

DEUTERONOMY

Message Eleven

**Aspects of the Church Life  
under the Government of God**

Scripture Reading: Deut. 1:9-18; 15:10; 22:9; 25:13-16;  
1 Cor. 10:6, 11

**I. The history of the children of Israel is a type of the church—  
1 Cor. 10:6, 11:**

- A. In His administrative arrangement God chose the children of Israel, the descendants of Abraham, and made them His people as a type of the church—Rom. 9:11-13; Acts 7:38:
  - 1. In the Old Testament the church is not mentioned in plain words, but there are types that portray the church—Gen. 2:21-24; 1 Chron. 28:11-19.
  - 2. The children of Israel, as the chosen people of God, are the greatest collective type of the church, in which we see that the church is chosen and redeemed by God, enjoys Christ and the Spirit as the life supply, builds God's habitation, inherits Christ as its portion, degrades and is captured, is recovered, and awaits Christ's coming.
  - 3. Paul applies the history of the children of Israel to the New Testament church life—1 Cor. 5:7-8; 10:1-13:
    - a. In Hebrews and 1 Corinthians Paul points out clearly that what happened to the children of Israel is a type of the believers—10:6.
    - b. The entire history of Israel is a story of the church.
- B. The Bible contains two histories—the history of Israel and the history of the church—Acts 7:1-53; Rev. 2—3:
  - 1. The history of the children of Israel is a type, and the history of the church is the fulfillment of the type.
  - 2. In the Old Testament we have a type, a picture, of God's economy concerning the church, and in the New Testament God's economy concerning the church is fulfilled—1 Tim. 1:4; Eph. 1:10; 3:9-11.

**II. God has a government in the universe, and there is also a  
government in the church—Rev. 4:2; 5:6; Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5:**

- A. God desires to execute His government in the universe through the church—Eph. 1:10, 22-23.
- B. Among the children of Israel there was a situation full of God's government and administration; the coordination and building in Exodus and Numbers were under God's administration and government.

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- C. The divine government among God's people is a theocracy—Rev. 4:2; 5:6:
1. Theocracy is government by God according to what He is—Psa. 89:14.
  2. God's administration among the children of Israel was a theocracy, meaning that God Himself came to govern, to rule, to administrate, the people directly yet through some agents; the agents were the priests and the elders working together for God's theocracy—Deut. 1:9-18.
  3. The theocracy among the children of Israel was a government according to God's constant speaking, as written in the law, and God's instant speaking, through the breastplate of the high priest by means of the Urim and the Thummim—Exo. 28:30; Lev. 8:8; Num. 27:21; Deut. 33:8.
- D. God's government in the administration of the church is neither autocracy nor democracy; autocracy is a kind of dictatorship, and democracy is government by the people according to the opinion of the people—Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5:
1. In the church life we honor God's authority as our government; thus, the government in the church is a theocracy—Eph. 1:10, 22-23; Col. 2:19.
  2. Today God's rule is based on the Bible outside of us and on the Holy Spirit within us—2 Tim. 3:16-17; Rom. 8:5, 14.
  3. When the elders follow the Holy Spirit in discussing matters, there is neither an autocracy nor a democracy but a theocracy, the rule of God.
- E. A proper king among the children of Israel was one who was instructed, governed, ruled, and controlled by the word of God—Deut. 17:14-20:
1. The principle should be the same in the churches today—Acts 13:1-4a.
  2. In order to administrate the church, the elders must be constituted with the word of God—Col. 3:16:
    - a. As a result, they will be under God's government, under God's rule and control.
    - b. Spontaneously, God will be in their decisions, and the elders will represent God to manage the affairs of the church; this kind of management is theocracy.

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#### **III. God's word spoken through Moses describes aspects of the church life under the government of God—Deut. 1:1:**

- A. In exercising His government, God required the children of Israel to worship Him in the unique place—Jerusalem—the worship center chosen by Him; they did not have the right to select a place according to their concept—12:1-12:
  - 1. Only the place where God put His name could be the worship center of His people—v. 5.
  - 2. God's people were to come to Mount Zion, the unique place chosen by God for corporate worship.
  - 3. God chose the unique place of worship for the purpose of keeping the oneness of His people—Psa. 133:1.
- B. God takes care of the needs of all those who are part of His expression—Deut. 12:19; 14:27-29:
  - 1. In New Testament terms, this means that Christ takes care of every member of His Body—1 Cor. 12:14-27; Phil. 4:14-20.
  - 2. In the church life we should love the Lord Jesus, love His Body, and take care of the needs of all the members—2 Cor. 8:1-15.
- C. If God's people would give to the poor, God would bless them in all their work and in all their undertakings—Deut. 15:10:
  - 1. In the church life today we should be happy when giving to the poor, knowing that God will bless us—2 Cor. 9:1-12.
  - 2. The dealing with mammon and the offering of material possessions are related to God's administration among the churches in resurrection—1 Cor. 16:1-3:
    - a. The fact that material things are offered on the first day of the week indicates that they should be offered in resurrection, not in our natural life—vv. 1-2; Matt. 6:1-4.
    - b. If we know resurrection life and the resurrection power, we will overcome money and material possessions, and what we have will be used for God's administration among the churches—1 Cor. 16:1-2; Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-35; Rom. 15:26.
- D. Deuteronomy 25:13-16 is the ordinance concerning differing weights and measures:
  - 1. The dishonest practice of having differing weights and measures is a lie and is surely from Satan—John 8:44.

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2. In spiritual application, to condemn a certain thing in others while justifying the same thing in ourselves indicates that we have different weights and measures, that is, different scales—one scale for measuring others and a different scale for measuring ourselves.
  3. In the house of God, the church (1 Tim. 3:15), only one scale should be used to weigh everyone.
  4. If we have only one scale, we will be fair, righteous, and just, even as God is, and we will keep the oneness and one accord in the church—Matt. 7:1-5.
- E. The prohibition against sowing two kinds of seed in one's vineyard may typify the prohibition against teaching differently in the church—Deut. 22:9; 1 Tim. 1:3-4; 6:3; cf. Luke 8:11:
1. The church is God's vineyard, and in this vineyard only one kind of seed, one kind of teaching, should be sown—1 Cor. 3:9b; Acts 2:42.
  2. If we teach differently, sowing more than one kind of seed, the "produce" in the church will be forfeited.
  3. The apostles taught the same thing to all the saints in all the places and in all the churches—1 Cor. 4:17; 7:17; 11:16; 14:33b-34:
    - a. We also must teach the same thing in all the churches in every country throughout the earth—Matt. 28:19-20.
    - b. There is no thought in the New Testament that a teaching is good for one church but not for the other churches; rather, the New Testament reveals that all the churches were the same in receiving the teachings—Titus 1:9.
- F. Only by faith can we live the church life under the government of God—Eph. 1:22-23; 4:15; Col. 2:19; Gal. 2:16; 3:2, 5-9, 14:
1. God wants His people to do whatever He requires not by self-effort but by faith—Heb. 10:39—11:1, 6, 9-12; 12:2; 1 Pet. 1:7-8.
  2. God's economy is in faith, and faith is the unique way for God to carry out His economy—1 Tim. 1:4; Gal. 2:20; 2 Cor. 5:7; 4:13.
  3. The church is "the household of the faith"—Gal. 6:10:
    - a. The household of the faith is composed of all who are sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus—3:26.
    - b. All the believers in Christ together constitute a universal household, the great family of God—a family that believes in God—6:10; Heb. 11:6.