

Date : 15 October 2023
Theme : Possessing our Inheritance
Topic : How God impresses His love on us and how we express our love for Him
Key passage : Deuteronomy 7:1-11
Key verse : The Lord did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. But it was because the Lord loved you and kept the oath he swore to your ancestors...
(Deuteronomy 7:7-8 NIV)

Introduction

The key word in Deuteronomy 6 is how to be impressed with God's law and express it out to others. Impress means repeating in different ways. Here again in Deuteronomy 7, God is impressing upon the Israelites, His Love for them as well as His expectation for His people. Through that, how the Israelites can express their love for Him.

(1) How does God impress His love?

A. God Loves through His Protection

V1: When the Lord your God brings you into the land you are entering to possess...drives out before you many nations...larger...stronger than you...

V2: and when the Lord your God has delivered them over to you...

- 'When' not 'If': God would definitely bring the Israelites into the Promised Land. The purpose of bringing them out of Egypt was so that God could bring them into the Promised Land.
- God assured the Israelites that He would give them victory over their enemies in the Promised Land, fulfilling the promise God made to Abraham in Gen 15:17 *"In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure."*
- By protecting them and defeating their adversaries, God expressed His love by ensuring their safety and security.

B. God Loves through His Warnings and Instructions

God forbids actions that alienate us from Him.

V2: you must destroy them totally. Make no treaty with them, and show them no mercy.

V3: Do not intermarry...

V4: for they will turn your children away from following me to serve other gods...

V5: This is what you are to do to them...

- God warned the Israelites that exposing themselves to the idolatrous practices would corrupt their love for God. Thus, the Israelites should totally destroy them and not have any relationship with them. Intermarriage with them would be followed by idolatry, because in those cultures, it was common that "when you marry them, you marry their gods", thereby violating the second commandment .
- Young people when you choose a life partner – Do not be unequally yoked. (2 Cor 6:14) Recognize that the boundaries that God has given is not to restrict us but rather to make sure we will walk within His covenantal relationship and continue to enjoy His blessings.
- God will not bless an unequally yoked relationship.

C. God Loves His own

V6: For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession.

V7-8: The Lord did not set His affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous...but...because of the Lord loved you...

- His holy people
 - God had set apart the Israelites for Himself – to worship the Lord who brought them out of Egypt and be separated from the pagan practices of idolatry.
 - Israel was a people holy or separated by virtue of their worship of and obedience to the Lord.
- His chosen people
 - God chose the Israelites not because of Israel's greatness. It was because of His promise (oath) to Abraham. Abraham had faith to obey God.
 - God chose the Israelites to fulfil His divine purpose and demonstrate His grace. God wanted Israel to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation – to showcase both His redeeming grace and righteous judgment.
- His treasured possession
 - This metaphor emphasizes how highly He values and loves them, just as someone treasures their most precious belongings.
 - He is loyal, unchanging, cherishing and loyal to those who have chosen to remain in covenant relationship with Him.
 - We are not our own, we belong to God
 - Therefore every choice we make must reflect this consideration.

D. God Loves because of His Covenantal Love

V8: kept the oath He swore to your ancestors that He brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

V9: Know...God is God; He is faithful God, keeping His covenant of love to a thousand generations...

- God is a covenant-keeping God; He rewards those who love Him and remain faithful to Him. God promises 1000 generations of faithfulness. The phrase thousand generations means forever.

(2) How should we express our love for God?

God expressed His love in so many ways. How do we express it?

a) Through Faith in His word.

V2: when the LORD your God has delivered them over to you and you have defeated them, then you must destroy them totally...

- Israel had to enter into the land in order to possess the land. Though God promised that He would deliver the nations to them, yet God would not do it all for them.
- What did God require of Israel in order for them to possess the land? In a word F.A.I.T.H = "Forsaking All I Trust Him."

- God would enable them to overcome their enemies, no matter how strong the enemies (larger and stronger than you are. Deuteronomy 7:1) - The first generation of Israel was unable to enter into and possess the Promised Land was because of their unbelief.
- The Israelites were called to have faith in God by following His commands and relying on His strength as they faced various challenges, including the conquest of the Promised Land.

b) Through Obedience to His commands

V2: Make no treaty(covenant) with them and show them no mercy...

V3: Do not intermarry with them...

V5: Break down their altars, smash their sacred stones, cut down their Asherah poles and burn their idols in the fire.

- God warned the Israelites not to show favor to their enemies, or to make a covenant with them, or marry their children.
- No covenants or agreements with the idolatrous nations. Loyalty to other gods violates His 1st commandment– Do not have other gods.
- No commitment or relationship should jeopardize our relationship with God. (Whether spouses, boyfriends/girlfriends, friends.)
- A radical, complete destruction was important because of the depraved nature of the worship of the Canaanites, who worshipped male and female gods of sex and who practised human sacrifice with their own children.
- Hate what God hates. God hates sin, especially idolatry which violates the 2nd commandment.

(3) Application

a) What has fractured your covenant relationship with God?

- Immorality in relationships
- Sexual perversion
- Friendship with the world
- Tolerating sin

b) What childish ways do I need to put behind me?

- When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me – 1 Corinthians 13:11