

d) What happens when learning and teaching of God's word ceases?

At the turn of the 20th century when the United States and United Kingdom began to embrace the teachings of Charles Darwin and Sigmund Freud, the seeds of corruption were sown. Widespread acceptance of premarital sex led to epidemic levels of out-of-wedlock child births. From only 1 out of 200 babies conceived out of wedlock in colonial Massachusetts, today 40% of babies are born to single women. Millions of babies are murdered every year through abortion,

There is a direct link between the fracturing of families and major societal problems. Per capital rate of violent crime has doubled in the U.S since 1960. The percentage of Americans living in welfare homes has also doubled. More and more people look to its government for handouts. 1960 marked the year the U.S outlawed the teaching of the Bible in school).

3. Those who Learn, Obey and Teach (LOT) the 10 Commandments *Deuteronomy 5:6-22*

The 10 Commandments are God's revelation to live by His ways – His guiding principles for our well-being, prosperity and a prolonged life span. God sets exact boundaries in His laws.

a) To relate to God (how you love God)

- No other gods (exclusive allegiance to God who has set us free from bondage)
- No worship of man-made gods (no idols)
- No misuse of His Name (no disrespect of God's Name)
- No breaking of the Sabbath (time set aside for corporate worship).

b) To relate to people (how you live out God's holiness)

- No dishonouring of parents (primary level relationship for all other relationships)
- No murder (sanctity of human life)
- No adultery (sanctity of marriage)
- No stealing (no violation of a person's property)
- No testifying falsely (no lying / stealing of a person's reputation)
- No coveting (no desiring of neighbour's things)

Application

3 steps to learn and observe (put into action) God's laws.

a. Learn something new about God's laws and judgement every day.

(Those who say, after hearing a sermon, ...*That was good reminder...* has not learnt anything).

b. Meditate as you hear the word preached or what you have read.

- Learning takes place when I meditate (process mentally). Nothing is remembered unless my thinking capacity is exercised. It takes effort. Lazy minds will not assimilate knowledge.
- Writing down your learning points eliminates ambiguity. Dawson Trotman said ...*Thots (ideas) disentangle themselves when they pass from the lips through the pencil tip...*

c. Evaluate my learning habit daily.

- What new thing have I learnt today that is an insight into God's wisdom?
- What did the two disciples on the Emmaus Road conclude after hearing Jesus expound the Scriptures? ... *were not our hearts burning within us while He talked to us...and opened the Scriptures to us? Luke 24:32*

Personal ambition

Ask God for a new love for His laws and judgements.

- The psalmist wrote ...*my heart stands in awe of Your word...* Psalm 119:161
- This sense of love is the result of the Holy Spirit's impartation.
Pray: ...*Open my eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law...* Psalm 119:18