

Old Testament 17
Beware Lest Thou Forget
(Deuteronomy 1; 6; 8; 11; 30-33)
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(Here is spiritual background to help understand the prophecies in these scriptures of us, the Latter-day generation preparing to inherit Eternal Life, and **how, if we have faith, we can inherit it**)

I. Why was ancient Israel, who was freed from bondage, not allowed to enter the Promised Land?

- A. They had insufficient faith to inherit it (Deuteronomy 1:28, 30, 32).
- B. By comparison, why did most during Jesus' time not enter into the *True* Promised Land --- Eternal Life?
 - 1. As their forefathers, they did not have faith to inherit it.
- C. In both cases, the Lord told *who* would help them inherit it.
 - 1. To ancient Israel the Lord said: "But Joshua...he shall go in thither; encourage him: **for he shall cause Israel to inherit it**" (Deut. 1:38).
 - a. While telling that Joshua of those days would lead them in, **these words were also prophetic. For the name Joshua is the English for "Jesus" in the Greek.**
 - b. For this reason it is written "The Lord will circumcise thine heart... to love the Lord thy God..." (Deut 30:6). This would happen to those who truly understand Jesus' great work of atonement, which produces a broken heart.
 - 2. The Savior made many statements that He would bring those who had faith in Him into Eternal Life, such as: "In my Father's house are many mansions... I go to prepare a place for you" (John 14:2).

II. A later generation of Israel did inherit, after struggling in the wilderness forty years.

- A. "And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years ... to humble thee and to prove thee..." (Deuteronomy 8:2-3).
- B. A similar promise was made in Jesus' time. After the Jews rejected Jesus' Gospel, it went to the Gentiles, but **a latter-day generation would receive it.**
 - 1. The Lord says through Paul, "as it is written, **There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.** For this is my covenant unto them when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel they are enemies for your [the Gentiles'] sakes but as touching the election they are beloved for the fathers' sakes" (See Romans 11: 25-28).
- C. The Lord said in the last days this generation will be blessed with the "eyes to see and ears to hear" what ancient Israel and those in Jesus' time did not understand.

III. Deuteronomy means "Regiving of the Law." This "law" was to be re-given to the new generation [in the latter-days] who could now inherit.

- A. This incident, while being true history, also bore witness of us, as descendants of Israel who have been offered again the principles needed to enter Eternal Life.
- B. The **Lord is telling us** through His renewed commandments that the important factor is to not forget His covenants, blessings, and commandments as past generations. **He confirms He is speaking of the last days** when He says,

1. "...then the Lord... will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will gather thee from all the nations" (Deut. 30:3).
- C. He even said that in these last days He will gather the deceased of Israel!
 "If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee..." (Deut. 30:4). Through our Temple Work, we are helping Him do that today.

IV. Not only does Deuteronomy teach that a latter-day generation will receive the Promised Land ancient Israel lost, **but it tells who the Lord will use to lead us into it.**

A. Review Deuteronomy 33:13-17.

B. **Note the very important prophecies made regarding the seed of Joseph.**

1. There is to be a "land of Joseph" (v. 13). [Which Brigham Young in his *Discourses* said was America].
2. It will be blessed with the "precious things of heaven [and]... of the deep (v. 13)." [It will be blessed with revelation from heaven and from out of the earth -- -The Book of Mormon].
3. It will be a blessed with bountiful harvests ["precious fruits brought forth by the sun"] (v. 14). (The Midwest is called "the breadbasket of the world").
4. It will receive special blessings due to its "ancient mountains" and the "lasting hills." [The Saints would find refuge there and blessings to help them grow strong] (v. 15).
5. "Let blessings come upon the head of Joseph ... that was separated from his brethren" (v. 16). [Joseph's lineage was separated when Lehi was led to this land and when many of those of Ephraim were led here in the early days of the Church].
6. "His glory is like [the first born, that is he would receive the blessings of the firstborn] and his horns are like the horns of the unicorn ['the wild ox' according to the footnote and a recognized symbol of Ephraim]. **With them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth"** (In other words, **he will gather Israel**) (v. 17).
7. The gatherers would be "... the ten thousands of Ephraim and the thousands of Manasseh" (v. 17.) The prophets have testified, "It is Ephraim and Manasseh who will bring salvation to the earth."
8. These things are being fulfilled at this very time: as thousands of missionaries from Ephraim [mostly from North America], and Manasseh [mostly from Central and South America], gather Israel from without the world.

IV. The Ways to Remember the Lord.

A. How did the Lord encourage Israelites to remember God in Deuteronomy?

1. See Deut. 6:8-9. They wore phylacteries [little boxes carrying scriptures] on their foreheads and put scriptural citations on their doorways.

B. What has He told us *today* to do to remember Him and our covenants?

1. Answers should include: the sacrament, testimony meetings, Sunday talks, Sunday School lessons, Sunday priesthood and Relief Society meetings and their manuals, temple attendance, temple clothing worn daily, daily scripture study, daily prayer, fasting, Family Home Evening, week day meetings of auxiliaries, home teaching and visiting

teaching, service to others, service from others, ward conference, stake conference, general conference, church magazines, reading of other *good* books, daily experiencing of the beauties of nature, uplifting music, Church sponsored media, letters to and from missionaries, attending baptisms, bearing witness to less active in the church or non-members of our church, etc.

Consider how we can make all these things more effective in helping us remember. [One example, prepare for Sacrament meeting and the sacrament by sitting quietly and listening to the prelude music after briefly and quietly greeting others].

Consider how all these things work together, and that following the Lord's counsel brings interconnectedness to our lives, which truly helps us remember the Lord and our covenants **always**.

V. Music is one powerful source the Lord has given us to help us remember. Consider the hymn "Redeemer of Israel" whose imagery very much comes from these experiences of ancient Israel and **refers to us as that last inheriting generation!**

Redeemer of Israel,
Our only delight
On whom for a blessing we call.
Our shadow by day,
And our pillar by night,
Our King, our Deliv'rer, our all.

We know He is coming
To gather his sheep
And lead them to Zion in love
For why in the valley of death should they weep
Or in the lone wilderness rove?

**How long we have wandered
As strangers in sin
And cried in the desert for thee!**
Our foes have rejoiced
When our sorrows they've seen
But Israel will shortly be free.

As children of Zion,
Good tidings for us
The tokens already appear.
Fear not, and be just,
**For the kingdom is ours,
The hour of redemption is near.**