

## **Deut 7:1-11 No Compromise for Conquerors, part 2**

After a break of several weeks, we are back in the book of Deuteronomy.

We've already looked at the first 5 verses of this passage.

This part of the chapter is a warning against the dangers of compromise. Moses' primary concern here is that Israel must not compromise with the nations it's about to conquer—there is “No Compromise for Conquerors.” Israel must not learn the ways of the heathen. God's people must be radically distinct from other nations. In order to preserve the covenant with God, they must not compromise with the pagan people in the land they are about to conquer.

Likewise, Christians today need to beware of compromise. We must keep our distance from ungodly people and influences in our world. We must avoid unequal yokes and alliances that would lead to spiritual compromise. We must not learn the ways of the heathen. We must be distinct and uncompromising.

How do we live in this sinful, pagan world without compromise? Last time, we considered the first four commands that Moses gave to the Israelites that would help them avoid compromising with a depraved culture.

- I. .1-2 Conquer the nations greater than you. Cast out these great nations; utterly destroy them.
- II. .2c Make no covenant with them; show them no mercy. No contracts, no treaties with them; cause God's judgment to fall upon them.
- III. .3-4 Make no marriages with them.
- IV. .5 Destroy their religious images/objects. There must be no spiritual compromise, no cooperation with idolatry. You must throw down and eliminate their false religion.

Those were the first four steps in avoiding compromise. With that in mind, let's go ahead with the rest of the passage. There are three other steps to take if we are going to avoid compromise.

V. .6 Remember who you are—remember your identity.

Perhaps the most important things for us to understand is who God is and who we are. I.e., identity is a big issue. When we correctly identify God and ourselves, and when we act in accordance with our identity, we will not compromise.

A. .6 You are set apart unto God—a holy people to the Lord your God. Holy means “set apart, unique” You are not like the other nations. Israel was set apart for God, dedicated to God, committed to the true and living God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

E.g., the stipulations of Leviticus set the nation apart from the pagans.

B. .6b You are a chosen people for the Lord Himself. The Jews are the chosen people. God chose Abraham and made a covenant with him. The Israelites exist as a nation because God chose them.

C. .6c You are a special treasure above all the people on the face of the earth.

“special treasure” (סֵדָקָה) – a valued, personal property; something of great value owned by the Lord alone. Israel is God’s special people—his chosen people, his like no others, his own people.

Exodus 19:5 *Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; ....*

Deuteronomy 14:2 *For you are a holy people to the LORD your God, and the LORD has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.*

Psalms 135:4 *For the LORD has chosen Jacob for Himself, Israel for His special treasure.*

Israel had a unique relationship with God that no other nation had. They must not squander that position by becoming like the pagans.

Why was Israel God’s special treasure? Was God’s choice of Israel based on their size? Their importance? Their religious devotion?

D. .7 You are not a large nation; you are the least of all people.

1. We might call God’s choice of Israel *unconditional*. God’s choice was not based on anything the Jews had done or would do. It was based on God’s own eternal purposes and plans.

2. We might call God's choice of Israel *unilateral*. That is, it was one-sided, not two-sided. God chose Israel and made promises to the nation based solely on God's purpose and plan.
  3. God's choice was based on himself, not on Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob.
  4. Israel existed only because God had protected them all these years. Israel existed as a nation only because of God's sovereign, miraculous work on their behalf. God chose them in spite of their weaknesses and failures.
- E. .8a You are loved of the Lord. God set his love on these unworthy people for his own good purposes. They didn't deserve it or earn it. It was purely based on God's choice and nothing else.

**Quote:** Why God loved [Israel] is not stated in the Pentateuch, but the focus of thought is obvious—it is the character of God rather than any excellence in the people that accounts for the choice.<sup>1</sup>

**App:** Ultimately, that's how salvation works. It's all of grace. God determines to set his love on people of his own choosing. It's the character of God, not any excellence in ourselves that accounts for our salvation. We can never take any credit for our own salvation. We don't contribute to it; we don't add anything to it. Eph 2:8-9; Titus 3:5

- F. .8b You are the object of God's oath toward your fathers.

God made promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He made a covenant with them. He promised that they would become a great nation and occupy the land of Canaan (Gen 17:7-8). God is giving the PL to Israel as a fulfillment of the promises that he made many centuries before. And in so doing, he will use Israel to judge the wicked, debased Canaanite people.

**App:** As we look at these verses, many of these same things are true of Christians.

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<sup>1</sup> Earl S. Kalland, "Deuteronomy," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992), 71.

- ✓ We are a holy people of the Lord—that’s what the word “saint” means. God has claimed us for himself. God wants us to be separated from the world and dedicated to him. We must strive to be set apart *from* the world and set apart *unto* God. We must not compromise spiritually.
- ✓ God chose us for himself. Jesus said, “You did not chose me but I chose you.” The Bible tells us that Christians are elect/chosen according to the foreknowledge of God. We may not fully understand the doctrine of election, but we cannot deny God’s choice of his own people.
- ✓ We are God’s special treasure for himself – something of great value owned by the Lord alone. God loves us personally. Jesus died for us. Jesus loves the church and gave himself for it.
- ✓ We are not a large, powerful group of people. Genuine believers are some of the least in power and the fewest in number. Not many people go through the narrow gate; not many walk the narrow road. It’s only a remnant who are truly faithful. Most people reject the Gospel. Christians are a small group.
- ✓ We are unworthy of God’s love. God does not love us because we have earned it or merit it; he loves us in spite of our unworthiness.
- ✓ We are the recipients/beneficiaries of God’s oath. We benefit from the stipulations of the *new* covenant (Jer 31:31). In Deuteronomy, Moses is talking about the Old Cov, but Christians operate under the New Cov. We operate under the words of Jesus, the Gospel, and the teachings of the apostles.

