

DEUTERONOMY 1-2

January 15, 2012

Introduction:

- Today we begin a study of the book of **Deuteronomy**. In the first two chapters Moses reminds the people of what has transpired since Israel was delivered from Egypt.

As we begin, what broad, Biblical principles do we learn in these two chapters?

- One principle we learn is this: if you do what God wants and He is with you, you are going to win. Israel only lost battles when it disobeyed God. Read **Deuteronomy 28:1-14**. [*1 “If you fully obey the Lord your God and carefully keep all his commands that I am giving you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the world. 2 You will experience all these blessings if you obey the Lord your God: 3 Your towns and your fields will be blessed. 4 Your children and your crops will be blessed. The offspring of your herds and flocks will be blessed. 5 Your fruit baskets and breadboards will be blessed. 6 Wherever you go and whatever you do, you will be blessed. 7 “The Lord will conquer your enemies when they attack you. They will attack you from one direction, but they will scatter from you in seven! 8 “The Lord will guarantee a blessing on everything you do and will fill your storehouses with grain. The Lord your God will bless you in the land he is giving you. 9 “If you obey the commands of the Lord your God and walk in his ways, the Lord will establish you as his holy people as he swore he would do. 10 Then all the nations of the world will see that you are a people claimed by the Lord, and they will stand in awe of you. 11 “The Lord will give you prosperity in the land he swore to your ancestors to give you, blessing you with many children, numerous livestock, and abundant crops. 12 The Lord will send rain at the proper time from his rich treasury in the heavens and will bless all the work you do. You will lend to many nations, but you will never need to borrow from them. 13 If you listen to these commands of the Lord your God that I am giving you today, and if you carefully obey them, the Lord will make you the head and not the tail, and you will always be on top and never at the bottom. 14 You must not turn away from any of the commands I am giving you today, nor follow after other gods and worship them.] **NLT***
- Another principle is this: when we refuse to do what God tells us to do, He may not allow us to do it later. Read **1:41-45**. [*41 “Then you confessed, ‘We have sinned against the Lord! We will go into the land and fight for it, as the Lord our God has commanded us.’ So your men strapped on their weapons, thinking it would be easy to attack the hill country. 42 “But the Lord told me to tell you, ‘Do not attack, for I am not with you. If you go ahead on your own, you will be crushed by your enemies.’ 43 “This is what I told you, but you would not listen. Instead, you again rebelled against the Lord’s command and arrogantly went into the hill country to fight. 44 But the Amorites who lived there came out against you like a swarm of bees. They chased and battered you all the way from Seir to Hormah. 45 Then you returned and wept before the Lord, but he refused to listen. What this means is that God’s will for us may change if we fail to be obedient to Him. God would have defeated the Amorites if Israel would have obeyed Him initially, but once they doubted and disobeyed Him He was no longer with them for this battle.] **NLT***
- It always cost us something when we disobey the Lord. The men **20 years** and older who refused to go into the Promised Land the first time all died in the wilderness. They also lost the opportunity to see God work miracles as He gave them the land.
- God is for us. See **Romans 8:31-32**. If we disobey Him, though, He may be against us. See **2:14-16**. See **1 Peter 5:5-6**. See **Haggai 1:2-11**.
- God is faithful to His promises. See **2:5,9, &19**.
- Even though God has made promises to us, there is almost always something we have to do before that promise becomes true in our lives. In **1:8,21** and **2:31** God tells them that they have to possess (go in and take) the land.

1:8 Look at chapter 1 verse 8. What will it require for Israel to “possess” the land that God had promised to them?

- They will have to go in and “fight” for the land. Possessing what God has promised us usually requires some obedience from us. Most of God’s promises are like this: “If you will...then I will...” If we don’t do our part then we do not experience what God wanted to do for us or in us.

1:9-15 What all might we learn about leadership from verses 9 to 15?

- No person *can* or *should* try to do it all. More people means more problems to deal with. There should always be requirements for leaders (*wise, discerning, experienced*). Difficult decisions would be passed up to higher leaders and ultimately to Moses.

