



The Ethical Values and Leadership Practices in Deuteronomy

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ABSTRACT: A search for a philosophy of leadership has to begin with ontological and epistemological questions. The former deals with what leadership is and the latter is concerned with how one can know. Hence, this work engages in exploring the meaning, scope, and nature of leadership through the methods of analysing common words and metaphors of leadership in the Old Testament, particularly the Book of Deuteronomy. In addition, the research perspectives on the nature of leadership in the area of leadership studies are discussed to arrive at a more comprehensive understanding of the characteristics and functions of leadership. This article deals with the ethical values that lay the foundation for the leadership practices in Deuteronomy. In doing so, sources of moral courage will be discussed first, as people's personal and corporate moral courage has to originate from certain concepts, which serve as a philosophical underpinning, driving leaders in the ethical directions of leadership practices. Next, leadership with a concern for people and ethics is discussed. The crux of the philosophy of Deuteronomy is that people should choose life by obeying the law of the Lord and avoid destruction that results from disobeying the law. Hence, leadership practices are there to create life or well-being for the people. Finally, there will be a study on how ethical practices shape society, with reference to Israelite society in the context of the narratives in the Book of Deuteronomy.

Keywords: Leadership, Bible, Deuteronomy, Israelite society.

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INTRODUCTION

The book of Deuteronomy is one of the books of the Old Testament that gives various theological and philosophical messages. Several studies have been conducted by several previous researchers. Cook (2021) has researched the prophecy of Moses in the book of Deuteronomy. Then Sanou (2019) examines Moses' mentoring of Joshua and his lessons for leadership. Kugler's research (2018) focuses his research on tracing the historical-literary relationship of Deuteronomy with reference to God's decision about the end of Moses' life. Finally, Tia's (2022) research focuses more on reading the vision of Deuteronomy in various pieces of literature. Some of these studies have not examined the ethical values of leadership in the book of Deuteronomy.

This work deals with leadership practices and their integrated systems in Deuteronomy. All leadership practices depended on each other to serve the people. Just like task-oriented and relationship-oriented cultures, possible leadership behaviours can be further classified into autocratic and participative styles. Both styles are to be understood in terms of the process of decision making they use. Autocratic style operates independently, while participative style involves all members of the team in decision making. There are various thoughts about integrated systems in leadership but at the core of this connectedness is a set of shared values. However, these shared values aim at holistic development of the people, which is why the family, civil, military and religious leadership practices function together with seamless coordination based

on integrated systems. There are four domains of integrated systems – mobilisation of self-directed participants, a learning community, empowerment to make decisions, and holistic development. For members of a group to lead themselves and make good decisions that will serve common purposes, they should be empowered by their leaders. Of the many concepts on integrated systems, McKinsey's 7-S model, which recommends seven elements to keep the connectedness and interdependence strong, is chosen as viable tool to study the integrated systems of leadership practices in Deuteronomy (Williams, 2011).

Using these seven elements, this research will analyze the leadership practices of the Book of Deuteronomy. First of all, strategy is concerned with plans, goals and objectives which hold the people together. In the Book of Deuteronomy, the main goal for all the leaders is to help the Israelites obey God so that they could have a joyful and peaceful life in the land of Canaan. Patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) were mentioned in relation to the promise of the land (Emerton, 1982). This promise could only be maintained through faithful obedience to God's teachings. Parents, priests, judges, and elders had the responsibility to pass down the traditions and will of God for future generations to obey the law of God. God placed before the people blessing and curse to obtain the promise of land and progeny. The former (blessing) pointed to life and the latter (curse) to death. With this, God told the people to choose life and the people had to voluntarily choose life. God never forced them, nor did he use them as automatons to obey his will mechanically.

