

Bible Study Notes

Monday, October 9th, 2017 - Fifth Day - Feast of Tabernacles

One True God - Don't Follow Satan (Deut. 32)

Neh. 8:18, 8-9, 13-18

The restored Jewish community under Ezra and Nehemiah kept the fall Holy Days. They kept the Feast of Tabernacles by building booths - temporary dwellings - for the first time since the days of Joshua. Notice - a major part of keeping the Feast of Tabernacles is to have daily gatherings to receive God's teachings from the Bible.

Deut. 31:10-13, 1-3, 6-9, 16-29

During the Feast of Tabernacles, Moses instructed the Israelites to read the law that God gave to him. God was going to bring them into the Promised Land through Joshua. God knew, though, that they would forsake Him and break His covenant. God knew they would go off-track. God sees the big picture. After Moses died, Israel would eventually forsake God, just as Adam and Eve had done. This is why God is working with the Church of God today - so that we learn not to go off track! God gave Israel a song (ch. 32) that would testify of these things.

Notice verses 24-26 - Moses finished writing the law, delivered it to the Levites in a book and instructed them to put it into the side of the Ark of the Covenant. This is what they were reading in Ezra and Nehemiah's day during the Feast of Tabernacles. The originals in the side of the ark were the standard from which many copies were made (see Acts 15:21).

Deut. 32

(v. 1-3) The song starts out with the sentiment, "This is good teaching!"

(v. 4-6) Notice, God is called the "Rock" of Israel. The apostle Paul stated in 1 Corinthians 10:4, referring to the time of Moses, that that "Rock" was Christ! Christ WAS the God of Israel - the God of the Old Testament! See Hebrews 11:26 also.

(v. 7-11) God determined where to place Israel geographically on the earth, centrally located. All other nations were situated around Israel. Acts 17:26 supports this. (NOTE: the Hebrew word translated "Adam" in Deut. 32:8 [KJV] should be rendered "man.") God wanted the various families that came from the three sons of Noah and their wives to be in certain pre-determined locations and to have established boundaries (Gen. 10). He divided the people of the earth by giving them separate languages (Gen. 11). He intended these things in order to slow down the spread of evil. Deuteronomy 2-3 shows that God didn't want the Israelites to disturb the people of Edom, Moab and Ammon as they journeyed to the Promised Land. He was going to give them the land of Canaan.

Deut. 7:6-10 and 32:9-11 go together. God worked with the nation of Israel because of Abraham's faithfulness and because of His promises to Abraham. Israel was HOLY because God set it apart. That was the reason for circumcision - an outward identifying sign that they were the people of God. It's like what is described in John 6:44 and Romans chapter 9 - God calls those whom He wills to call during this age. The initiative is God's. Nobody can "call" themselves. Neither can anyone form their own religion and bring God into it. God makes the

first move. True religion originates with God, not man. That includes the principle of not having other gods (Ex. 20:3).

Notice Deuteronomy 7:1-5 - God was going to cast out the nations before Israel. Chapter 20 shows that they were first to offer the nations peace - an opportunity to avoid conflict. However, God definitely intended to give Israel the land of Canaan! They were NOT to intermarry with the other nations which inhabited the land before they arrived. Israel was to establish God's true religion in the Promised Land, and completely destroy the false religions that were there ahead of them. This foreshadowed the fact that all traces of Satan's false religions will be completely destroyed and eliminated from the earth before the World Tomorrow begins!

(v. 12-14) The One True God (Yahweh) was Israel's God. There were no other gods involved in causing them to become a great nation, or in leading them out of Egypt (Ex. 20:1-3). Psalm 81:3-12 contains the same sentiment. The key to success, for Israel and for God's Church today, is: DON'T HAVE ANY OTHER GODS! Don't follow Satan - follow the One True God. If Satan tries to "get his foot in the door" or inject his thinking into the Church, DON'T FOLLOW IT (II Cor. 11:3-4, 13-15)! Psalm 1 is a guide as to how to conduct your life. Don't walk in the counsel of the ungodly - those who try to pull things off track. God alone was the One who caused Israel to become a nation, and He alone gave them their blessings. They owed everything to God, the only true God (Matt. 4:10).

