

Obedient Faith

Key Verse: “*You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.*”
—Deuteronomy 4:2,
New American
Standard Bible

Selected Scripture:
Deuteronomy 4:1-14

IN HIS PERFECT WISDOM, God determined to provide his chosen people, Israel, with various laws and ordinances by which they should live. The details of many of these laws are recorded in Exodus chapters 20-24. In chapters 25-30, God’s instructions are given concerning Israel’s priesthood and the construction of the Tabernacle.

The provision of this Law Covenant arrangement came about after God had fulfilled his promise to deliver the Israelites from Egyptian bondage. (Exod. 3:7,8; 14:30,31) Now that they were a

free people, it was needful that they have a set of laws to guide them in daily living, as well as in their religious service to God. Israel’s observance of God’s law began as they traveled toward the land promised to their forefather Abraham. When God called Moses to lead the Israelites, he told him, “I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanites, ... unto a land flowing with milk and honey.”—Exod. 3:17

We recall the Lord’s original statement to Abram concerning a yet unseen land of promise. “Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that

I will shew thee.” (Gen. 12:1) Abram followed God’s instructions, and because of his faithfulness in doing so he was rewarded with much land and flocks. (Gen. 13:14-17; 24:34,35) His name, Abram, which means “exalted father,” was later changed by God to Abraham, which means “father of a multitude.” (Gen. 17:5) By Moses’ day, the Israelites constituted this “multitude” which had come from the loins of Abraham, and they were now journeying to the land promised to him and his progeny several centuries before.

Turning again to the time of Israel’s deliverance from Egyptian bondage, God told Moses that he was the one to be used to deliver the people. He said, “Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh.” (Exod. 3:10) After spending forty years in the land of Midian tending his father-in-law’s flocks, Moses had become very humble. He had learned meekness and distrust of his own ability. This attitude, however, was exactly what was needed in order for him to be an instrument in the accomplishment of God’s purposes.

Like Moses, we must learn that God’s purposes in us are not according to our works, power or ability, but God’s. All those who would be used in his service must learn the lesson contained in these words of the Master: “Without me ye can do nothing.” (John 15:5) Each of us should carefully watch for the leadings of divine providence, as Moses learned to do, realizing that only as we are co-workers together with God can we accomplish anything.—I Cor. 3:9

Our Key Verse points out to us that in working together with God, we are to follow his commandments only and not seek to do our own will. It is recorded that when God presented his law to Israel, Moses “took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient.” (Exod. 24:7) We, too, must live by faith and trust in God, and realize that obedience to his commands is vital as we strive to be sanctified in thought, word and deed.—I Sam. 15:22 ■