Secondly, systems are the mode of operation or procedure which has to be governed by shared values. The end does not justify the means. Both the result and the way to get the result are important. The laws mentioned in the Book of Deuteronomy constitute shared values (Otto, 2019). Thirdly, these shared values are called super ordinate goals, the opposite of subordinate goals. But both goals have to be achieved by the shared

values based on the ethical elements of a community formulating the cultural practices, with acceptable and unacceptable behaviours which may not be part of the written law. In most cases, shared values are unwritten laws. Fourthly, structure is important. Structure is what sustains the systems and shared values. There has to be some kind of organisational flow in the civil leadership. Moses remains at the top and Joshua comes as his assistant with all the other leadership practices under these two leaders. Structure gives positional power, authority and responsibility to the people. The structure, seen in the Book of Deuteronomy, is both vertical and horizontal. In vertical connectedness, all members, in a domain of leadership, have to be connected with the people up and down the structure. In horizontal connectedness, leaders are to be integrated with fellow members.

At the same time, interconnectedness within an organization or department alone cannot produce leadership effectiveness. The reason being leadership effectiveness can be further enhanced by interconnectedness of leaders in one department or organization with the leaders of equal capacities in another department and organization. This is beautifully illustrated in the Book of Deuteronomy especially in the judicial systems. Judges have to go with elders to determine some cases and both judges and elders have to take difficult cases to the priest (Exodus 18; Deuteronomy 21: 1–9). In tough cases, all these three leadership practices converge to make the final judgement. Likewise, priests were members in the army and they had the authority to participate in the process of recruiting soldiers, along with the military commanders, which shows that the leadership practices in Israel were interconnected, interdependent and integrated. Fifthly, skills play an important role in keeping the leadership practices integrated. Skills are the abilities to accomplish the goals of the leadership teams. The skills have to be complimentary to each other, which means that everyone does not have to possess the same skills. There are general skills and the specific skills. General skills are to be part of

every leadership practice and they include abilities such as discernment, knowledge, understanding, communication expertise, listening skills and building relationships. However, specific skills are related to works distinctive in certain leadership practices. For example, the skills of the priests to conduct cultic rituals, the skills of the military leaders to design strategies for war and warfare, and the skills of the civil leadership in determining witnesses and settling the disputes of people may not be common among all the leadership practices.

Nevertheless, as the leadership practices are supportive to each other, their skills also will become complimentary to each other. Sixth, style is another important element in the integrated systems of leadership practices. As noticed earlier, leadership effectiveness depends upon identifying and using the right leadership style, whether it is task-oriented or relationship-oriented. Situational favourableness has to be considered when the leaders make the decision about the choice of the style. The style of one leadership practice can contribute to the effectiveness of another leadership practice. For example, military leaders have to be task-oriented, though they have to be relationship-oriented. Tasks come first when they focus on their strategies to defend the nation and repel enemy nations. Persuasion is useful in motivating the soldiers, but autocratic styles of leadership are effective at critical moments, in which decisions may not be made on the basis of consensus by all team members. However, this military leadership style helps a nation to defend itself.

Seventh, staff members are significant people in integrated systems of leadership practices. If right people are not in the right place, it is very difficult to see the desired goals achieved. Though theocracy is an overarching system that governed all leadership practices, democracy was not completely avoided by God. Leaders were appointed by God who chose the people already recognised as leaders by their communities. For example, Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, advised the national leader to select people to govern different sizes of groups

of people (Exodus 18). God never opposed the idea, even though that came from a man who belonged to another religion. Then, in the Book of Deuteronomy, Moses tells the people that he commanded the people in the wilderness to choose leaders from among themselves. So it was democracy as well as theocracy. Therefore, it is concluded that the staff members were selected on the basis of theo-democracy.

Based on the above background, this study explores the meaning, scope, and nature of leadership in the Book of Deuteronomy. The research question is: what are the principles and practices of leadership according to Deuteronomy?

METHOD

The methodology of this research is a qualitative approach through literature study, by reading books and journals and researching related books. Hermeneutic principles are also used to understand the meaning of the text (Cameron, 2010; Gilbert et al., 2018). Research perspectives on the nature of leadership in the field of leadership studies are discussed to arrive at a more comprehensive understanding of the characteristics and functions of leadership. Hence, this work engages in exploring the meaning, scope, and nature of leadership through the methods of analyzing common words and metaphors of leadership in Deuteronomy. The results of the analysis and hermeneutics are presented descriptively in several themes.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Covenantal Relationship With Yahweh

