CORNERSTONE CONNECTIONS
JANUARY 06 2024

Scripture Story: Deuteronomy 32.
Commentary: *Prophets and Kings* (or *Royalty in Ruins*), Introduction.

an undelivered gift



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key text

"For the LORD's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted inheritance."

(Deuteronomy 32:9, NIV)

flashlight

"Through the chosen nation, God had purposed to bring blessing to all mankind.

". . . They were hedged about by the precepts of His law, the everlasting principles of truth, justice, and purity. Obedience to these principles was to be their protection, for it would save them from destroying themselves by sinful practices. . . .

"Christ was their instructor. . . . In the tabernacle and the temple His glory dwelt in the holy Shekinah above the mercy seat. In their behalf He constantly manifested the riches of His love and patience" (*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 17, 18).

what do you think?

What would be the best thing you could think of as a gift for your 18th birthday?

____ A computer
____ Clothes
____ A cell phone
____ Something else _____

did you know?

There has always been a difference of opinion about how many Israelites came out of Egypt. The confusion comes from the way you translate one of the Hebrew letters! Why is this important? The children of Israel had been told to take possession of the Promised Land. The only problem with this was that they were not the only people living there! So the question of how many people came out of Egypt becomes important since they had to fight their way through the Promised Land that was already occupied by others. They could have been as few as 3,000 to 5,000 people or perhaps as many as a million or so. Regardless of how many people there were supposed to be, they were expected to be the Lord's gift to the nations.

How could they have done that in the midst of trying to conquer a territory? They could have accomplished it by continually following the Word of God, much the same as we are called to do.

INTO THE STORY

"The LORD alone led him; no foreign god was with him.

"He made him ride on the heights of the land and fed him with the fruit of the fields.

"He nourished him with honey from the rock, and with oil from the flinty crag. . . .

"The LORD saw this and rejected them because he was angered by his sons and daughters.

" 'I will hide my face from them,' he said, 'and see what their end will be; for they are a perverse generation, children who are unfaithful.

" 'They made me jealous by what is no god and angered me with their worthless idols.

" 'I will make them envious by those who are not a people; I will make them angry by a nation that has no understanding.' . . .

"Moses came with Joshua son of Nun and spoke all the words of this song in the hearing of the people. When Moses finished reciting all these words to all Israel, he said to them, 'Take to heart all the words I have solemnly declared to you this day, so that you may command your children to obey carefully all the words of this law. They are not just idle words for you—they are your life. By them you will live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to possess.'

"On that same day the LORD told Moses, 'Go up into the Abarim Range to Mount Nebo in Moab, across from Jericho, and view Canaan, the land I am giving the Israelites as their own possession. There on the mountain that you have climbed you will die and be gathered to your people, just as your brother Aaron died on Mount Hor and was gathered to his people. This is because both of you broke faith with me in the presence of the Israelites at the waters of Meribah Kadesh in the Desert of Zin and because you did not uphold my holiness among the Israelites. Therefore, you will see the land only from a distance; you will not enter the land I am giving to the people of Israel.' "

(Deuteronomy 32:12, 13, 19–21, 44–52, NIV)

OUT OF THE STORY

What is God's attitude toward His "chosen" people at this point?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Why was Moses not allowed into the Promised Land?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Do you think it was fair of God to keep Moses out? Explain.

_____
_____
_____
_____

What does it mean when God says that He is a "jealous" God?

_____
_____
_____
_____

What reason did God have to be angry with the Israelites?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Why do you think Moses said, "They are not just idle words for you—they are your life. By them you will live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to possess" (verse 47)?