Many of these ideas are wrapped up in...

1 Peter 2:9–10 *But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.*

Peter is not talking to Jews; he’s talking to Gentiles.

It’s amazing that these concepts that so clearly pertained to Israel under the OT system now apply to Christians in the church age. That does not mean that the church has replaced Israel. God still has a plan and purpose for Israel; “all Israel will be saved.” But right now, the church is the center of God’s program. Christians are “a chosen generation...”

**Trans:** In saying these things, Moses was trying to motivate the Israelites to remain committed to God and to avoid compromise.

Likewise, God's love for us should be a strong motivation for our obedience and commitment to God. God's love for us and his choice of us ought to motivate us to live holy lives and serve him. Our commitment to Christ should prevent us from compromising with the world. How can we compromise with the world when we are the objects of God's love, choice, oath, covenant, and mercy? These truths should motivate us to be totally dedicated to God and to avoid the idols of this world.

Remember who you are, then...

VI. .9 Remember who God is

- A. He is God. Moses reminds the people over and over again in Deuteronomy that the Lord is their God. They don't bow down to lifeless idols; Israel must remain wholly dedicated unto the Lord and to no other.

Remember that shortly after the exodus from Egypt, Israel fell into idolatry (cf., the golden calf). So this is a reminder not to do that; Yahweh is their God, not the idols of the Canaanites.

- B. He is the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations—i.e., far into the distant future; forever. If they would obey and serve God, he will keep his side of the covenant, he will give them this land and bless them in every possible way. Cf. vss. 13f.

But on the other hand...

- C. .10 He repays those who hate him to their face, to destroy them.

Here is the other side of the covenant; here is the threat. If they disobey and fall into idolatry, it will spell disaster for them. God will punish them harshly if they fail to keep their end of the contract.

1. The expression "He will repay him to his face" (.10end) seems to indicate that God will deal with each person individually and personally.
2. God will destroy the nation if they fail to obey the covenant, and God will destroy each individual person who hates him.
3. He'll do this without delay. God is not slow/slack in repaying those who hate him.

This is a stern warning—you can expect strict discipline—in fact, destruction—if you turn away from God and start worshipping idols. God’s patience will come to an end eventually, and when it does, God’s judgment will be strict.

Cf. Deuteronomy 28—the long list of curses for disobedience. If they want the blessings and if they want to avoid God’s judgment, they must keep the covenant without compromise.

**App:** For Christians, God threatens discipline/chastisement if we stray from his commands. If you are genuinely saved, you don’t have to worry about loss of salvation, but you do want to avoid sins that would incur God’s “fatherly displeasure.” God threatens chastisement and discipline for disobedient believers. In fact, destruction could be the result if we fail to repent—1 Jn 5—sin unto death.

In the NT, Paul describes “the goodness and severity of God” (Rom 11:22). That’s what we see here. We experience God’s mercy and grace when we submit humbly to his commands. We experience severe chastisement when we flagrantly, unrepentantly violate God’s commands.

**Trans:** Both the mercy of God as well as the threat of discipline should help us avoid spiritual compromise. God’s love toward us should keep us from compromise, and the threat of chastisement should keep us from compromise.

VII. .11 Keep the commandments, statutes, and judgments which God commands.

As they enter the PL and begin the conquest, the most important thing is to keep God’s commands—obey God’s law. The key to success in living in the PL is faithful obedience to God. They’ll enjoy the blessings and avoid chastisement if they obey God’s law.

**App:** We are not Israel, and we are not entering the PL, but the principle is still true. Success in life depends largely on obeying God’s commands, statutes, and judgments. We avoid compromise by simple obedience. If we love God and if we appreciate God’s love for us, we will not compromise.

Israel was about to enter the PL and begin conquering nations larger and more powerful than themselves. But they could do it if they obeyed these principles. As we consider this passage, we should review the principles and consider how they apply to us:

Overcome falsehood with truth. Proclaim the truth and stand strongly against error.

Don't allow the world to press us into its mold. Don't love the world or the things in it. Don't be a friend to this evil, dark, pagan world.

Don't inter-marry with unbelievers. Marry someone of like faith and practice.

Remember who you are—a holy people wholly dedicated to God, a special treasure above all the other people of the world.

Remember who God is—the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for those who love and obey him, but also the God who will destroy those who hate him.

Keep God's commands and instructions. Success in the Christian life depends on obedience to God's commands.

Maybe you cannot identify with the words of verse 6. Perhaps the words of verse 10 apply more accurately to you. Then you need to repent and trust Christ.

Like the ancient Israelites, success for us requires faithful obedience and avoiding compromise with the ungodly people of our world. We must not learn the ways of the heathen. Like the ancient Israelites, Christians are a special treasure to God. We must be wholly dedicated to God and avoid compromising with the world.