

Deuteronomy

Vineland Park Baptist Church

Jim Gunn

Study # 07

October 27, 2010

In the last lesson we discussed covenants with the emphasis on God's authority to make unilateral covenants that may be unconditional or conditional.

God's covenant with Abraham was unconditional, i.e. not dependent on Abraham's behavior. It is true that Abraham was justified by faith; but his justification was not contingent upon his obedience.

God's covenant made at Sinai was conditional as Moses will explain as he preaches on the Ten Commandments in his second sermon.

KEEPING the COVENANT in CANAAN

a) Possess the Land

Deuteronomy 7:1-2

7:1 "When the LORD your God brings you into the land which you go to possess, and has cast out many nations before you, the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than you, ² and when the LORD your God delivers them over to you, you shall conquer them *and* utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them.

Some people are uneasy with God's command to utterly destroy the pagans:

On what basis? Their "goodness?" Their "innocence?"

Romans 9 gives us the principle that we are not to presume to set in judgment on God no matter how little we understand His deeds. And I would add do you really believe that all men, including you, deserve to go to hell?

Then what is the problem with God having them killed?

Rom 9:14-21

¹⁴ What shall we say then? *Is there* unrighteousness with God? Certainly not! ¹⁵ For He says to Moses, *"I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion."* ¹⁶ So then *it is* not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy. ¹⁷ For the Scripture says to the Pharaoh, *"For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth."* ¹⁸ Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens.

¹⁹ You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will?" ²⁰ But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed *it*, "Why have you made me like this?" ²¹ Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?

The prohibitions against intermarriage had nothing to do with race.

Deut 7:3-5

³ Nor shall you make marriages with them. You shall not give your daughter to their son, nor take their daughter for your son. ⁴ For they will turn your sons away from following Me, to serve other gods; so the anger of the LORD will be aroused against you and destroy you suddenly. ⁵ But thus you shall deal with them: you shall destroy their altars, and break down their *sacred* pillars, and cut down their wooden images, and burn their carved images with fire.

God's purpose in choosing Israel was to have a separated people under His law, to observe the commandments, especially the Sabbath, and to be missionaries to the Gentiles.

It is noteworthy that one main reason the Jews were kept in captivity for 70 years was to allow for that many Sabbatical Years to pass.

SABBATICAL YEAR

A year of rest and redemption that occurred every seven years in the Hebrew nation. By God's prescription, Israel was to set apart every seventh year by letting the land go uncultivated (Lev 25:4-5). The crops and harvest that were reaped during this year were considered the common possession of all men and beasts (Ex 23:11; Deut 15:1-18). None of this harvest was to be stored for future use.

During a sabbatical year, Israelites were to cancel all debts owed to them by their fellow Israelites (Deut 15:1-5). At the least, a period of grace was to be set aside in which payment was not required. The people of Israel were also to free their Hebrew slaves, remembering that they were also slaves in the land of Egypt at one time and that God had redeemed them by His goodness.

God's anger fell on Israel because the sabbatical year was not observed from the time of Solomon (Jer 34:14-22). This was one reason why Israel spent 70 years in bondage at the hands of the Babylonians.

(from Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Copyright © 1986, Thomas Nelson Publishers)

2 Chron 36:17-21

¹⁷ Therefore He brought against them the king of the Chaldeans, who killed their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion on young man or virgin, on the aged or the weak; He gave *them* all into his hand. ¹⁸ And all the articles from the house of God, great and small, the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king and of his leaders, all *these* he took to Babylon. ¹⁹ Then they burned the house of God, broke down the wall of Jerusalem, burned all its palaces with fire, and destroyed all its precious possessions. ²⁰ And those who escaped from the sword he carried away to Babylon, where they became servants to him and his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia, ²¹ to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths. As long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbath, to fulfill seventy years.

God tells Israel why He chose them as a people and who would benefit:

Deut 7:6-8

⁶ "For you *are* a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth. ⁷ The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; ⁸ but because the LORD loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers, the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

Because the misunderstanding is so widespread I think it is necessary to repeat that God's choosing Israel as a people has nothing to do with individual justification. There is an Israel within Israel; the "Israel of God" and "Israel after the flesh."

Rom 9:6-8

⁶ But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they *are* not all Israel who *are* of Israel, ⁷ nor *are they* all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, "*In Isaac your seed shall be called.*" ⁸ That is, those who *are* the children of the flesh, these *are* not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed.

b) The Peril of Forgetting

Deuteronomy 8

Remember and don't forget.

Let's just read Deuteronomy 8.

Deut 8

"Every commandment which I command you today you must be careful to observe, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land of which the LORD swore to your fathers. ² And you shall remember that the LORD your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you *and* test you, to know what *was* in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. ³ So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every *word* that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD. ⁴ Your garments did not wear out on you, nor did your foot swell these forty years. ⁵ You should know in your heart that as a man chastens his son, so the LORD your God chastens you.

⁶ "Therefore you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him. ⁷ For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, that flow out of valleys and hills; ⁸ a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey; ⁹ a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing; a land whose stones *are* iron and out of whose hills you can dig copper. ¹⁰ When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land which He has given you.

¹¹ "Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments, His judgments, and His statutes which I command you today, ¹² lest — *when* you have eaten and are full, and have built beautiful houses and dwell *in them*; ¹³ and *when* your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and your gold are multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied; ¹⁴ when your heart is lifted up, and you forget the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage; ¹⁵ who led you through that great and terrible wilderness, *in which were* fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty land where there was no water; who brought water for you out of the flinty rock; ¹⁶ who fed you in the wilderness with manna, which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might test you, to do you good in the end — ¹⁷ then you say in your heart, 'My power and the might of my hand have gained me this wealth.'

