

SESSION #23 (11 May 10) Deut 8:1-10 Surviving the toughest test of all: the Prosperity Test

I. INTRODUCTION & REVIEW

1:1-5	Introduction to God's spokesman, the 1 st Prophet Moses
1:6 - 4:40	1 st Exposition of the Torah = <u>motivation</u> to obey from (1) <u>past gracious actions</u> of Yahweh and (2) <u>sovereign destiny</u> of the nation (<u>future gracious actions</u> of Yahweh)
4:41-49	Editorial comment on context of 2 nd Exposition of the Torah
5:1 - 26:19	2 nd Exposition of the Torah = proper response to Yahweh in heart and soul
5:1 --11:32	Loving Yahweh with all the heart
5:1-33	The Mt. Sinai event & ramifications
6:1-25	"Living in the Word"
7:1-26	Joining in Yahweh's war—requirements & resources
8:1-20	Surviving success by maintaining the mental attitude of creature-hood

Review the argument so far:

5:1 - 7:26 2nd Exposition

Battle in the mind and heart:

5:1-33 Mt. Sinai event & doctrines of [revelation] and [inspiration]

6:1-25 How to get the Word into the Heart

- 6:4-5 Summary
- 6:6-9, 20-25 How-to procedures: 24/7 teaching moments in life centered in the family
- 6:10-19 Five distractions to personal relationship with Yahweh

7:1-26 Conscripted into Yahweh's war against evil

7:1-5, 17-26 How-to procedures: no substitute for complete military & cultural victory over evil (Canaanites in their gross rejection of divine revelation served as a historical example of what eventually will occur at the Return of Christ just as the Syrian king Antiochus Epiphanes served as the picture of the coming Antichrist)

(in Church Age it's a picture of what goes on in the battleground of the heart)

1. Finish the job—no last-minute "peaceful coexistence" treaties.
2. Maintain family integrity by refusing to dilute the [cultural power] of the family.
3. Eliminate every artistic expression of paganism.
4. Cope with fear by utilizing the faith-rest drill using [exodus imagery] to argue from the greater to the lesser.
5. Understand at all times that victory over evil will appear to be [delayed] but that's because God has a greater plan working.
6. The booty of holy war is Yahweh's, not ours.

7:6-16 Maintaining the [contractually-supported] personal relationship with God.

Genuine, long-enduring personal relationships depend upon [good] and [stable] character, not like the on-again, off-again "relationships" people speak of today. Today there's a strong agenda against being pinned down to long-term [obligations] (in workplace's use of "contract" personnel, in "living arrangements", etc.).

Enjoyment in 7:13-15: economic, family, and health blessings

Chapter 8: Moses prepares the nation for dealing with blessing—a new kind of “testing” that is one not often passed. Will reach out into the future beyond holy war to a time of peace and prosperity.

II. PROPERLY RESPONDING TO YAHWEH’S BLESSINGS (8:1-10)

Moses knew his people well!

8:1 all the commandments which I command you this day you will be careful to do. . .

all—A unified whole set in the contract with Yahweh = structure in the relationship (see end of verse “*which Yahweh swore to your fathers*”).

I command you → doctrine of [inspiration]

Be careful to do → takes effort in the mind and heart (“Living in the Word” life-style)

8:2 remember (again!!)

Biblical faith rooted in historic revelation – God’s acts/events and His interpretation of them.

History is a tremendous source of learning, but paganism not interested because it sees no [purpose or meaning].

- Early USA history of the Founders
- Military history studied to broaden the mental tools of military leaders
- Family immigration from Europe
- So-called “natural history”

all the way that Yahweh your God led you in the wilderness. . .

all—many events along those 40 years of history

to humble you and test you to know what was in your heart

3 sequential actions here

(1) *Afflict* = taking away the normal logistics of life: water, food, clothing.

(2) *To test* = same word used of Massah event in 6:16 when the 1st generation tested Yahweh’s character to see whether He was with them or not.

