

GOOD QUESTIONS FOR HARD DAYS

Scripture references: Deut. 3:24; 4:7, 8, 32-34.

Intro: There are, of course, many fascinating things about the Word of God. But one of them is the use that is made of questions.

One time as I read through the Bible I made a list of every verse in the OT and the NT where there are questions, and from time to time I go to them and consider them again.

Oddly enough, the first question in the Bible came from Satan. Cf. Gen. 3:1. It would seem from this that sin is the main cause of questions. In God's search for man, He then asked some questions of His own. Cf. Gen. 3:9, 11(2), 13.

Questions have a way of forcing us to think, of bringing an issue to a focal point. Do you remember the questions that the angel of the Lord asked Hagar? In Gen. 16:8 we have these words: "Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go?" She only answered one of them: "I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai."

In coming to the book of Deuteronomy we certainly come to one of the most wonderful books of the Bible. It contains Moses' last messages to his people before he died and they crossed over the Jordan into the promised land. It shows his great concern for them. And over and over again we see that he points them to the key to blessing: obedience to the Word of God!

But Moses used questions. He used them with the Lord, and he used them with his people. Some of them were to be answered; some were to express His love for the Lord; some were just to make his people think!

In Deuteronomy, chapters 1-4, we have Moses' first message. In the 3rd and 4th chapters we have a series of 7 questions which I want to consider tonight, grouped under four headings. These are questions about God, questions that every child of God needs to think about over and over, and to answer, at least in his own heart.

Notice the first one in Moses' prayer which God could not answer.

I. QUESTION #1: THE GREATNESS OF GOD -- HIS POWER (Deut. 3:24).

Moses had felt this way when he started out from Egypt as we see in his great psalm in Exodus 15, verse 11:

"Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?"

Forty years had not changed Moses mind about the greatness of God and His power. This truth had carried him through many difficulties. Now he could no longer be with his people and lead them, BUT THEY STILL HAD THIS SAME WONDERFUL, POWERFUL, UNCHANGING GOD.

How would you answer this question?

II. QUESTION #2: THE NEARNESS OF GOD (Deut. 4:7).

This has to do with prayer, when we speak to God. There were going to be many times when they would need this.

Cf. Psa. 34:17-19,

"The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all."

What must it have meant to Joshua when the Lord said to him,
" . . . as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee;
I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee" (Josh. 1:5b)?

Is there anything that you would trade for this truth? What would you do if you could not pray?

III. QUESTION #3: THE WORD OF GOD (Deut. 4:8).

We need always to pray that the Lord will never let the Word get commonplace to us. Are you enjoying it? Is it daily your delight? Do you feel about it like Jeremiah did -- a man who had little else to rejoice about. Cf. Jer. 15:16, "Thy words were found . . ."

See also that marvelous passage in Psa. 19:7-11!

Can you think of anything you have that is more wonderful than the Word of God? What does anyone have that can compare with it?

IV. QUESTION #4: THE REVELATION OF GOD -- HIS GLORY (Deut. 4:32, 33).

The reference here is to what God did in revealing Himself at Sinai. No nation had ever experienced anything like that.

This revelation was carried on in OT times at many times and in different ways. Now it has been completed in Christ. Cf. Heb. 1:1, 2; John 1:18, 14; 2 Pet. 2:12-18.

Why should we know about Him? What a stronghold for days of

trouble!

V. QUESTION #5: THE SOVEREIGN CHOICE OF GOD (Deut. 4:34).

This verse speaks of all that the Lord did to redeem Israel from Egypt. It goes back to the very beginning. It was what God did "in Egypt."

Who can explain God's sovereignty in salvation? Do not get so involved with the problems connected with divine election that you cannot enjoy it.

This is what caused Paul to marvel as he began the Epistle to the Ephesians. Cf. Eph. 1:3, 4.

Note also what Moses said later in Deuteronomy 7:6-8.

Concl: Why have I called these GOOD QUESTIONS FOR HARD TIMES?

The answer is found in Deut. 4:25-31, which just precedes the last two questions. These are truths which will be used to bring Israel back to the Lord in the days of the Great Tribulation. Thus, they span all of Israel's history -- from beginning to end.

Therefore, through all of our trials, our hard times, may our minds be turned to the Lord -- His greatness, His nearness, His Word, Himself, and His choice of us. Then our peace will be restored, our faith will be strengthened, and we will see the faithfulness of the Lord as He demonstrates to us that neither He, nor His Word, nor His love for us has ever changed!