

# Adult Quarterly

## Godly Living

**Quarterly Aim: To show that God expects His people to live godly lives.**

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## About the Writer



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# Godly Living Requires Obedience

## APPLICATION

To show that godly living demands obedience.

## SCRIPTURES TO READ

Text: Deuteronomy 4:1-10.

Related Scripture: Genesis 5:22-24; Leviticus 11:44; 19:37; Deuteronomy 26:16; Matthew 7:21-23; Luke 11:28; John 14:15; Acts 5:29; Hebrews 10:38; 11:5; James 1:22-25; 1 John 3:7.

Devotional Reading: Obedience unto Righteousness, Romans 6:16.

## Introduction

Godly living. What does it mean? The word godly has the general idea of something devoted to God thereby giving Him honor and glory. Living would present the thought of the manner of a person's conduct. So, taking these two words together would mean the manner by which a person conducts his or her life is devoted to God for the purpose of bringing Him honor and glory. The goal of this study is to direct our attention toward this noble purpose. God wants His people to behave in such a manner that honors Him.

The lesson text comes from a time in the national life of Israel when they had completed their forty years in the wilderness, the journey which took place because of their disobedience to God's directions as they first approached the Promised Land. The people sent spies into the land to determine how productive it was and how easy it would be to conquer. The spies came back with a generally negative report. Ten of the twelve men reported that the land was highly productive, but giants and strong cities

were there. They did not believe they could conquer the land. Their rebellion led to wandering forty years in the wilderness. Now, they approached the Promised Land once again. Moses had been their leader for all those years, but he would not be allowed to enter the Promised Land. The words given in the book of Deuteronomy were his final message to the people.

The focus of this lesson is Moses' message of encouragement. He wanted the people to understand God's purpose. Their growth would be evidenced by obedience to God's Law. Obedience is the willingness to do what had been commanded. This idea presumes the understanding that God has given commandments. What God had said will help His people become the greatest people they can be. Moses' words then serve to challenge God's people even today. What is included in being obedient to God?

### 1. \_\_\_\_\_ **Pay Attention (Deuteronomy 4:1)**

When Moses called upon the people to "hearken" to what was said, he wanted them to use their intelligence to hear with the ears and understand with the mind. This was more than merely listening to the words spoken. He wanted these things to become reality to them. This is much like parents talking to their children when the children's eyes seem to glaze over. The parent has to draw the attention back to what is being said. "Listen to me!" Moses had truth which was important for the people to embrace and comprehend. Just learning the words were not sufficient. They needed to put these things into practice.

What Moses related to the people were God's statutes and judgments. The word "statutes" has the idea of appointed decrees and declarations of something. The root of the word spoke of some word or truth engraved in stone or metal. This strongly reminded them of the time when Moses went up on the mount to receive the Law. God gave him two tables of stone engraved with His message for the people. Those words declared His statutes—appointed decrees and declarations. Judgments spoke of a sentence handed down in a court. It especially referred to the formal decree of divine Law. When Moses related the Law of God, he did not give man's message. He presented the decrees of God—His standard of right and wrong behavior. He relayed the patterns by which the people could bring proper honor to God.

Moses' words were important. Those words were so vital that Moses wanted to make sure everyone heard them. "Pay attention! Listen to what is said" is what Moses meant when he said, "Now therefore hearken, O Israel" (verse 1). This is something people today should learn. Far too often people do not consider the sermon preached by the pastor to be anything extraordinary or special. The pastor might not be the greatest speaker in the world, but he is the messenger of God. If he is preaching the Word of God honestly and accurately, then he is giving God's message to His people. Church members should listen attentively to what is said so they can learn the commandments of God. Such attention will help a church grow both numerically and spiritually.

## 2. \_\_\_\_\_ **Be Warned (Deuteronomy 4:2, 3)**

Moses gave warning about how to treat the message of God. He declared no one had the right to add to or take from the Word of God. This is a definite danger in the world today. The Bible has been watered down to the point where it becomes difficult to know what it really says. Some scholars have determined that it really does not matter if parts of the Bible are excluded and other parts deemphasized. It almost appears that some people think that as long as a person is sincere, then that person is fine. Moses would not have agreed.

An important part of the warning given by Moses was the importance of guarding and protecting the message of God. Moses used the word "keep." It has the idea of hedging about or guarding something. The picture of the word goes back to the Garden of Eden. When God placed Adam there, he was to keep the garden, to take care of the garden. It was also used by David when he had the opportunity to kill King Saul but refrained. He called out to Abner (the main general under Saul) asking why he had not kept (guarded and protected) the king. Moses wanted the people to carefully watch over the Law to make sure it was cared for and guarded. This meant more than merely taking out the sword to guard it. It presented the thought of guarding it through one's actions. One's manner of living served to watch over the Law in the eyes of those around them.

Moses gave an example for the people to remember. It was the matter of Baal-peor. Balak had tried to hire Balaam to curse Israel. While Balaam wanted to curse them for the wealth he

would gain, God did not allow it. Since Balaam could not curse Israel, he showed Balak how to entice the Israelites into sin in hopes God would turn His back on them. Many people entered relationships with the Moabites even though God had forbidden them to do so. This brought punishment upon the people, but God did not turn away from them. Moses wanted his people aware of the dangers of failing to keep the Law of God through their actions.

People today must be aware of what God has said about their behavior. The world has lessened its standards of right and wrong. The worldly approve almost any kind of behavior. They claim God does not mind even though His Word declares wrong behavior to be an abomination. God's people will make a decision about what they believe and will show it in their actions. They should be careful to keep the Word of God.

### **3. \_\_\_\_\_ Be Blessed (Deuteronomy 4:4-8)**

Why should God's people bother to obey His commands? People today are all about finding out the profit in their actions. Can people gain benefits for obedience to God?

They can gain the benefit of a right relationship with God (verse 4). Those who did not sin in Baal-peor were careful to "cleave" to God. They would cling or adhere to Him. This definition describes gluing two items together. God's people should glue themselves to God. They should follow Him in all situations. This is a great benefit because God shows the direction we should go.

People can also gain the benefit of a positive testimony (verse 6). What people think is important. A person's testimony is only as good as what the person does. Obeying the commands of God will assure the individual of doing the right thing. Then people will look and see a life committed to the purpose of God.

People will gain the benefit of blessings from God (verses 7, 8). Israel was considered a great nation because of its relationship with God. He was part of their daily lives and helped them through their difficulties. Remember that the people of Israel had not yet left the wilderness. God had provided for their physical needs by giving them manna to eat, water to drink, clothes to wear and protection against their enemies. Surrounding nations would say, "What nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh

unto them, as the LORD our God is in all things that we call upon him for?" (verse 7).

God continues to care for His people. His desire is for them to be obedient in all things. God looks out upon them to watch over and help them. They are blessed because of their relationship with God.

## Conclusion

## Be Careful (Deuteronomy 4:9, 10)

The final words of Moses challenged the people to be careful. "Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen" (verse 9). This was not only directed at those who heard the words Moses spoke directly. They were intended for all generations to follow. God is not content with only the present generation being committed to Him. He expressed the value of making this a generational matter. God's people must be careful to transmit God's truth to the next generation. Someone has said that a church is only one generation away from dying. If the next generation is not taught the truths of God's Word, where will the churches be? Churches must carefully and faithfully teach the message of truth as presented in the Bible.

Is obedience to God's Word important? The value we place on God, His work and His Word will be shown by the way we conduct our lives. Churches must be careful to continue teaching "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). In this manner we will be teaching all people the value of obedience.

