

Dt. 7:6-11 (LD 4) “Rebellion Gets Its Just Deserts”

For the Children: Have you ever heard your parents talking about someone getting his “just deserts”? It means getting what is deserved, usually a punishment or consequence for bad behaviour. Most people have a feeling that wrong behaviour should receive a just punishment. But many people don't like to hear about God giving sinners their “just deserts,” because they are afraid it includes them. However, it would be impossible to live in a world where God did not punish evil. What kind of God would ignore evil? The Lord does not ignore it: He is holy and just. But He is also loving and merciful, so He rescues some sinners, in order to show His love and mercy upon them. **Questions:** Why does God choose the ones He does for salvation? Why shouldn't people try to criticize God for His judgement upon the wicked? Why should we obey God's commandments?

Introduction:

First Point: Why the Lord Chose Israel

- 1) Not Because of Them: We do not speak of God's judgement on the wicked because we think we are better than others. Israel was not chosen because they were better e.g., more numerous (v.7, with Hos. 1:10/1 Pet. 2:10). Election is entirely by God's “good pleasure,” not man's merit (Eph. 1:3-12).
- 2) Because of His Love: God chose Israel simply because He chose to love the unworthy (v. 8). He demonstrated this love by rescuing them from Egypt, but even more so in sending His Son to die for sinners while they were still enemies.
- 3) Because of His Covenant: The generation held as slaves in Egypt was also shown love because the Lord was keeping His covenant promise (oath) to their forefathers (v. 8). Rescue from slavery to Egypt because of God's love and faithfulness is a picture of His rescue of sinners from slavery to Satan and sin, through the Lord Jesus.
- 4) In Contrast to Egypt: God rescued Israel from Egypt, cursing the Egyptians and destroying many of them. Israel did not deserve rescue, because they were far from God at the time; Egypt certainly *did* deserve the punishment they received. For they had hardened their hearts against God and treated His people harshly. Mercy to sinners is undeserved, punishment is just.

Second Point: What We Conclude from This

- 1) Know That the Lord Is God: Vss. 9-11 draw some conclusions from this, indicated by the “therefore” in vss.9 and 11. The first conclusion (v. 9) is that we should know that the Lord alone is God. He alone has the power to elect before time, to redeem one nation and to punish another. He is the Potter and we are but clay; we are not in a position to judge Him for His election or condemnation of sinners (Rom. 9).
- 2) Remember His Mercy as Well as His Justice: God is faithful to both His covenant promises and His lovingkindness (love, mercy, kindness and loyalty) to His people (v. 9). Sinners often react against God's judgement because they have a vested interest. They speak as if He is not merciful because He judges the wicked. They forget that He is “certainly merciful, but He is also just” (Q/A 11; Dt. 7:9), as well as holy (v. 6). The Lord cannot deny Himself or any of His attributes – He is always true to Himself!
- 3) Do Not Forget How He Deals with Those Who Hate Him: We should also remember that those who do not believe in God, like Pharaoh, actually hate Him – either self-consciously, or with the hatred of indifference. The warning that God will repay those who persist in hating Him also applies to covenant-breakers – doubly so! If the Lord did not punish the supreme sin of hating God, how could we see God as holy or just? It is true that the natural man is *no longer* able to love God without God's aid. However, man was originally able to love God and do good. Adam's free and willful choice to rebel was done as mankind's head and representative. The whole race is therefore accountable for it. See Q/A 9.
- 4) Remember to Keep His Commandments: In light of these truths, we should remember to keep/do all of God's Law. He is holy, and we are chosen as His holy possession (vss. 6 and 11). The Lord does not show His lovingkindness to those who persist in willful disobedience (v.9). He does show His love and mercy to those who strive to obey, and repent when they break His laws, for the sake of His Son.

Conclusion: