

Looking Back to Remember for Future Living

Our memories often fail us. Things happen in the world around us and in our personal lives that stir us to joy, anger, frustration, excitement depending on what the situation may be. But it isn't long before we have moved on in life and have forgotten that particular experience. Some experiences aren't good and are worth putting behind us. Others are good and, though we ought not to hold on to one experience as if the rest of our life depends on it, we ought to remember what God had done in our lives.

At the time of the Exodus God had said much, commanded much and done much in the lives of the Israelites. After 40 years of wandering in the wilderness Moses gathered them on the plains of Moab and reminded them of what God had said, commanded and done in their lives and spoke to them about how they should live in the promised land.

Our experiences are part of God's formation process for what God wants us to do in life.

Deuteronomy

1) Multiplication and diversity of leadership (Deut. 1: 9 – 18)

- Exodus 18 – Even Moses had forgotten that it wasn't his idea but his father-in-law, Jethro's idea to multiply the leadership so that Moses doesn't burn out.
- ^{PR 19:20} Listen to advice and accept instruction, and in the end you will be wise.
- Leadership potential was always amongst the people. It had to be realised.
- A leadership structure was set in place for the leading of God's people into the purposes of God.
- This had the approval of all the people (1: 14)
- “One man shows” are not part of God's purpose for His church.
- The leader who has burnt out has not led wisely.
- Joshua was to succeed Moses (31: 1 – 8)
 - A good leader will have raised up someone to take over from him/her.
 - God's purposes didn't not come to a halt at the death of Moses but continued with Joshua leading His people.

2) Israel's Failings

- They rebelled and didn't go into the land after the report of the spies. (1: 26 – 46)
 - Their rebellion was because they didn't trust God (1: 32)
 - The majority aren't always right.
- They made a golden calf to worship (9: 1 – 29)
 - They grew impatient with God and Moses and decided to do things their own way rather than God's way.
- It isn't a bad thing to fail unless we fail at the same thing more than once.
- We often learn more from our failings than from our successes.
- Let us think about the areas where we have failed and what we can do so that we don't repeat the same mistakes again.

3) Israel's Victories

- They defeated the kings of Heshbon and Bashan in their wanderings (2: 24 – 3: 11)
 - God gives second chances when we have failed him and allows us victories that we would not accomplish on our own to rebuild our trust in Him.

4) God's Commands and Warnings

- Obedience (4: 1- 2)
- Do not make idols of anything (4: 16)
- The Ten commandments (5: 1 – 21)
- Love the Lord your God (6: 4 – 5)
- Not to make treaties with the people they drive out of the land (7: 1 – 6)
- Do not forget the Lord (8: 1 – 20)
- Besides his general commands has God commanded you to do something specific for Him?
- If we can't hear what God is saying we need to ask ourselves, “Have I obeyed the last thing that God commanded me to do?”

5) God's Blessing even with His Foreknowledge of Rebellion

- God knew that His people would rebel against Him before they did (31: 29)
- He still blessed them through Moses (33: 1 – 29)
- Jesus knew that Peter was going to deny Him but He did not stop loving Peter.