

Stay in the Light

Deuteronomy 18:9-19

May 10, 2009

Intro

We are still with Israel as they are camped on the eastern side of the Jordan River. Moses is giving his last messages to them to prepare them to enter into the land which God promised them. This is the second of five messages. As we see throughout the book of Deuteronomy, he is helping them understand the Law which God gave to them at Mount Sinai 40 years before, but he is also seeking revival for them.

Moses knows that Israel must have a right heart before God if they are to obtain the promises which God intends for them. The same is true for us in that God also seeks revival here among us, even now. We must all have our heart in the right place before God in order to live the victorious life and to obtain the promises God intends for us.

Here in chapter 18, he is fore warning them of spiritual dangers. Part of spiritual revival is understanding how to keep our lives from been shipwrecked. So here in these verses, God is giving them insight into spiritually dangerous things that they should not get involved with.

But God also gives them the answer to their need. He prophesied of the messiah that will come and speak the words of life which God intended for them.

I. Don't Do as Others Do

- 1 That may seem obvious, but God never says something without a reason.
- 2 There is a warning here that would be good for us to understand and apply to our lives.

A. There are some things God doesn't like

- 3 Well, actually, there are some things that God finds detestable, that's a much stronger word.
- 4 In verse 9, Moses told Israel to not imitate the detestable things of the world.
- 5 In verse 12, Moses said that whoever does these things is detestable to the Lord. Those are very strong words.
- 6 But it helps us to understand but there are many things in this world God finds offensive. But there are also things in this world which please God very much.

Illus – There is a line in one of the worship songs we sing which captures this perfectly. “It's time to live a life of love that pleases You.”

Philippians 2:13, for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

7 In the book of Ezekiel, God says that he takes pleasure in seeing those who were once wicked repenting of their ways and finding life.

8 There is a great verse that speaks to this in the prophet Zephaniah...

Zephaniah 3:17, The Lord your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing.
NIV

B. There are spiritual forces of darkness

1 In verses 10 through 14, Moses specifically names the practices of the world that God detests.

2 These could be organized into three groups. Each of them is spiritually dark. In other words, there is a spiritual reality behind them, but they are demonic in nature.

3 The three groups would be those who proclaim to be fortunetellers, those who try to manipulate the future, and those who attempt to communicate with the dead.

4 God told Israel through Moses, and I believe God is telling us as well, that we should not be involved in any of these things because they are detestable to God.

5 Many people are curious about these things; some people are fascinated by them.

Illus – You would be amazed at how prevalent these things are in Africa. What is even more amazing is that there are people who are actively involved in church there but also are actively involved in spiritually dark things.

Steve was telling me recently about a pastor who was dedicating a child and made the parents promise that they would keep this child away from witchcraft.

6 Divination – this would describe those who try to foretell the future through various occultic means. There are those who do this today through reading tea

leaves, or through palm reading, Ouija boards, etc. (Did you know that Ouija boards are second only to the game of Monopoly in popularity?)

- 7 Witchcraft – this is the attempt to use spiritual powers to affect other people’s lives, such as through casting spells, speaking incantations, etc. There is a modern resurgence of witchcraft; even what is known as white witchcraft. (Apparently, the difference being that white witchcraft is environmentally friendly.)
- 8 Soothsayer – these are those who try to predict the future by using astrological signs. Many newspapers today still print astrology reports, or horoscopes, according to people’s birth sign.
- 9 Interpreting omens – this was a very popular practice for many years whereby people would see events in their lives as indicators of either what was to come, or what they should do. There were times in history when people would interpret omens by looking at the entrails of an animal, or perhaps examining the liver of a goat.
- 10 Sorcerer – this would refer to the use of drugs for the purpose of having a spiritual experience. Our modern word “pharmacy” actually comes from the Greek word “pharmacia”, which refers to sorcery. (The drugs of the sixties started out as an attempt to have spiritual experiences.)
- 11 Communicating with the dead- this last group has to do with those who attempt to communicate to the dead through various means.
- 12 All of these things are detestable to God, and he instructs them, and I believe also us, that we should in no way be involved with them in any form.
- 13 Some may believe that they are harmless, but there is a spiritual reality behind them, and that power is demonic.
- 14 The most important thing to understand is that the power behind these things is not a benevolent power. The power behind them is demonic.

Ephesians 6:10-18 Spiritual Battle

- 1 What we need is to seek our God and not imitate the things that others do.

Isaiah 8:19, When they say to you, “Consult the mediums and the spiritists who whisper and mutter,” should not a people consult their God? Should they consult the dead on behalf of the living?

II. The Future is Found in Jesus

- 1 In verses 15 and 18, Moses told Israel that God would raise up for them a prophet like himself and that they should listen to him.
- 2 In other words, you will not need to be involved in any of those things that the world seeks for spiritual experience because I will give you a prophet from among the people.

A. He is the mediator between God and man

- 1 In verse 16, Moses told them that this was according to their request at Mount Horeb.
- 2 This was when God spoke to them directly with his own voice, but they became very afraid and asked Moses to be a mediator for them.
- 3 The prophet which Moses spoke of was their coming messiah. Even modern Jews believe this is a reference to the messiah.
- 4 That Messiah is Jesus...

1 Timothy 2:5, For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,

Hebrews 9:15, For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that...those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

Hebrews 8:6, But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises.

- 5 When John the Baptist was preaching in Jerusalem, there were some who came to him and asked, "Are you the prophet?"
- 6 John responded, "I am not the one, but he who comes after me."
- 7 Later, when John was arrested and held in prison he sent some messengers to Jesus with a question, "Are you the one?"

Luke 7:22, And He answered and said to them, "Go and report to John what you have seen and heard: the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have the gospel preached to them."

- 8 After Jesus fed the 5,000 with five loaves of bread and two fish the crowd marveled and said of Him...

John 6:14, Therefore when the people saw the sign which He had performed, they said, "This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world."

1 We need a mediator because our sins have separated us from God.

Illus – Job longed for someone to be able to put his hand on God as well as on him.

B. If you know Jesus, you know the future

9 An interesting thing about humans is that we are fascinated about knowing the future.

Illus – that is unique among God’s creation. We had a dog, Cocoa, and the only future she cared about was when we were coming home. After that, nothing mattered at all.

10 The fact is that Jesus is already in the future.

John 8:57-58, So the Jews said to Him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?” Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.”

1 Another reason we want to know the future is because we are very concerned about what’s happening in this world.

Illus – there are many supposed prophecies of man that predict that the end of the world will come in 2012. They give several reasons for this.

11 But Jesus told us not to be concerned.

John 16:33, “These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.”

12 If you want to have your future predicted, it is this...

1 If you accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior, you will have your sins forgiven.

2 You will be adopted as a child of God.

3 You will be seated in the heavenly places with Christ.

4 You will have eternal fellowship with God through Christ Jesus.

5 And you will have an eternal reunion with those who are in Jesus Christ.

6 Take courage, He has overcome the world.