The first five books, called the Pentateuch, have covenant as the main motif and in the Book of Deuteronomy, this motif is projected as the basis of all practices in the Israelite community, including their leadership practices. The undercurrent impetus for the leadership is the ethical value system and this is based on covenantal relationship the people had with God. This covenant is defined as a “solemn commitment guaranteeing promises or obligations

undertaken by one or both covenant parties” (Toryough & Okanlawon, 2014, p. 564). The covenant seen in the Book of Deuteronomy is patterned after how covenants were formulated between the king and the ordinary citizens or vassals in the ancient Near Eastern culture, especially in the Hittite culture. Mendenhall observes six important aspects composing the Hittite treaty:

1. Preamble – These are the words of the king who wants to make covenant with his vassals. It shows that the king could take the initiative to formulate the covenant for any reason.
2. Historical Prologue – In this section, the previous relations of the parties are outlined, because covenants were based on relationship.
3. Stipulations – This part delineates all obligations of the vassal, the king’s responses to the fulfilment of the obligations, and the rules and regulations binding on the parties. The terms and conditions based on the trustworthiness and faithfulness of the parties are clearly cited.
4. Document – This is the record of clauses of the terms and conditions, and this document was kept in the sanctuary to be read periodically.
5. Witnesses – The document has a long list of gods invoked to witness the covenant.
6. Blessings and curses – The covenant mentions the blessings that were to be pronounced on the obedient and curses that were to come upon the disobedient (Dyrness, 2009, p. 114).

Moreover, it is observed that the covenantal regulations stipulated in the Book of Deuteronomy follow the same outline seen in the Hittite treaty, shown in the following:

1. Preamble (Deut. 4:44-49): Moses opens his speech, saying, “These are the words that Moses addressed to all Israel ...” This is how the Hittite Suzerain treaty began.
2. Historical Prologue (Deut. 5-11): The experiences Israel had with the Lord are retold. The Lord’s deliverance from Egypt and loving care in the wilderness are highlighted to warn the people of Israel against disobedience to the law of the Lord.

3. Stipulations (Deut. 12-26): Moses is presenting the laws and rules for the people to abide by. These served as terms and conditions for the covenant (Deut. 12:1).
4. Publication (Deut. 27:1-10): The Book of Deuteronomy speaks of covenant ceremony, which is the time for open declaration of the covenant and its stipulations.
5. Divine witness – The Lord is invoked as the witness for the people (Deut. 30:19).
6. Blessings curses – Moses is clearly asking the people to choose life by obeying the Lord with the promise of a blessed life, but he also warned the people about the destruction or the curses that would come upon the people for their disobedience (Deut. 27 & 28) (Craigie, 1976, p. 22).

Armed with this understanding of the covenant, it is important to observe the conditional nature of the covenant, though based on Israel’s relationship with the Lord. The Lord promised to give the land of Canaan, because the people in that land were wicked. However, the people of Israel were warned that they would be expelled by the Lord from the land if they worshipped the idols of the Canaanite people. This condition was emphasized before (Exod. 23:30; 34:11; Lev. 18:24-30) and reiterated in Deuteronomy (Deut. 4:25-26; 8:18-20; 28:21-24, 63; 29:21-28; 30:17-18). Another aspect of the covenant is the law that governed the relationships between the parties. God and the people of Israel were united by the covenant, but this was similar to many agreements between persons based on legal consent to fulfill certain requirements, which appear to be the law (McCarthy, 1972, p. 10). The law came into existence as a result of the covenant relationship. However, the covenant was established out of love for the people and so obedience to the law was expected to be the expression of love toward God (McCarthy, 1972, p. 39). This covenantal relationship was the source of moral courage for Israel. Since all the rituals signified the covenant and laws were taught by almost all the leaders.

Moreover, prophets rose, called by God to direct the people to obey the laws, whenever the people went after other gods. The people were faced with brief periods of attacks and oppression from the neighbouring people groups as a result of their apostasy. So, all these elements helped the people of Israel know that they could continue to enjoy the goodness of the land as long as they complied with the law. In this light, the Book of Deuteronomy is a repetition and reinterpretation of the law leading to its reapplication in the lives of the people (Toryough & Okanlawon, 2014, p. 119).

