

## Deuteronomy 2:1-24 - Thursday, April 21st, 2011

- By way of introduction, it's important we understand the "why" behind the "what" of the book of Deuteronomy, lest we see it as a redundancy.
- This book is a second giving of the law, which is why it's named "Deuteronomy." It's given a second time for what's now this second generation.
- Again, keep in mind that this second generation were either very young children at this time, or they may not have even been born at this time.

(1) "Then we turned and journeyed into the wilderness of the Way of the Red Sea, as the LORD spoke to me, and we skirted Mount Seir for many days. (2) "And the LORD spoke to me, saying: (3) "You have skirted this mountain long enough; turn northward.

- Here, Moses is retelling how that one year at Mt. Sinai was long enough, and that the time had come for them to move on, and turn northward.
- This is interesting for a number of reasons not the least of which is, during that year they had witnessed quite a lot of trauma and a lot of drama.
- They'd seen the plagues leading to the Exodus, the parting of the Red Sea, the worshipping of the golden calf, and then the receiving of the law.

- Here's what I'm thinking; there does come a time in our journey with the Lord, when He will say it's time; "that's long enough," or "pau already."
- In other words, you've skirted your mountain of trials and tribulations long enough, and now the time has come to move on and turn northward.
- The Lord knows how much we're able to bear up under, and will not try us beyond that which we are able. We have this promise in 1 Cor. 10:13.

1 Corinthians 10:13 NIV (13) No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

George Mueller - "The only way to know great faith is to endure great trials"

(4) And command the people, saying, "You *are about to* pass through the territory of your brethren, the descendants of Esau, who live in Seir; and they will be afraid of you. Therefore watch yourselves carefully. (5) Do not meddle with them, for I will not give you *any* of their land, no, not so much as one footstep, because I have given Mount Seir to Esau *as* a possession.

- This is what I love about this book, and we already see it in just the first two chapters; Moses is filling in some blanks and connecting some dots.
- What I mean by that is; they're not only being told what God commands them to do, but they're told the reason God's commanding them to do it.
- The reason they're to be careful is that Esau's descendants fear them and God hasn't given them any of that land as part of the Promised-Land.

- By the way, let me go on record and say; this is why the so called "Palestinians" of today refuse to be associated with the descendants of Esau.
- Were they to do this, then they would have their Palestine, because that land was given to Esau and the Promised-Land was given to Jacob.
- Furthermore, this is evidence that they don't want land, or even a Palestinian state, they want Israel's Promised-Land and no Israeli state.

(6) You shall buy food from them with money, that you may eat; and you shall also buy water from them with money, that you may drink.

(7) "For the LORD your God has blessed you in all the work of your hand. He knows your trudging through this great wilderness. These forty years the LORD your God *has been* with you; you have lacked nothing." "

- Notice how they're being reminded of God's abundant provision, in that they lacked nothing, so much so, they are to buy from the Edomites.
- Here's the question, why is the next generation being told about, what at first glance would seem, a nebulous detail as it relates to their money?
- I would suggest that the Lord deems it necessary to show them that, while He will always provide, He may not always provide the way we think.

- Consider this, in the infancy of their Exodus, God spoon fed them with Manna from heaven, but eventually he blessed the work of their hands.
- God may choose to provide Manna for a season, however, He may choose to bless the work of our hands instead of dropping it from the sky.
- Also, this seems to indicate that at some point, they had to grow and mature to the degree in which they could generate income for themselves.

Jon Courson - "The point is simple. God expects us to grow up and to move on. concerning that which was once given to us, God will say, 'You need to participate in the process not because I'm being mean to you or holding back from you but because I want to see maturity in you.'"

(8) "And when we passed beyond our brethren, the descendants of Esau who dwell in Seir, away from the road of the plain, away from Elath and Ezion Geber, we turned and passed by way of the Wilderness of Moab. (9) Then the LORD said to me, 'Do not harass Moab, nor contend with them in battle, for I will not give you *any* of their land *as* a possession, because I have given Ar to the descendants of Lot *as* a possession.' "

- Like the Edomites, God did not want them to battle the Moabites either again, because He had not given them any of their land as a possession.
- I believe there's a lesson to be learned in this, and it's to be careful, and prayerful about picking our battles with our Edomites and Moabites.
- If God has not given us that which he's given them to possess, then neither will he give us the victory in going to battle in order to possess it.