(v. 15-21) [Jeshurun = Israel - Isaiah 44:2] Israel lightly esteemed God. They followed foreign gods - demons, not the true God. 1 Corinthians 10:20-22 shows that people who worship idols are really worshipping demons, and God won't tolerate that. The gods of the gentiles, which Israel tragically followed, which the churches and religions of this world do follow (II Cor. 4:3-4; Rev. 9:20; 12:9), are not true gods, but demons! These demons are very clever, skillful, artful, smart, cunning and deceptive. They are good at making themselves look appealing. False Christianity is filled with the culture and attitude of the demons (Rev. 18:1-4, 21-24). When people do these wrong things, there is a greater power - the spirit of Satan - leading and influencing them (Acts 26:18)!

The story goes on from here - God declared that He would heap all sorts of trouble on Israel because of their unfaithfulness in turning away from Him and following other gods. He was going to give them multiple problems until they realized their sinful ways and willingly turned back to the One True God! This principle applies to all nations today, as it did to ancient Israel (Rom. 2).

Deut. 30:15-20

You must CHOOSE the right way! Every individual called by God today has to make the choice for himself. Nobody can make it for you. That is true of those who will be called later as well. Everyone eventually must make the decision either to follow the One True God, or to forsake Him and follow Satan into rebellion. When God takes the initiative to call someone, He enables him to make the right decision. That is how character is built. There are only two ways - life and death.

It's not that Mr. Armstrong was important of and by himself, it's that God is important and He gave Mr. Armstrong HIS TRUTH (John 17:14-20)! When anyone comes along and says, "Mr. Armstrong was a good man, but he made mistakes," they're in danger of turning away from God's truth (light) and plunging into Satan's deceptions (darkness). In the World Tomorrow, the generations will not lose God's truth, but will pass it on from generation to generation, and will be blessed as a result (Deut. 4-6, Psalm 78; Isa. 59:21; 65:23).

Judges 2:7, 10

Has this not happened in our days in the Church of God? Today's younger generation wasn't old enough in the days of Mr. Armstrong to know what was so good about it. They weren't converted during that time. They are losing God's education.

Judges 2:1-3, 11-15

The Israelites lost God because they failed to drive out the nations from the land of Canaan. The Canaanites influenced the CHILDREN of the Israelites. Israel was intended to be entirely pure without any demonic cultural influence from the outside, but the Israelite kids wanted to be like the other kids and worship other gods because that's what the Canaanite kids and their families did. This can happen when you send a Church of God kid to one of this world's schools. Parents need to be diligent to counteract much of what is being taught in the schools, in the eyes of their children.

1 Cor. 10:1-14, 19-22

This chapter tells us that the Old Testament stories are very much for our teaching and benefit today. The true religion of God is an ISRAELITE religion, not a Gentile one (12:2). Its roots are in Abraham, Isaac, Jacob. To be a Gentile person who receives the Holy Spirit and enters into the Church of God is to be grafted into "the Israelite tree" (Romans 9-11, esp. 11:16-21). Christ is the Head of the One True Church. In OT Israel, Christ was the God of Israel - He was their God, their "Rock." Jesus Christ was the God of Moses and Israel (Hebrews 11:24-26). Israel was "the Church in the Wilderness" (Acts 7:38). They are an example for the Church of God today (I Cor. 10:6, 11; Rom. 15:4). We are to learn from their history. Don't follow after other gods! When someone (such as Mr. Armstrong) is on the right track and God uses them without any doubt ("by the fruits you will know," Jesus said), FOLLOW their example (Heb. 13:7, 17, 24; 1 Cor. 11:1, etc.). When false teachers come along later and depart from God's true teaching, FLEE from them and don't listen to what they say (Prov. 19:27; Psa. 1:1-2; II Cor. 11:3-4; II John 9-10).

Rev. 20:1-6

Christ and the saints will win in the end. Satan's bad influence will be removed. God's influence will be the only one around. Everything will be right in the World Tomorrow - it will be a perfect, utopian society built entirely on God's law and way of life.