Imitation of God

According to some scholars, imitation of God is the strongest source of moral courage (Barton, 1978). In many instances, Moses encouraged the people to follow God in their everyday lives. For example, when admonishing masters to treat their slaves with kindness, Moses asked the people to think of the time they were in Egypt as slaves and of the Lord who delivered them out of that cruel bondage. So, emulation of God is the ultimate goal, because the imitation of God then becomes the aspiration and goal of the people. This idea is expressed in the Books of the Prophets and Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament (Fiddes, 2013). This directive to be like God was already expressed in Leviticus 19:2, which shows that the appeal to the people to be like God in moral qualities was not something new in Deuteronomy, but it was a restatement and reminder. There are many images used in the Book of Deuteronomy to speak of the attributes of God. For example, God is portrayed as a mother eagle that cares for the young ones (Deut. 32:11-12) and as a rock that gave birth (Deut. 32:18). These images point to the motherly love of God for the people of Israel. At the same time, God is also depicted as a father in the Book of Deuteronomy. In Deuteronomy 1:31, Moses says that God carried Israel as a father would carry his son. According to Deut 8:5, God disciplined Israel

like a father who disciplines his son (Medved, 2016). The Israelites could thus better understand God's love for them when He commanded them to not pursue wickedness, because a loving parent wouldn't desire that for his or her children (Medved, 2016). God is also described as a judge who punishes people for their wrongdoing (Deut. 4:27) as well as the protector of the people, who are poor and needy (Deut. 10:17-18)

The attributes of God are expressed in the biblical narratives for two main reasons. First, we can understand who God is and what he wants to do for His people. This can help God's people admire and adore God, because adoration and worship would not be meaningful without understanding the nature of God. Second, the more the people understood God, the more they could emulate him. This is why the Book of Deuteronomy is not a mere collection of rules and regulations, but a book with laws interspersed with the narratives relating to the experiences the people had with God.

Corporate Identity

The Book of Deuteronomy highlights many important concepts such as divine deliverance, divine love, renewal of leadership, and the renewal of a covenant relationship (Whittle, 2014). Along with these concepts, Deuteronomy also emphasizes the identity of Israel in relation to God. The book speaks of the divine choice. It is beautifully expressed that God delivered Israel out of love and that God was faithful in maintaining that love relationship with the people. Moses also pointed out that God was trustworthy and reliable to fulfill the promise He made to his forefathers that Israel would possess the land. However, before Israel possessed the land, God had to possess Israel as His special treasure or property (Deut. 7:6) (Lee, 2021). So, the corporate identity of the people as His chosen people was to be kept intact by following the laws. A brief classification of the laws in the Book of Deuteronomy is given below:

| Classifications | References |
|------------------------|--|
| Civil laws | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be just with the poor, (Lev. 19:15) 2. Neighbor's cattle (Deut. 22:1-4) 3. Children, rebellious (Deut. 21:18-21) 4. Debt (Lev. 23:34-43; Deut. 31:10) 5. Divorce (Deut. 22:19) 6. Dress, attire (Deut. 22:5) 7. Do not hate in your heart (Lev. 19:17) 8. Inheritance (Num. 18:26; 26:53-56; 36:8-12) 9. Justice practices (Lev. 24:17-23) 10. Kidnapping (Exodus 21:16) 11. Landmarks (Deuteronomy 19:14) 12. Property redemption (Lev. 25) 13. Murder and killing (Deut. 21:1-4) 14. Retain just scales in commerce (Lev. 19:35f) 15. Robbery, extortion, false witness, and restitution (Lev. 6:1-7) 16. Punishment for Sabbath breaking (Num. 15:32-36) 17. Theft (Deut. 5:19; Lev. 19:11) 18. Warfare (Deut. 20:1-20) |
| Ceremonial Laws | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expired with the fulfillment of priestly work of Christ (Matt. 3:15) 2. Cleaning the house of a leper (Lev. 14:33-57; Num. 5:2) 3. Festivals (Lev. 23:1-25; Nu. 29:39) 4. Laws on animals for food (Lev. 11:1-47) 5. Law of Atonement (Lev. 16:1-28; 17:1-16) 6. Offerings (Num. 29:39) 7. Consecration of priests (Ex. 29:1-46) 8. Priestly duties (Lev. 7:1-37) 9. Regulations for Priests (Lev. 21, 22) 10. Various sacrificial offerings for sin (Lev. 1-6) |
| Moral Laws | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No Expiration because it is based on God's character. "You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy," (Lev. 19:2) 2. Idolatry (Lev. 26:1-13) 3. Love God (Deut. 6:4) 4. Love your neighbor as yourself (Lev. 19:18) 5. Oppress your neighbor (Lev. 19:13) 6. Stealing or lying (Lev. 19:11) 7. Sacrificing children to Molech forbidden (Lev. 20:1-5) 8. Sexual sins: adultery, incest, bestiality, homosexuality, etc. (Lev. 18:20; 20:9-21; Num. 5:12-15) |

