

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Deuteronomy: Moses' Great Appeal For Israel To Obey God For Blessing

Part IV: The General Call For Loyal Obedience, Deuteronomy 4:44-11:32

F. Handling Rebellious Sin By Relying On God's Grace

(Deuteronomy 9:1-10:11)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Rebellious sin abounds all around and even in us, creating a great threat against our obtaining God's blessing:

(1) Rebellious sin afflicts the judicial branch of our federal government: (a) on June 26, 2013, the U. S.

Supreme Court ruled against the California citizens who sued to defend their 2008 state Proposition 8 initiative that defined marriage as the union of a man and a woman, which initiative was passed by the voters. The court claimed those citizens "lacked standing to sue." ("A Gay Marriage Muddle," The Wall Street Journal, June 27, 2013, p. A20)

Justice Anthony Kennedy dissented: "In California and the 26 other States that permit initiatives and popular referendums, the people have exercised their own inherent sovereign right to govern themselves. The Court today frustrates that choice . . ." in rebellion against the sovereign will of the people! (Ibid., "Notable & Quotable," p. A21)

(b) Most poignantly, though, the Court's decision inadvertently places it in rebellion against Scripture's God: He called homosexuality an abomination (Lev. 18:22) and destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah for it (Jude 7), so refusing the will of the voters to stand against this abomination leaves the Court supporting it in God's eyes, Matthew 12:30.

(2) Rebellious sin afflicts religious circles: huffingtonpost.com recently ran an article by U. C. C. minister Reverend Chuck Currie ("There Are No Strangers In God's House," June 21, 2013) where he told how a lady minister critiqued him for surrendering his Biblical authority when he preached that "homosexuality" was not a sin. Reverend Currie replied that she should not even be a pastor if she were consistently to take the literal view of the Bible!

Remarkably, both ministers show they know the Bible interpreted literally counters both homosexuality and women in pastoral leadership, but both rebel against the Bible's authority taken literally on the issue of their choice!

(3) However, rebellious sin afflicts those of us who consistently take the Bible literally: for years, believers have expressed to me their objections to acts by other believers against pastoral authority in churches! However, it is hard for me to get too upset over this sin even when it is my pastoral authority that is being opposed, for when God led me toward the pastorate, I myself was in such steep rebellion against His will that He used 1 Samuel 15:22-23 to convict me of this sin, which passage claims the sin of rebellion is as witchcraft! Rebellious sin can readily afflict us!

Need: "So we ask, "With the abundance of rebellious sin all around and/or IN us, what is the solution?"

I. Moses' general Deuteronomy 4:44-11:32 call for loyal obedience to God in the suzerain treaty format of Deuteronomy calls Israel in Deuteronomy 9:1-5a, 6-10:11 not to think God was giving her the Promised Land due to her righteousness, for she had been and still was stubbornly rebellious against the Lord:

- A. God through Moses announced that Israel was about to cross the Jordan River and possess nations of people there who were far greater and mightier than she was, Deuteronomy 9:1-2.
- B. This great conquest would be accomplished by God Who would be a "consuming fire" to destroy and subdue these Gentiles nations before Israel so that she would drive them out and make them quickly perish, Deut. 9:3.
- C. Such news could make Israel conclude that God's great help was coming because she *deserved* it due to her **righteousness**, so the Lord **WARNED** Israel against making such a conclusion, Deuteronomy 9:4a.
- D. Instead, Moses reminded Israel of her **long-term stubborn rebellion against God**, Deuteronomy 9:5a, 6-10:11:
 1. Moses reported God was **not** impressed by Israel's *sedaqah* ("conformity to law," Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 277; R. B. Girdlestone, Syns. of the O. T., 1973, p. 101) or with her *yosher* ("moral uprightness," Ibid., Kittel; B. D. B., A Heb.-Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 449), that both her obedience and moral nature were not great, that they were not the entities that moved the Lord God to give her the Promised Land, Deuteronomy 9:5a!
 2. To the contrary, Moses said Israel was *qesheh-'orep*, "stiff-of-the-back-of-the-neck" like an obstinate horse refusing to turn its head to the direction its rider wanted to go, Deut. 9:6; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 791.
 3. As proof of this charge Moses recalled Israel's long record of rebellion against God since leaving Egypt, and he focused largely on her rapid descent into idolatry while he was still on the Mount getting the Law from God amid all of the visible displays of God's presence, Deut. 9:7, 8-10:9 with Ex. 19:17-20; 32:1-10.
 4. Nevertheless, in grace, God consented to Moses' request for Him not to destroy Israel, and the Lord decided to lead her into the Promised Land to fulfill His promise to the forefathers, Deut. 10:10-11.

