

Deuteronomy 4:32-40 Devotion to God Out of Gratitude

Introduction: This text closes out the first speech which Moses made to the people of Israel as he sought to prepare them to go into Canaan and conquer the land and then to be faithful to live for the Lord after they had conquered the land. In this entire speech Moses has looked backward to the things that God has done for Israel. He used the things which God had already done for them as the basis for appealing to them to be loyal and faithful to God.

I. A contrast between this text and the previous text

- A. In the previous text Moses reminded those who had been present at Mt. Sinai at the time when God made the Covenant with Israel of the awesome and frightening power of God.
 - 1. God had appeared to the people of Israel in the form of a cloud on Mt. Sinai from which He had spoken to the people and given them 10 Commandments, which were the basis of the Covenant.
 - 2. God had appeared to set the whole mountain afire, which was a frightening scene.
 - 3. He had displayed His awesome power also by lightening and thunder.
 - 4. He had shaken the mountain and the surrounding area with a mighty earthquake.
- B. The scene was so frightening to the people that they asked Moses to ask God not to ever speak directly to them again.
 - 1. It was too frightening to them.
 - 2. They asked Moses to request God to speak only to them through Moses henceforth.
- C. It was with this reminder of the awesome power of God that Moses reminded the people that God had given them fair warning of what He would do to them if they were to forsake His laws and turn to the worship of idol gods.
 - 1. God had threatened to send drought, flood, and to withhold His protection from enemy nations.
 - 2. Furthermore, God had threatened to remove them from their homeland if they turned to idolatry.
- D. In other words, Moses sought to frighten them into obedience and loyalty to God.
 - 1. Those who had been present at Mt. Sinai would well remember their fright.
 - 2. The younger generation was now informed by Moses of what he said would be verified by the older ones.
- E. But in our text today Moses does not appeal to them to be loyal to God out of fear, but by gratitude to Him for His blessings.

II. A reminder of the Lord's blessings on their nation

- A. Moses asked the people to inquire among the nations whether or not God had ever blessed any other nation as He had blessed Israel, V.32.
 - 1. They were to inquire about the past all the way back to the creation of man.
 - 2. They were to inquire throughout the whole world.
 - 3. They were to ask whether anybody had ever seen such a thing or ever heard of such a thing.
- B. Specifically they were to inquire if they had ever heard of God speaking to a people out of fire and the people living to tell about the experience, V. 33.
 - 1. Moses had at the burning bush and the whole nation of Israel had at the burning Mt. Sinai.
 - 2. But there is no other record of such an event.
- C. They were to ask whether or not they had heard of one nation being taken from within another nation much like a baby being taken from its mother, V.34.

1. By temptation? (testing, trials)
 2. By wonders?
 3. By war? (He fought for Israel at the Red Sea)
 4. By a stretched out arm? (The opening of the waters of the Red Sea)
 5. By terrors? (Plagues)
- D. God had allowed them to be in captivity and had delivered them in this mighty fashion so that they might know that there is to be no other god, V.35.
- E. God from heaven had spoken to them with an audible voice and had instructed them concerning His will, V.36.
- F. He had loved Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and had demonstrated His love for them by delivering their seed (Israel) out of Egypt in a mighty way, V.37.
1. It was God's love for their forefathers and for them that motivated God to deliver them.
 2. It was God's love for them which should motivate them to love God, to be grateful to Him and to be loyal to Him.
- G. God had driven nations out of Gilead which were mightier than Israel and He would yet drive other nations mightier than Israel out of Canaan, V.38.
1. He had already driven mightier nations out of Gilead east of the Jordan River.
 2. He would also drive out the mighty Canaanite nations west of the Jordan.

III. An appeal, V. 39-40.

- A. It was on the basis of God's love and blessings which God had already been giving to the Israelites that Moses appealed to them to be loyal and faithful to God, V.39.
1. He wanted the people of Israel to not only be informed of God's love and God's goodness toward them, but to take this information to heart, V.39.
 2. He wanted them to be faithful to obey the commandments of the Lord, V.40.
- B. Love is the strongest motivating factor known to man.
1. Fear is, likewise, a strong motivating factor. (The unsaved needs to know that he will be punished for his sins in the hereafter and the saved needs to know that he will be chastised for his sins in this life.
 2. But the strongest motivating factor is an awareness of what God has done for us.