

DEUTERONOMY

Message Five

Becoming Qualified to Inherit the Promised Land

Scripture Reading: Deut. 1:8, 21; 4:1-2, 5-9, 20, 40; 8:6; 10:12-21

I. The book of Deuteronomy speaks of the kind of person who is qualified to inherit the promised land as the good land—1:8, 21:

- A. God's people need to match what God is—4:20, 40; 10:12-21:
 - 1. The inheritors need to match the Giver of the inheritance so that He would be with them both in their living and in their fighting—1:8, 21; 4:1-2, 5-9.
 - 2. In order to match the Giver of the inheritance, we need to be holy as He is holy—Lev. 11:44; 19:2; 20:7; 1 Pet. 1:16.
- B. Those who are qualified to inherit the good land know God's heart and God's government, love God, trust in God, fear God, subject themselves to God's ruling, mind the tender feelings of God, and live in the presence of God—Deut. 10:12; 6:5; 2 Cor. 10:13; Luke 6:36; Phil. 1:8.
- C. Christ is the One who supplies us, sustains us, and makes us those who love God, trust in God, fear God, subject ourselves to God's ruling, mind the tender feelings of God, and live in God's presence—Matt. 8:9; Luke 7:13; John 6:57; 14:6; 1 John 3:2.

II. In His economy God has planned that we should do everything God requires of us—Matt. 5:18; 7:21; 12:50:

- A. It is impossible for us to do anything for God by ourselves; we need another life—the divine life, the life of God—19:26; John 3:15; 1 John 5:13.
- B. God wants us to do all of this not by ourselves but in Christ, by Christ, with Christ, through Christ, and by being one with Christ—John 6:57; 14:19; Phil. 4:13.
- C. This means that we need to have a spiritual union, an organic union, with Christ—John 15:4-5; Rom. 12:5:
 - 1. In order that we may enter into such a union with Christ, God wants us not only to believe in Christ but also to believe into Christ—John 3:15-16, 18.
 - 2. To believe into Christ is to have an organic union with Christ, becoming one spirit with Him—1 Cor. 6:17.
 - 3. In this union we are joined to Christ, we are one with Him, and we are in Him—John 15:4-5.
 - 4. Now as those who are one with Him and in Him, we need to do all that God requires by Christ and through Christ—Phil. 4:13.

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5. No longer should we live by ourselves and do things by ourselves, but we should live by Christ and do everything by Christ—John 6:57; 14:19.
- D. The crucial matter we need to realize is that God wants us to live, act, behave, work, and have our being in Christ, by Christ, with Christ, through Christ, and in oneness with Christ—Gal. 2:20; John 15:4-5, 7.
- E. In fulfilling God's requirements, we should not have any trust in ourselves; rather, we should learn to take God's desire as our desire and take Him as our life and life supply—Eph. 4:20-21; John 11:25; 6:57.

III. Moses charged the people of Israel to love God—Deut. 6:5; 10:12:

- A. The word *love* implies affection, which is something very tender—v. 12:
 1. God Himself has set an example of loving by setting His affection on His people—v. 15.
 2. We should love God by setting our affection on Him.
- B. *The love of God* in 1 John 2:5 denotes our love toward God, which is generated by His love within us; God first loved us in that He infused us with His love and generated within us the love with which we love Him and the brothers—4:19-21.
- C. In Deuteronomy 10:12 Moses spoke of loving God with all our heart and all our soul, and in 6:5 he commanded us to love God with all our heart, soul, and might (our physical strength); we love the Lord our God with all our being, that is, from our heart, through our soul, our mind, to our body—Mark 12:30.
- D. To love God (1 Cor. 2:9) means to set our entire being—spirit, soul, and body, with the heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30)—absolutely on Him, that is, to let our entire being be occupied by Him and lost in Him, so that He becomes everything to us and we are one with Him practically in our daily life.