_____
_____
_____
_____

punch lines

"For you singled them out from all the nations of the world to be your own inheritance, just as you declared through your servant Moses when you, Sovereign LORD, brought our ancestors out of Egypt" **(1 Kings 8:53, NIV).**

"Therefore I will praise you, LORD, among the nations; I will sing the praises of your name" **(2 Samuel 22:50, NIV).**

"LORD, the God of our ancestors, are you not the God who is in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. Power and might are in your hand, and no one can withstand you" **(2 Chronicles 20:6, NIV).**

"In that day you will say: 'Give praise to the LORD, proclaim his name; make known among the nations what he has done, and proclaim that his name is exalted' " **(Isaiah 12:4, NIV).**

"Ask me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession" **(Psalm 2:8, NIV).**

"And your fame spread among the nations on account of your beauty, because the splendor I had given you made your beauty perfect, declares the Sovereign LORD" **(Ezekiel 16:14, NIV).**

further insight

"Have faith in God. He knows your need. He has all power. His infinite love and compassion never weary. Fear not that He will fail of fulfilling his promise."—Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, p. 164

Sabbath

Read 1 Kings 8:53.

After having completed the activity in the *What Do You Think?* section at the beginning of this lesson, you must have some thoughts about gifts. In our biblical passage for this week we realize that God meant for Israel to be the salvation of the nations. But they thought only of themselves as receiving the gift of a homeland from God. They did not understand the gift they were to be to the rest of the world. They were to exemplify God's character on the earth for the world to see. Unfortunately, they were continually trying to be like the world rather than an example to it. Have you ever made that mistake? How can you better reflect God's character to those around you?

Sunday

Read Deuteronomy 32:46, 47.

Most of Deuteronomy 32 is a type of song or poem for the children of Israel to understand what God is thinking about them at that particular time.

However, Moses placed great importance on verses 46 and 47 for Joshua and the children of Israel. If someone gave you those same words, how could you apply them to your life? How would you be different than the children of Israel? What would cause you to take to heart the words in this text as if they were meant for you?

Monday

Read Deuteronomy 32:9.

What do you think the verse for today and this week's *Key Text* means? Could it mean that God blesses the world through His people? Could it mean that the only way the world will really get to know God is through the inheritance (or legacy) God gives to those who choose to follow Him? If that is the case, what does that mean for you? Are you God's inheritance? Are you the one who is supposed to bless the world for God? How might you go about doing that?

Tuesday

Read Psalm 2:8.

In the *Flashlight* section we see that Israel had a responsibility to be the character of God for the nations surrounding Israel. Could God say the same thing to you? Would you be comfortable with that responsibility? Could you be the face that has to show the world who Jesus Christ is? Do you look different or the same as the world around you? Does anyone know you are a Christian? How would they know? What does being a blessing to those around you really mean?

Wednesday

Read 2 Samuel 22:50.

In the *Punch Lines* section of the lesson we see many different texts all alluding to the same thing, that Israel was to be a blessing to the nations. The text that best sums up this concept is found in today's Bible reading. This is the theme of all the Scriptures quoted. It seems that this is spoken of a great deal in both the Old and New Testaments. In the New Testament we call this "evangelism." Write down all the things you think of when you hear the word "evangelism."

How can you see yourself "evangelizing"?

Thursday

Read Ezekiel 16:14.

Being a blessing to those around you takes a serious bit of intent and intentionality. What are you doing today and every day that brings you closer to being that blessing to those in your life?

Make a list of five things that you can do to be a blessing to those in your sphere of influence:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Friday

Read Deuteronomy 32.

Much of Deuteronomy is a serious rebuke of the Israelites by the God they were to love. Read this passage as if it was written directly to you. Replacing pronouns directed to the audience with your name. How meaningful is the text when you look at it as if it is a note written directly to you? Pretty powerful stuff! If you were going to write a response to the person (or God) who wrote this note to you, what would you say? Write that note out and keep it in your Bible as a bookmark in Deuteronomy 32.

this week's reading*

Prophets and Kings (or *Royalty in Ruins*), Introduction.

**Royalty in Ruins* is a special adaptation of *Prophets and Kings*, created for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press®. Get more information about it at www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companion-books#.URlhF1rBO9s. By following the weekly reading plan, you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages Series each year.