Figure 1. A Brief Classification of the Laws and Ethical Values (Slick, 2015)

All of these were loaded with ethical significance and became identity markers for the people of Israel that distinguished them from

surrounding nations. Moreover, these laws were the source of the people's moral courage as they followed these laws as God's special people (Long,

2010). The fact that following these laws established a unique identity for the people in the sight of God and in the estimation of other people also served as a great motivation for the people to adhere to God’s law.

Ten Commandments: Foundation For All Laws

Apart from the corporate identity, the Ten Commandments became the summary for all the laws – ceremonial, civil and moral. In fact, all the

rituals were meant to support the Ten Commandments (DeRouchie, 2017). Some scholars like John Walton opine that a significant portion of the Book of Deuteronomy (Chapters 6-26) explains the Ten Commandments (Deut 5) to exhibit the spirit of the law, which primarily referred to four major issues (Walton, 1987). By addressing these issues, the Ten Commandments offer a strong source of moral courage. These four issues are seen below:

| Major Issues | Godward | Manward |
|------------------------------|---|---|
| Authority | Commandment 1 Expounded in chs. 6-11 | Commandment 5 Expounded in 16:18 – 18:22 |
| Dignity | Commandment 2 Expounded in ch. 12 | Commandments 6, 7 & 8 Expounded in chs. 19-21; 22:1-23:14; and 23:15-24:7 respectively |
| Commitment | Commandment 3 Expounded in 13:1 – 14:21 | Commandment 9 Expounded in 24:8-16 |
| Rights and Privileges | Commandment 4 Expounded in 14:22 – 16:17 | Commandment 10 Expounded in 24:19 – 26:15 |

Table 2. Four Major Issues Addressed by the Ten Commandments (Coogan, 2017)

These four issues dealt with by the Ten Commandments conveyed to the people what ethical values God wanted the people to practice in relation to him and what ethical values the people had to practice in relation to their fellow citizens. The first commandment emphasized God’s authority, that there should be no one and nothing to take the place of God, while Commandment 5 highlights human authority, derived from the divine bestowal of authority, which is related to the appointment of leaders. The second commandment states, “You shall not treat the LORD your God that way”, with an injunction that Israel should never make images for the Lord just like the Canaanite people did for their gods. At the same time, in the sixth, seventh, and eighth commandments, the Lord prohibits assaulting human dignity by sins such as causing accidental homicide as well as false testimony.

Next, commandments three and nine address the issue of commitment. In Deuteronomy

3, the problems are related to relationship, commitment and obligations to God, while chapter 9 deals with commitment and obligations related to human relationships. Fourth, commandments 4 and 10 tackle issues related to rights and privileges. The Sabbath day was to be observed in honor of God by giving rest to all laborers as well as animals. This was also a way to express humanity’s gratitude and dependence upon God as Creator. This commandment also corresponds with the responsibilities the people had to take care of the poor and needy for they also had rights and privileges to good life, such as is described in the Sabbath Year (every seven years) and the Jubilee (Keener, 2014). Therefore, the Ten Commandments were not just a set of rules and regulations, but about a way of life ordained by the Lord to experience a life blessed by Him, which is a strong motivating factor for Christians becoming effective, Christ honoring leaders.