(3) *To know what was in your heart whether keeping His command or not.*

This is NOT proof of “open theology” that denies God’s omniscience.

It is revelation of how God condescends to our level and interacts historically (used of Abraham in sacrifice of Isaac).

Heart:

Body parts like “heart”, “bowel”, “kidneys” when used in Scripture refer to the physical body organs—not some theological abstract notion.

“Heart” for example is used in the Bible like it is used in everyday conversation: “heart-warming”, “know by heart,” “heart-broken”.

Why? Because the heart “senses” what is going on.

Research, especially neurocardiology, has discovered some insightful truths:

- Electrical energy of the heart permeates every cell in the body and is 50X brain’s electrical energy—its electrical field can be sensed out to 8 feet away.
- New level of communication—not chemical levels as with hormones—but in rhythms, like radio and light waves, now carry information.
- 40,000 neuro-sensors in the heart.

Quotes on research from the Heart Math Institute:

“The heart as the most powerful generator of rhythmic information patterns in the body, acts effectively as the global conductor in the body’s symphony to bind and synchronize the entire system. The consistent and pervasive influence of the heart’s rhythmic patterns on the brain and body not only affects our physical health, but also significantly influences perceptual processing, emotional experience, and intentional behavior.”

The Coherent Heart, McCarty et al., P 3

“The heart is the most consistent and dynamic generator of rhythmic information patterns in the body: its intrinsic nervous system is a sophisticated information encoding and processing center that operates independently of the brain. . .of all the bodily organs, the heart possesses by far the most extensive communication network with the brain.” P 6

“Afferent input from the heart not only affects the homeostatic regulatory centers in the brain, but also influences the activity of higher brain centers involved in perceptual, cognitive, and emotional processing, thus in turn affecting many and diverse aspects of our experience and behavior.” P 6.

“Groundbreaking research in the relatively new field of neurocardiology has demonstrated that the heart has an extensive intrinsic nervous system that is sufficiently sophisticated to qualify as a ‘little brain’ in its own right.” P 47

“In addition to modulating the activity of the nervous and endocrine systems, input from the heart influences the activity of the digestive tract, urinary bladder, spleen, respiratory and lymph systems, and skeletal muscles. . . .Spinal cord excitability varies directly with the cardiac pulse.” p47

Key measure of heart-brain interaction is heart rate variability (short term beat-to-beat changes in heart rate).

8:2 “Heart” in the Bible refers to the physical heart’s management of cognition and understanding. Is loyalty to God part of your inner bodily management system ??

8:3 humbled you

Adversity Test: knock out the props from the details of life—interruption of the “normal” cause-effect chain—to see whether we have practiced faith in His “shadowing” mercy behind these surface cause-effects. Creator/creature distinction’s practical outworking.

Detail of life #1

Caused you to hunger and fed you with manna which you did not know

Exod 16: 14-21

Manna = what is it?? (Heb: MAN HU → MANNAH) = unknown, outside of the range of “normal” knowledge.

Reaction among the nation—see the complaining. **Num 11:4-9**

Was supernatural **Josh 5:12**

that he might make you to know that man shall not live by bread alone

Don’t isolate the “normal” phenomena from the divine “background” going on all the time.

but by every utterance of the mouth of Yahweh

Spoken word of God causing the [shape] of history moment-by-moment (Yahweh is Creator who creates AND speaks/acts in subsequent history).

Jesus used this against Satan’s temptation to have Him utter a command that was out of line for Him in kenotic testing.

8:4 garments. . .feet. . .

Details of Life #2, #3: clothing and physical endurance.

8:5 know with your heart that as a man chastens his son

Moses wants this knowledge “deep” so that 2nd generation will take away from history the results of the Adversity Test—to see “behind” the veil of “normal” cause-effect that God is providing logistical grace. Must learn to live like a [creature], not a god.

Next section **8:6-10** addresses the future—how the 2nd generation should respond to God’s blessing by remembering the Adversity Test Lesson.