IV. Moses commanded the people of Israel to fear God—Deut. 14:23; 31:13:

- A. We all should fear God; we must have a proper fear of God—Prov. 1:7; 9:10; 1 Pet. 1:17; 2:17; 3:2, 16; 2 Cor. 7:1:
 1. This is a holy fear, that is, a healthy, serious caution that leads us to behave holily—Phil. 2:12.

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2. We should fear God and want to be separated, sanctified, unto Him as a holy people—Eph. 1:4; 5:27; Col. 1:22; 1 Thes. 5:23; 1 Pet. 1:16.
3. To fear God is to submit to His authority—Matt. 28:18.
4. Because God is severe toward those who are rebellious, we need to fear Him—Num. 12:1-12; 16:1-35.
- B. The lack of fearing God is terrible; it is the source of all kinds of lawlessness—1 John 3:4, footnote 2.
- C. “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Heb. 10:31), and “our God is also a consuming fire” (12:29):
 1. The living God whom we serve is not mocked—Gal. 6:7.
 2. The history of the church proves that a Christian who does not fear God will not have a good ending; such a Christian will have a miserable ending.
 3. If a believer is God-fearing, sooner or later he will be manifested by God; such was the case with Joseph, who was a God-fearing man and was enthroned—Gen. 41:38-44.

V. The children of Israel were not only to keep God’s commands but also to walk in His ways—Deut. 8:6; 10:12-21:

- A. When we fear God, we will walk in God’s ways—8:6; Exo. 33:13:
 1. God’s ways are actually what God is—Psa. 103:7.
 2. Whatever God is, is a way to us; for instance, God is love, and love is a way in which we walk—Rom. 8:4; Gal. 5:25; 1 John 4:8, 16.
 3. To walk in God’s ways, therefore, is to live God, express God, manifest God, and magnify God—Rom. 2:4; 11:22; Titus 3:4-5; Phil. 1:20-21a.
 4. We need to learn God’s ways—what God is and how He acts and behaves—Exo. 33:13.
- B. The God who is our way is Christ; to take Christ as our way is to live Him in what He is, and to live Him is to express Him, to manifest Him, and even to magnify Him—John 14:6; Phil. 1:20-21a.
- C. In the New Jerusalem the river of water of life proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb and flowing in the midst of the street indicates that God is both our life and our way—Rev. 22:1-2.
- D. We take God as our life, and His life with His nature then becomes the way on which we walk—1 John 5:13; 2 Pet. 1:4.

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VI. The children of Israel went forth in battle to fight against their enemies; today we also are in a war—Deut. 20:1-20:

- A. In this war we are fighting for Christ and to remain in Christ.
- B. If we would possess Christ and live in Christ as our land, we need to fight against the spiritual enemies—Col. 1:12; Eph. 3:8; 6:10-18.
- C. As we are fighting, we need to realize that we are fighting for what God has given us; once the enemies have been defeated, the land will be cleared for our inheritance—Col. 1:12.
- D. Actually, we are not the ones fighting, for God goes with us and fights for us—Deut. 20:3-4:
 - 1. It is our duty to fight, but we cannot fulfill this duty by ourselves; we can fulfill our duty to fight only by faith in the Lord, that is, only by the Lord Himself as our life and life supply.
 - 2. We need to believe that the Lord has ordained us to fight and that He will fight for us—vv. 1-4.
 - 3. We should simply take His word and obey Him, knowing that the outcome depends on Him—1:30.

VII. If we thoroughly study all these matters, we will know God better and also know what kind of person we should be, what kind of being we should have, and in what kind of way we should walk—4:20, 40:

- A. We should walk before God and with God according to what God is—8:6.
- B. Because we have God's life, we should learn of Him to be the same as He is; in order to do all the things that God requires, we need the divine life, the life that works with God for His people—John 3:15; 1 John 5:11-13; 2 Pet. 1:4; Matt. 5:48.
- C. We can fulfill all of the Lord's requirements only by the divine life, the eternal life, which is the Triune God embodied in Christ (John 14:6; 1 John 5:11), who is realized as the life-giving Spirit—John 14:16-20; 1 Cor. 15:45b.