Transmitting Memories and Motivation

The most important event in the history of Israel was God revealing himself at Sinai, because this is where the Israelites were recognized as a nation, given the law, and entrusted with the knowledge of God's nature. About the greatness of this divine revelation, Jeremiah Unterman states:

In the Jewish Bible, the most important event in the history of the Israelites was God's revelation at Sinai. Indeed, in all of recorded history, only in the Bible do we have the claim of a god's revelation to an entire people. This revelation is a democratization of divine communication that stands in stark contrast to the revelation claimed in the ancient Near East only by an elite: king, priest, or prophet. The undeniable message is that every single Israelite is significant to God (Unterman, 2017, p. 15).

This important revelation became the basis for the rest of the Old Testament. Moreover, this event had to be retold. In fact, the entire Book of Deuteronomy is a retelling of the Exodus, the constitution of the nation at Sinai, and the wilderness journey so that the people would remember the power and love of God. Moreover, all leaders were instructed by Moses to retell these founding stories to their members. With all the rituals and symbols, the people had to tell the stories of God's redemption repeatedly in such a way that the listeners would feel that they had experienced those events (Weinfeld, 1992).

There are three great benefits in transmitting the memories of these past experiences to the present generation. First of all, passing on the memory was a way of educating future generations. It is a content-oriented program of training the people in remembering and reflecting on the past to learn lessons from the good things as well as the bad (Ellman, 2019). The second benefit is that the generations that did not have the experiences of the people who passed away would understand their legacy and heritage (Yerushalmi, 2011). The third benefit is that transmission of God's powerful deeds spurs the people to love and obey God better, contributing to more deeply embedded ethical

values in the culture (Assmann & Livingstone, 2006).

Cultural Endorsements

Every society has culturally acceptable behaviors, which reveal the ethical values the people believe in. These ethical values may or may not align with divine laws. When cultural elements violate the divine laws, the cultural elements have to be done away with. There were some cultural behaviors that were specific to the Israelite practice. For example, when they captured a place, they destroyed all the pagan worship sites and objects of idolatry. Moreover, the four elements of the Ten Commandments – authority, dignity, commitment rights, and privileges were assimilated into the culture of Israel, and were to be practiced every day (Gaon & Rubinstein, 2021). There were many Canaanite cultural practices, which the nation of Israel was instructed not to follow. The religions in the neighbouring nations had the system of sacred prostitution, but Israel was commanded to eschew that practice (Frevel, 2018). It is also obvious that in the Book of Deuteronomy, there are restrictions on marriage and divorce, because Israel was surrounded by cultures that apparently had no problem with polygamy and unreasonable divorces (Yamauchi, 1978). Despite that, the law focused on monogamy. Moreover, in the culture that allowed the kings to have many wives, Deuteronomy warned against such a practice (Schenker, 2005). Though cultural endorsements of certain attitudes and behaviors can give moral courage to the people, the divine law stands above the cultural practices.

Leadership With a Concern for People And Ethics

Choosing Life: The Best for the People

Moses' teachings in the Book of Deuteronomy aim at equipping the people for living a good life. By obeying these laws, the people of Israel had a choice to make in their lives concerning whether or not to enjoy the goodness of the land.

The past experiences of God's deeds, the faithfulness of their forefathers, and the failures of their forefathers are cited in the book so that people would not choose to live in disobedience and incur the consequences of the curse, but know how obedience led them to blessings. The past was narrated not to keep the people stagnant, but to motivate them to move forward in choosing life. Moreover, Deuteronomy speaks of the love of God in relation to Israel and this divine love would motivate the people to choose life (Millar, 2000). Choosing life is a voluntary responsibility. God was not forcing the people to choose what he would want them to choose, but as God, who is characterized with the love of both a father and a mother, he was helping his people, as His children, to make wise choices. This is why God was making an appeal to the people, so that they would obey (Lenchak, 1993).

Choosing life is the most fundamental choice decision a person can make, because life means blessing is the main definition of blessing. Life is synonymous with what is good and death with what is evil. Israel had to make this choice before they could go forward to possess the land (Deut. 30:15). This good life was and is a gift from God, which does not come to humanity without human responsibility and response. Life is not some kind of status, but it has to be lived out in the everyday life (Watkins, 2014). This is the main concern for any kind of leadership. With concern for the well-being of the people, leaders have to focus on helping those under their care cultivate a good life for themselves and others. With this burden, they must carry out their duties and serve the people, living out the good life from God on a daily basis and reflect that life in all their leadership practices. This good life is the right of every human being and this leads this research to examine the concept of human rights in the Book of Deuteronomy.