8:6 so keep [His] commandments to walk in His ways and to fear Him

Respect for His authority that He is behind all of life’s experiences, whether good or bad.

8:7-9 because Yahweh your God is bringing you. . . .Jack nothing

Prosperity Test: more difficult than the Adversity Test!!

Note the list of blessings!!

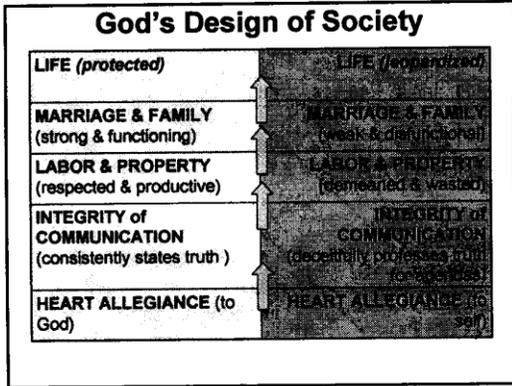
Note that labor is still required—these aren’t some socialist/Marxist handout schemes!

8:10 When you have eaten. . .then you shall bless Yahweh your God for the good land He has given you.

Proper response from the heart that remains aware that “behind” the labor is the logistical grace of God in providing the capital assets for production. His “unseen hand” ought to be credited.

III. CONCLUSION

1. 2nd generation faces a future Prosperity Test that will show whether their creature-hood has become the operational perspective deep down in their nervous system, or whether they will forget the lessons from their parents’ Adversity Test.
2. Does it take an Adversity Test for you to learn to respect the Creator/creature distinction?
3. Do you automatically, reflexively, thank the Lord for the everyday details of life?



Doctrine of Revelation

Verbal: includes <i>information transfer</i> from God to man (Deut 30:11-14)
Personal: includes <i>personal interaction</i> between God and man (Ps 95:6-11)
Historical: intermittent so depends upon <i>historical memory</i> (Ex 12:24-27; 1 Cor 11:23-26)
Comprehensive: implications <i>span all of life</i> (Deut 12-26)
Prophetic: line of self-consistent prophets with a horizon to the end of history (Heb. 1:1-2; 1 Pet 1:10-12)

Doctrine of Inspiration

Dual authorship: genuine human product yet perfect revelation of God (eventual Hypostatic Union of the God-man shows how human & divine natures interact- John 1:14)
Verbal: very words used by the human authors, and not just their concepts ("God-breathed" [Greek 'theopneustos'] 2 Tim 3:16)
Plenary: extends to <i>every part</i> of the Bible—"red letter" and "black letter" (2 Tim 3:16 & 2 Pet 3:16)
Sufficient subset of all revelation: authors' selection of material (Luka 1:1-4; John 20:30-31; 21:24-25)
Infallible: contract testimony that is false <i>violates the 9th commandment</i> (1 Cor 15:15)

Structure of Chapters 6 & 7

Chapter 6	Chapter 7
6:1-9,20-25 The commands & the procedures of learning them well	7:1-5,17-26 Holy war & the procedures of executing it
6:10-19 The (heart) relationship with Yahweh	7:6-16 The (contractual) relationship with Yahweh

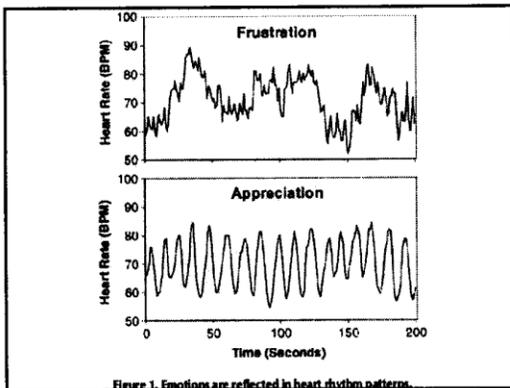


Figure 1. Emotions are reflected in heart rhythm patterns.