II. Rather, God's gift of the Promised Land to Israel was based on His character quite independent of her:

- A. God revealed **HIS righteousness** demanded Israel be used of Him to destroy the Canaanites, Deut. 9:4b, 5b:
 1. Over four hundred years before Israel's conquest of Canaan, God had informed Israel's patriarch, Abraham, that He would one day give Abraham's descendants the land of Canaan, Genesis 15:13-16a.
 2. The **reason** God gave for **NOT** giving them the land **before** that time was that the sin of the Canaanites was not yet great enough to warrant God's destroying them in divine judgment, Genesis 15:16b.
 3. However, when Israel reached Canaan after leaving Egypt, the Canaanites were fully ripe for judgment by annihilation, so God planned to give the nation Israel total victory over them, Deuteronomy 9:4b, 5b.
- B. God also noted **His faithfulness** to **His promise** to the **forefathers** led Him to give Israel the land, Deut. 9:5c:
 1. A **second** reason for God's giving Israel great conquest over Canaan's inhabitants was His need to keep **His OWN promises** to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob concerning the Promised Land, Deuteronomy 9:5c.
 2. Remarkably, **neither** had **these patriarchs** been **impressively righteous** in their **personal lives**:
 - a. Abraham had twice faithlessly lied about being married to Sarah, not trusting God to protect his life from kings who might want to kill him to take her as a wife. Gentile rulers had then taken Sarah into their harems (Genesis 12:10-16; 20:1-2) only to see God plague them so they would rebuke Abraham for lying (Genesis 12:17-20; 20:3-18) and return Sarah that she might bear Abraham the son of promise.
 - b. Isaac unrighteously favored his son Esau over Jacob, leading to tension that erupted in Jacob's deceptive stealing of his brother's blessing and having to flee for his life from him, Genesis 25:19-34; 27:1-28:10)
 - c. Jacob's faithless stealing of Esau's blessing had led to so many troubles in his life that he testified as an old man to Pharaoh in Egypt that his years had been "few and evil," Genesis 47:9.
 3. Thus, God was giving Israel the Promised Land due to **HIS faithfulness** to **HIS OWN promise** quite **independent** of **even** the level of "righteousness" in Israel's **forefathers!**

Lesson: *Regardless of the sin of her forefathers and Israel's stubborn rebellion against Him, God planned to give Israel victory over Canaan's people due only to God's character: (1) His righteousness required the Canaanites, ripe for judgment, be destroyed by Israel, and (2) His faithfulness to His Word required that He give her the land!*

Application: *May we (1) trust in Christ to receive eternal life, John 3:16. (2) Then, (a) realizing we as believers still have sin natures (1 John 1:8) and can sin (1 John 1:10), and that to live rightly requires that we lean on God alone, may we (b) confess our sins done as believers to God for His forgiveness (1 John 1:9) and (c) rely upon the indwelling God the Holy Spirit for the power to will (Phil. 2:12-13) and to do (Gal. 5:16) God's will, Romans 8:3-4.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

As unbiblical, ungodly and heinous in the eyes of Scripture's God is the growing recognition and even acceptance of same gender marriages in our country, the reaction this past week of professing Christian leaders to the Supreme Court's ruling has been equally unwise. I heard one professing Christian leader literally scold the Supreme Court over its ruling on the California Proposition 8 vote, and another warned of dire consequences to the nation!

Why is this unwise? Our country consists not only of professing believers in Christ, but of millions of people who do **not** take the Bible to be God's inspired, authoritative Word, who do **not** know Christ as Savior, and who thus go along with the ebb and flow of "politically correct" ideology in sheer spiritual blindness. They are like the "swine" Jesus mentions in Matthew 7:6: if the believer casts the pearls of the truth of God's true attitude about homosexuality before them, they trample them under foot and turn again to rend the one who casts the pearls! Openly chiding the Supreme Court with the morality of Scripture's God actually works **against** Christians, for the world thinks it is good that gays can wed if they so choose to live as gay couples.

A far **better** approach for us Christians to take is to realize that the world is in utter, blind rebellion against God, that the only solution is the grace of God! If anything, we Christians need to rely all the more on the Holy Spirit not only to live pristine lives on the moral plane, but live truly loving lives as well that make the gospel we present realistic to our very lost world, John 13:35. Only when the lost trust in Christ are they transformed in their value system, and only then will they replace immorality with moral uprightness, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.

May we remember that ONLY GOD can give victory over sinful rebellion, and it comes ONLY by HIS SALVATION through faith in Christ and, in living, by God's enabling based on HIS resources for the believer!

May we align with the GRACE of God in accord with His attributes to handle sinful rebellion in our OWN lives, and to respond effectively to it in the lives people in the world around us!