¹⁸ "And you shall remember the LORD your God, for *it is* He who gives you power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as *it is* this day. ¹⁹ Then it shall be, if you by any means forget the LORD your God, and follow other gods, and serve them and worship them, I testify against you this day that you shall surely perish. ²⁰ As the nations which the LORD destroys before you, so you shall perish, because you would not be obedient to the voice of the LORD your God.

MINDFUL of HIS MERCY

Deuteronomy 9:1-10:11

The best way to keep from becoming proud is to remember your past failures.

Except for the grace of God not a one of us would have an interest in the things of God, nor would we be restrained from any sin yet conceived.

Deut 9:1-6

"Hear, O Israel: You *are* to cross over the Jordan today, and go in to dispossess nations greater and mightier than yourself, cities great and fortified up to heaven, ² a people great and tall, the descendants of the Anakim, whom you know, and *of whom* you heard *it said*, 'Who can stand before the descendants of Anak?' ³ Therefore understand today that the LORD your God *is* He who goes over before you *as* a consuming fire. He will destroy them and bring them down before you; so you shall drive them out and destroy them quickly, as the LORD has said to you.

⁴ "Do not think in your heart, after the LORD your God has cast them out before you, saying, 'Because of my righteousness the LORD has brought me in to possess this land'; but *it is* because of the wickedness of these nations *that* the LORD is driving them out from before you. ⁵ *It is* not because of your righteousness or the uprightness of your heart *that* you go in to possess their land, but because of the wickedness of these nations *that* the LORD your God drives them out from before you, and that He may fulfill the word which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. ⁶ Therefore understand that the LORD your God is not giving you this good land to possess because of your righteousness, for you *are* a stiff-necked people.

Moses gives two more commands from God before they go into Canaan. One has to do with their relationship with God and the other with the aliens who choose to live with Israel.

Does 10:19 contradict 7:2?

Deut 10:19

Therefore love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

Deut 7:1-2

"When the LORD your God brings you into the land which you go to possess, and has cast out many nations before you, the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than you, ²and when the LORD your God delivers them over to you, you shall conquer them *and* utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them.

Deut 7:1-2 has to do with conquering the land and Deut 10:19 has to do with individuals as neighbors.

We have only touched on a few highlights in these chapters; as I have said I did not intend to do an exhaustive exposition of the book.

* * * * *

We too have covenant obligations.

When we profess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ we are obliged to keep His moral law, raise our children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," to "not forsake the assembling of ourselves together...", to respect our husband/love our wife..., and many other precepts.

Deuteronomy

LIVING for GOD in a PAGAN SOCIETY

Deuteronomy 12-26

ISN'T IT WONDERFUL that our civilization has progressed so far from the pagan culture in Canaan? Canaan was noted for pornography, drugs, sexual perversion, killing babies, and ignorance of the true God.

This lesson spans 15 chapters, so we will only be able to highlight some topics and make some application to ourselves.

What is worship?

“Basically, worship is not a scheduled activity. It is an attitude toward God. It may and should seek opportunities for specific expression in occasions and acts of adoration and praise. But it cannot be confined to limited periods, restricted locations, or forms and rituals. Worship is the engagement of the entire person in contemplation of God’s glory, praise for His goodness, responsive giving for His bounty, enjoyment of His fellowship, attentiveness to His voice, submission to His will, and dedication to His purposes. Thus, worship is not only *first* in life; it is *all* of life.”

Studies in Deuteronomy, Donald F. Ackland, Convention Press, 1964, page 67

1. WORSHIPPING in CANAAN

Deuteronomy 12:1-16:17

a) Purity in Worship

Deut 12:1-4

"These *are* the statutes and judgments which you shall be careful to observe in the land which the LORD God of your fathers is giving you to possess, all the days that you live on the earth. ² You shall utterly destroy all the places where the nations which you shall dispossess served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree. ³ And you shall destroy their altars, break their *sacred* pillars, and burn their wooden images with fire; you shall cut down the carved images of their gods and destroy their names from that place. ⁴ You shall not worship the LORD your God *with* such *things*.

Deut 12:2 “utterly destroy...where the nations...served their gods....” Why?

Deut 12:5-14

⁵“But you shall seek the place where the LORD your God chooses, out of all your tribes, to put His name for His dwelling place; and there you shall go. ⁶There you shall take your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the heave offerings of your hand, your vowed offerings, your freewill offerings, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks. ⁷And there you shall eat before the LORD your God, and you shall rejoice in all to which you have put your hand, you and your households, in which the LORD your God has blessed you.

⁸“You shall not at all do as we are doing here today – every man doing whatever *is* right in his own eyes – ⁹for as yet you have not come to the rest and the inheritance which the LORD your God is giving you. ¹⁰But *when* you cross over the Jordan and dwell in the land which the LORD your God is giving you to inherit, and He gives you rest from all your enemies round about, so that you dwell in safety, ¹¹then there will be the place where the LORD your God chooses to make His name abide. There you shall bring all that I command you: your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the heave offerings of your hand, and all your choice offerings which you vow to the LORD. ¹²And you shall rejoice before the LORD your God, you and your sons and your daughters, your male and female servants, and the Levite who *is* within your gates, since he has no portion nor inheritance with you. ¹³Take heed to yourself that you do not offer your burnt offerings in every place that you see; ¹⁴but in the place which the LORD chooses, in one of your tribes, there you shall offer your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I command you.

Deut 12:5-14 “seek the place....” Shiloh (Joshua 18:1)

Josh 18:1

Now the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of meeting there. And the land was subdued before them.