Who ultimately determined who the leaders would be?

- The tribes made their recommendations to Moses and Moses *appointed* the leaders.

1:16-18 What do we learn about judgment and decision-making in verses 16 to 18?

- They were to render *righteous* judgment. No one is to be favored: not an Israelite over an alien and not a *great* person (wealthy, well-known, powerful) over a *small* person. The principle here is that right is always right and wrong is always wrong, no matter who is on either side.

1:22-26 Look at verses 22 to 26. Why did the sending of the spies go wrong?

- The wrong people were sent in. Two tribes made great choices (Caleb and Joshua). Ten tribes chose the wrong representative so they were controlled by fear rather than faith and caused the people to doubt and fear.

1:27 What do we learn in verse 27 about human nature?

- When things are difficult in our lives, we tend to blame God and assume that He does not love us. *See Mark 4:37-41. [37 But soon a fierce storm came up. High waves were breaking into the boat, and it began to fill with water. 38 Jesus was sleeping at the back of the boat with his head on a cushion. The disciples woke him up, shouting, “Teacher, don’t you care that we’re going to drown?” 39 When Jesus woke up, he rebuked the wind and said to the water, “Silence! Be still!” Suddenly the wind stopped, and there was a great calm. 40 Then he asked them, “Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?” 41 The disciples were absolutely terrified. “Who is this man?” they asked each other. “Even the wind and waves obey him!”] NLT*

1:31 What do we learn about God and us from verse 21?

- God *carries* us as a father carries a child. His carrying us does not exempt us from difficulty (the wilderness) and challenges. Some think that God is with them when things are good and not with them when things are bad. God is with us in both. How our lives are going at the moment have nothing to do with God’s love for us or His presence in our lives.

1:36 Caleb followed the Lord fully. What do you think that looks like in a person’s life today?

- Spends time with God, knows his Bible, has a meaningful prayer life, obeys the Lord, serves the Lord with his time, talents, and money, walks in humility, stands up for righteousness, loves well, forgives, gets persecuted for his faith (2 Timothy 3:12), tries to bring others to **Christ**, etc. etc.

1:41-45 What do we learn about God’s will in verses 41 to 45?

- God may intend for you to become someone or do something that you lose the privilege of doing if you disobey Him. Moses lost the right to enter the Promised Land (Numbers 20:8-12). We can lose out on God’s “A” plan for our life. He still has a “B” plan...and it’s a good plan...but it’s not His “A” plan.

2:1-7 In chapter 2 verses 1 to 7, we see that the Jews were not to fight with the descendants of Esau. Who was Esau?

- Esau was the twin brother of Jacob (who God renamed “Israel”). Jacob swindled Esau out of his birthright for some soup ([Genesis 25:27-34](#)) and then deceived his father to steal his father’s blessing that belonged to Esau ([Genesis 27](#)). Esau was the son of Isaac and the grandson of Abraham.

2:8-9 Look at **verses 8 to 9**; who was Moab?

- Moab was the child of Lot by incest ([Genesis 19:30-37](#)). Abraham was Moab’s great uncle.

2:19 Look at **verse 19**; who was Ammon?

- Ammon was another child of Lot by incest ([Genesis 19:38](#)).

As we close today, we should remember that God is a promise-keeping and good God. The grace that God extended to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob overflowed onto extended family. Let’s read **2 Chronicles 21:5-7**. [**5** Jehoram was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years. **6** But Jehoram followed the example of the kings of Israel and was as wicked as King Ahab, for he had married one of Ahab’s daughters. So Jehoram did what was evil in the Lord’s sight. **7** But the Lord did not want to destroy David’s dynasty, for he had made a covenant with David and promised that his descendants would continue to rule, shining like a lamp forever.] **NLT**

- Notice that God blessed David’s ancestors because of David. Can any of you give the name of someone whose life may have caused God to bless your life today?