

SESSION #24 (18 May 10); Deut 8:11-20; The Heart of 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

Chaps 5-11 deal with the heart and mind. It is the meeting ground of God and us → central concern in the Bible. 42X referred to in Deuteronomy

A. "Heart" refers to both a spiritual and a physical part.

Physical part:

"Pump" that moves blood and is complex components throughout the body (transporter)

"Electronic regulator" that dominates the electrical rhythms throughout the body

Physical creation has [designs] that reveals [functions] = metaphor of spiritual reality.
(grapevines, sheep, seasons, and the bodily organs)

Spiritual part:

Deut 4:39; 6:5-6; 7:17; 8:2,5,14,17 (most occurrences along with chap 30)

Connection with physical heart:

- Can consciously affect the heart with our mental decisions (1 John 3:18-23).
- Unconscious thoughts and emotions can also affect the heart (post-traumatic syndrome & Jer. 17:9-10 where "heart" and "kidneys" are paired—adrenal glands secrete hormones according to perceived threat).
- Heart delivers hormones, oxygen, nourishment to the body and the heart is the source of our speech (Prov 6:18a; Matt 12:33-37; 15:10-20).
- We are to feed the heart the Word of God (Prov. 3:1-6; Ps 119:11).

Heart is the deep "controller" underneath the surface fleeting thoughts

- (1) Like deep ocean currents underneath the surface waves, or
- (2) Like a heavy flywheel of an engine.

B. Heart Testing:

The 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.

Adversity testing: 8:2

- No food supply
- No clothing supply
- Rugged terrain stressing their feet

8:3 by every action that proceeds from the mouth of Yahweh = His command word over all creation, including “natural” processes. His underlying [providential]-working.

8:5 and you [should] know with your heart that. . .

The practice of studying, memorizing, and repeatedly speaking in terms of the 1st generation’s 40-year Adversity Test—“living in the Word.”

as a father. . .so Yahweh. . .

Above and behind all circumstances is the sovereign love and power of God, so this deep knowledge neutralizes “cosmic thinking” that Nature is some [impersonal force] that must be somehow manipulated and/or appeased—looking to religion or the State for salvation and meaning.

8:10 when [you enter the Prosperity Test], bless Yahweh your God for the good land which He has given you.

Because “normal” procedures work so well, the tendency is to forget what supports them moment-by-moment.

II. IMPROPERLY RESPONDING TO YAHWEH’S BLESSINGS (8:11- 20)

8:11 keep yourself lest you forget. . .not keeping His commandments. . .which I command

Divided heart: can’t do both; daily “living in the Word” keeps the heart in the right shape.

Requires respect for the Inspiration of Scripture.

8:12 eaten. . .full. . .beautiful homes you build and dwell

pleasure, enjoyment in details of ‘normal’ life

8:13 is multiplied. . .multiplied. . .multiplied

3rd per plural = end result rather than direct action of the people

Economic prosperity

8:14ab your heart is lifted up and you forget Yahweh your God = pride from slipping into a cosmic perspective that economic prosperity ‘automatically’ comes about from my planning and labor.

8:17 say in your heart my strength and the bone of my hand has made. . .

Eyes looking at the 2ndry means, not the ultimate means = Creator/creature distinction

Improper response at the deep level of the heart due to failure over many days to “live in the Word.”

8:14c-16 Who brought you. . .Who led you. . .Who brought water to you. . .Who fed you
[HEB: Hiphil stems – causation]

to test you to humble you to do you good in the end

Adversity Test was to prepare them for the Prosperity Test.

Prosperity Test = maintaining mental attitude of [creature-hood]—of “seeing” His shadowing underlying providence in all the details of life and of “being thankful” in everything.

8:18 remember Yahweh. . .

Note the object of forgetting (v14) and remembering (here) is God Himself.

Relationships based upon enduring character (sessions 21 & 22, chaps 6 & 7).

- Therefore contracts
- Therefore marriage ceremonies
- Therefore treaties
- Cannot be antinomian and at the same time have a real relationship

He is the Giver of strength to you so that He may establish His contract. . .

Abrahamic Covenant: unconditional ultimately but conditionally mediated through Mosaic Covenant.

**8:19 if you forget by any means. . .[HEB: inf + verb = emphasis]
and follow. . .serve. . .worship. . .**

Paganism!

Metaphysical: What is the purpose of your existence?

Epistemological: How do I know what you are telling me is the truth?

Ethics: Who are you to tell me how to live?

At least one in 10 young people now believe life is not worth living. A 2009 survey of 16- to 25-year-olds by the Prince's Trust found that for many young people life has little or no purpose, especially among those not in school, work, or training. More than a quarter of those polled feel depressed and are less happy than when they were younger. And almost half said they are regularly stressed and many don't have anything to look forward to or someone they could talk to about their problems. No wonder many young people have such a pessimistic view of the future.

you will certainly perish [Heb: inf + verb = emphasis]

8:20 as the Goyim (nations, Gentiles) which Yahweh is destroying before you

Vivid reference to recent battles of the 2nd generation in chapters 2-4.

As a consequence of you not listening to the voice of Yahweh your God

= Moses' words → doctrine of revelation and inspiration.

III. CONCLUSION

Because of God's faithfulness to His contracts, prosperity can come (if they conquer as admonished in chapter 7).

This future time of economic prosperity and personal enjoyment will be a Prosperity Test to see if they've learned from history (the 40 yr adversity test) through living in the Word (chapter 6).

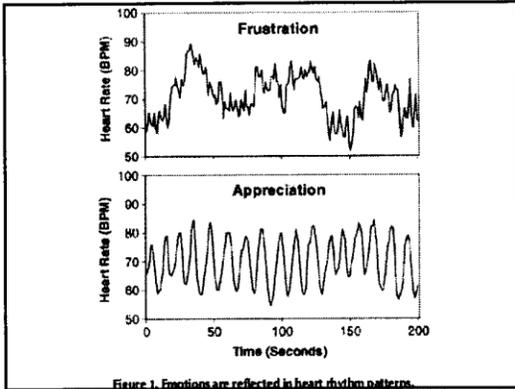
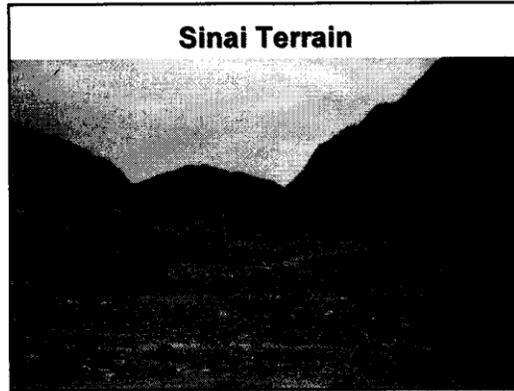


Figure 1. Emotions are reflected in heart rhythm patterns.



Theology of Thanksgiving	Theology of Complaining
God is in charge	God is in charge
God is gracious and gives me what I do not merit	God claims to be loving and gracious
God has my ultimate good in view as He administers providential circumstances in my life	But He treats me like He doesn't care or like He treats me like He delights in my misery

14ab Lest . . . your heart is lifted up and you forget the Lord your God

14c-16 Who brought you out of the land of Egypt . . . Who led you through the great and terrible wilderness . . . Who brought water for you . . . Who fed you . . . with manna which your fathers did not know . . . that He might humble you to test you to do you good in the end

17 You say in your heart 'my power and the might of my hand have gained me this wealth.'