

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

### **Deuteronomy: Moses' Great Appeal For Israel To Obey God For Blessing Part V: Specific Treaty Stipulations Of The Great King, Deuteronomy 12-26 E. Heeding God's Way Of Overcoming Livelihood Insecurity (Deuteronomy 14:22-29)**

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Livelihood security seems like an elusive goal to many people in today's world:

(1) Jessica Wohl and Phil Washba's article, "Analysis: Spending on cars, homes threatens apparel sales as holidays approach" (finance.yahoo.com, 8/26/2013) reported that consumers are spending more on durable goods like cars and homes, but are cutting back on buying less durable items like clothing.

(2) One reason is that "(f)our years into the economic recovery, U. S. workers' pay still isn't even keeping up with inflation." (Neil Shah, "Stagnant Wages Crimping Economic Growth," The Wall Street Jour., 8/26/2013, p. A2)

(3) Then there are rising costs: (a) "Consumers are . . . feeling the pinch of payroll taxes . . . [and] higher gas prices . . ." claims Alison Paul, vice chairman and U. S. retail distribution leader at Deloitte LLP, Ibid., Wohl and Washba. (b) Medical costs plague people, too: Jeffrey A. Singer's op-ed, "The Man Who Was Treated for \$17,000 Less" (Ibid., p. A15), told how a man planning to get a routine outpatient operation was told by a hospital clerk to "pay roughly \$20,000 up-front to cover the estimated balance" after insurance! The stunned patient tried to cancel the event until his doctor got him a deal elsewhere at just over \$3,000 total via bypassing his third-party insurance payer!

(4) Market uncertainty hinders businesses and job growth worldwide: Charlene Chu, "one of the most sought-after experts on China's increasingly risky financial system" has written reports that give a story that "'gets deeper and murkier, an unfolding horror'" according to Edward Chancellor, a strategist at a large investment firm. (Alex Frangos, "'Rock Star' Analyst of Chinese Debt," Ibid., The Wall Street Journal, 8/23/2013, p. C1)

(5) This last week we faced unsettling livelihood issues locally: stock portfolios broadly dropped and oil prices spiked at the threat of an attack on Syria for its leader's alleged use of chemical weapons against his people; financial radio talk show host, Dave Ramsay tried to encourage a young mother who thought the economy was utterly going to disintegrate; I heard several conversation relative to people in our Church on livelihood concerns -- we could go on!

Need: *So, we ask, "Since livelihood security seems to be such an elusive a goal for so many, what should we do?!"*

- I. Deuteronomy 14:22-29 taught Israel to HANDLE FEELINGS of LIVELIHOOD INSECURITY presented by the land of Canaan just *OPPOSITE* the way the PAGAN CANAANITES did (as follows):**
- A. The Deuteronomy 14:22-29 directive on tithing is part of God's Deuteronomy 12-26 specific treaty stipulations (Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 260) that were not an exhaustive list of laws, but instructed Israel on specific challenges she would face upon entering the land of Canaan, Ibid., p. 283; Deuteronomy 4:1.
- B. One such challenge involved the lure to idolatry due to Canaan's uncertain rainfall and its livelihood concerns:
1. In Deuteronomy 11:10-15, God explained how the land of Canaan Israel would enter was unlike the land of Egypt she left, for instead of perpetual irrigation by the Nile, Canaan relied totally on rainfall from God!
  2. The uncertainty of rain and unbelief in God had led Canaan's pagans to set up local Baal fertility gods and a supreme Baal allegedly living on Mount Carmel in Northern Israel so they might appease them to secure ample rainfall for agricultural produce for a livelihood, Ibid., p. 526; Zon. Pict. Ency. Bib., v. One, p. 431.
  3. Upon entering the land, then, Israel faced the lure to heed this Canaanite idolatry for livelihood security.
- C. However, God's Deuteronomy 14:22-29 stipulations on tithing aimed to counter this very potent temptation:
1. Out of the ten percent of all of Israel's agricultural produce, she was to take some of it to the place God had chosen to connect with His name, i.e., with His reputation as Creator of heaven and earth, Deut. 14:22-23a (*bamaqom 'asher-yibhar leshaken shemo sham* = "in the place which [He] shall choose to establish His name there," Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 287). This trip *countered* belief in *local* Baals or the chief Baal god at *Mount Carmel* by having Israel worship the Creator of heaven and earth at the place of *HIS CHOICE!*
  2. Thus, in the place **God SOVEREIGNLY chose**, Israel was to eat in His presence (*lipni Jahweh Eloheka* = lit. "in the face of Jahweh [Lord] your Elohim [God]," Ibid.), and rejoice in fellowship with Him, Creator of heaven and earth, **versus** looking to the Baals for livelihood-producing rain, Deuteronomy 14:23a,b.
  3. In this way, through use of the culturally powerful symbol of a fellowship meal with God (cf. 1 Samuel 1:7-8, 9-18), Israel would learn (*tilmad*, Ibid.) to revere (*leyir'ah*, Ibid.) the **true God always** (*kal-hayamim* = lit. "all the days," Ibid.) versus **ever** appealing to **any false Baal deity**, Deuteronomy 14:23c.