Deuteronomy and Thoughts on Human Rights

Life has to be lived with dignity, which is one of the primary foci of the Ten Commandments.

Leaders' concern for the people leads to leaders' appeals for them to choose life. That life has all the rights to live a good life within the boundaries of the divine laws and these rights, in modern terms, are called human rights. Many think that the concepts of human rights and dignity have come from humanistic thinking. However, it is interesting to learn that the articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) of December 1948 are similar to the laws in the Book of Deuteronomy (Bland, 2018). The similarities between Deuteronomy and Declaration of Human Rights indicate that the concept of human rights is actually based on Judeo-Christian principles gleaned from the Bible, such as is seen in the Book of Deuteronomy.

G. Braulik (2014) draws attention to some special aspects of human rights, the first of which is preserving human dignity. The Exodus occurred before the provision of the law. God first brought the people of Israel out of Egyptian slavery and then gave them the law. The people had to tell their children about this saving act of God (Deut. 6:21-25), which preceded the giving of Decalogue; this had to be incorporated into the social order of the Israelite community so that they could retain their liberty from generation to generation without going into servitude again by breaking the law (Braulik, 2014). The second concept of human rights found in the UDHR is granting freedom. When the Lord brought the people to the Promised Land, he gave them freedom to live and the Sabbath day was given to them as a decisive sign of faith that their provision would come from God (Deut. 5:15). Moreover, they had to keep the land fallow in the seventh year so that the land would become more productive. Similarly, they had to give rest to all laboring animals and all workers in the household (Deut. 5:14). Moreover, the Hebrew slaves could be released after six years of service (Deut. 15:12-15) (Bergland, 2019).

The third aspect of the UDHR in the Book of Deuteronomy is raising people to equality. The feast times in Israel were real moments of

egalitarian spirit, because it is during this time the all men, women, children, slaves and priests gathered together to rejoice before God (Deut. 16:9-12, 13-15). The fourth feature is fraternity in practice. The sense of brotherhood is very important, because this will stop one brother rising against another (Deut. 17:9). Judges were to do justice to their fellow kinsmen. Kings and prophets had to emerge from their brothers, because it is only then that they would be able to understand their brothers and serve them with justice. The fifth aspect is human rights and justice in the society of God (Deuteronomy 5), (Levinson, 2006).

Shaping the Ethical Culture of the Society

Corporate culture is a set of shared mental assumptions through which people have their perception, interpretation and decision-making for various circumstances shaped. It is commonly agreed that culture is what a social unit believes in as shared cognitions, which formulate cultural traits. Some cultural traits such as integrity and innovation improve leadership effectiveness. However, the question for discussion in this section is: How could Israel impact the cultures around them? There are four main ways in which Israel could respond to surrounding cultures and thereby shape them. First, Israel could accommodate the positive elements of other cultures. Making room for cultures is significant as it indicates openness to

learn. Second, Israel could adapt itself according to the cultural context. As mentioned before, Israel came under the influence of other cultures and adjusted to them as long as they did not violate the divine law. Third, Israel could address issues in the other cultures. Fourth, Israel could be a positive example to other nations so that it could shape the culture around it.

CONCLUSION

The ethical values mentioned in the Book of Deuteronomy are concerned with the daily life of the people in connection with everything around them. The foundation for any society its ethical system, which must be mirrored in the lifestyle of the people. The most efficient motivating factor for the imbibing of particular ethical values is the imitation of God. God's people were expected to be holy as God was holy. The Hebrew word for 'holy' means 'distinct', 'different', and 'separated', and all these meanings conveyed to the nation of Israel that they had to be different from other people. However, there were periods of apostasy and spiritual aberrations caused by stubbornness of heart. Israel was called to shape the culture of other people, but it could not do it fully. Israel's national failure could be attributed to the failure of leadership, which once again points out the importance of ethical leadership.

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