4. God was so intent on keeping Israel from seeking after the Baals for livelihood security that He decreed that **IF** His people lived too far from His tabernacle to bring their tithes there to eat, they could sell them and take the money to the tabernacle to buy there what they desired to eat in His presence, Deut. 14:24-26.
5. Then, trusting and revering God, Israel's people were to *share* her tithes with the needy, Deut. 14:27-29:
  - a. The Levites had no land inheritance for raising crops, so the other tribes in Israel were to donate of their agricultural produce tithes to the Levites to meet their livelihood needs, Deuteronomy 14:27.
  - b. Every third year, the people of Israel were to share the entirety of their agricultural tithes with the Levites, the foreigners in their land and the fatherless and widows, Deuteronomy 14:28-29a.
6. God then added that **IF Israel so trusted so as to revere Him this way (Deuteronomy 14:23c, 29a,b), He would bless them "IN ALL" (bekal, Ibid., Kittel; B. D. B., A Heb.-Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 287) "the work of your hand as to which you work" (ma'aseh yadeka 'asher ta'aseh, Ibid., Kittel), namely, in ALL of their efforts to raise crops, increase livestock herds and give to the needy, Deut. 14:29c, and this truth on enhanced livelihood stability is clarified later in Israel's history in the Book of Proverbs:**
  - a. Proverbs 1:7 claims the fear of the Lord is the "first phase, step" (*re'shit*, Ibid., p. 921) in the "knowledge" (*da'at*, Ibid., p. 395-396) of God's wise ways as is further clarified in the Book of Proverbs.
  - b. Thus, if a Hebrew heeded the Lord in eating of his tithes in God's presence at the tabernacle and sharing of them with the needy so as to *learn* always to *revere* Him (Deut. 14:23), he would **grow in learning God's insight** [also later described in Proverbs] on **management skills that led to a better livelihood!**

***Lesson:*** *God's stipulations on ancient Israel's tithing of her agricultural produce meant to instruct her to rely on God alone at all times as her livelihood Source, which faith would lead to respect for the Lord that in turn would lead to increased knowledge and better management of God's provisions that enhanced one's livelihood stability.*

***Application:*** *May we (1) trust in Christ for salvation from sin and hell to come under God's Much More Care, John 1:11-12; Romans 8:32. (2) As believers, may we ABANDON all FALSE GODS for our livelihood security, looking to GOD ALONE for it (Philippians 4:19). (3) We will thus learn to RESPECT the Lord (4) and He will direct us unto greater knowledge for wiser management of His livelihood provisions to enhance our welfare.*

***Conclusion:*** (To illustrate the message . . .)

Knight Kiplinger, long-time editor in chief of Kiplinger's reputable financial magazine, and his staff has summarized years of gleaned financial insight to form the article, "Eight Keys To Financial Security" (kiplinger.com). Of note, *each* point **MATCHES a point on productive management in the Book of Proverbs in line with our sermon lesson** as follows (The Scripture quotes are translations of the Hebrew text taken from our Proverbs lessons):

(1) His first point is: **"Invest in your own money-earning skills,"** and Proverbs 22:29 notes: **"Do you behold a nobleman skilled in his work? He will place himself before kings, he will not place himself before obscure men."**

(2) Kiplinger's second point is: **"Get adequate insurance,"** and Proverbs 30:26 states: **"The hyrax are creatures not mighty, but they make their home in the cliff, crag,"** thus helping to insure their personal security.

(3) Knight Kiplinger's third point is: **"Borrow sparingly,"** and Proverbs 22:7 observes: **"The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is slave to the nobleman who lends,"** a proverb that discourages excessive borrowing.

(4) His fourth point is: **"Invest as part of the budget,"** not with just leftover money, and Proverbs 6:6-8 **lauds the ant that works hard to store up food in its opportune summer so it can survive its dangerous winter.**

(5) Kiplinger's fifth point is: **"Plod in investing; go steadily,"** and Proverbs 21:5 similarly states: **"The plans of the diligent surely yield abundance, but all hastening surely yields need."**

(6) His sixth point is: **"Diversify adequately,"** and Proverbs 27:23-27 teaches **even a king must watch his investments in lowly hay fields, sheep, goats and land to diversify with collected wealth for security.** (Eccl. 11:2-3)

(7) Kiplinger's seventh point is: **"Live simply now for a better tomorrow,"** and Proverbs 21:17 similarly states: **"A nobleman of poverty loves revelry, pleasure; he who loves wine and olive oil will not gain riches."**

(8) His eighth point is: **"Give generously to help your world,"** and Proverbs 22:9 claims: **"He who has a bountiful mental quality will himself (emphatic pronoun) be greatly blessed."**

[This illustration relates just to financial stability enhancement, but the Book of Proverbs also teaches how revering God and trusting in Him produces enhanced physical health (Proverbs 3:7-8) and mental and emotional well-being, Proverbs 3:21-26 and 4:23-27, not to mention a host of blessings in various other realms of life!]

**May we trust in Christ for salvation. Then, may we resist "false gods" to trust God alone for livelihood security, revering Him, and He will make us able managers of His provisions for enhanced livelihood stability!**