(10) (The Emim had dwelt there in times past, a people as great and numerous and tall as the Anakim. (11) They were also regarded as giants, like the Anakim, but the Moabites call them Emim. (12) The Horites formerly dwelt in Seir, but the descendants of Esau dispossessed them and destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their place, just as Israel did to the land of their possession which the LORD gave them.) (13) " 'Now rise and cross over the Valley of the Zered.' So we crossed over the Valley of the Zered *was* thirty-eight years, until all the generation of the men of war was consumed from the midst of the camp, just as the LORD had sworn to them. (15) For indeed the hand of the LORD was against them, to destroy them from the midst of the camp until they were consumed.

- It's important to remember that the book of Deuteronomy covers a period of only 37 days. Now in just these five verses Moses covers 38 years.
- In so doing, he mentions how that the descendants of Esau dispossess the Anakim from the land that the Lord had promised to the Edomites.
- We'll now see this same thing in the next verses, and I want to draw your attention to something as we read them, because of what's in them.

(16) "So it was, when all the men of war had finally perished from among the people, (17) that the LORD spoke to me, saying: (18) 'This day you are to cross over at Ar, the boundary of Moab. (19) And *when* you come near the people of Ammon, do not harass them or meddle with them, for I will not give you *any* of the land of the people of Ammon *as* a possession, because I have given it to the descendants of Lot *as* a possession.' " (20) (That was also regarded as a land of giants; giants formerly dwelt there. But the Ammonites call them Zamzummim, (21) a people as great and numerous and tall as the Anakim. But the LORD destroyed them before them, and they dispossessed them and dwelt in their place, (22) just as He had done for the descendants of Esau, who dwelt in Seir, when He destroyed the Horites from before them. They dispossessed them and dwelt in their place, even to this day.

- Here, Moses tells them about how the Lord didn't want them going to battle against the Ammonites either, and it was for the very same reasons.
- Not only did He not give the Israelites the land promised to the descendants of Lot, but that it was Ammonites who dispossessed Zamzummim.
- Now, here's what I want us to see; sometimes God may choose to use others to both dispossess, and destroy, those giants that are in our lives.

- In other words, sometimes those giants in our lives, can also be on our land, in that they possess that which the Lord has promised to us.
- It's in those times that God may choose to use someone else to dispossess them in our stead. I think of that giant by the name of Goliath.
- Those who went to Israel with us were there in the Valley of Elah where a little boy named David would dispossess a giant named Goliath.

1 Samuel 17:1-3 NIV Now the Philistines gathered their forces for war and assembled at Socoh in Judah. They pitched camp at Ephes Dammim, between Socoh and Azekah. (2) Saul and the Israelites assembled and camped in the Valley of Elah and drew up their battle line to meet the Philistines. (3) The Philistines occupied one hill and the Israelites another, with the valley between them.

- There's a twofold lesson here and it's really quite clear—first, don't let the enemy occupy territory instead of you when God has promised it to you.
- Secondly, let the Lord, your David, fight the battle for you and instead of you because only He can dispossess the giant in His way, for His glory.
- Also, if God has given it to you, then the only way anyone can take it from you, is if you allow them to. Don't give to man, what God gave to you.

(23) And the Avim, who dwelt in villages as far as Gaza—the Caphtorim, who came from Caphtor, destroyed them and dwelt in their place.) (24) " 'Rise, take your journey, and cross over the River Arnon. Look, I have given into your hand Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land. Begin to possess *it*, and engage him in battle.

- Moses now rounds a corner of sorts and recounts how that instead of God saying don't battle, He now tells them to rise up and go do battle.
- The question is, why now? What's the difference between then and now? Well, notice that the Amorites were occupying land belonging to Israel.
- I think we would be grossly remiss to not take notice of a most profound principle that I believe is woven into the fabric of these two verses.

- Just because God has promised it to us, does not mean that it won't be a battle for us. The Christian life is not a playground, it's a battle ground.
- We do err when we develop a faulty mindset thinking we can take it easy, because it will be easy, when in reality it may be riddled with difficulty.
- It's for this reason that a lot of people either backslide, fall away, or were never truly born again to begin with. Consider the parable of the sower.

Matthew 13:3-9 NIV Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. (4) As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. (5) Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. (6) But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. (7) Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. (8) Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. (9) He who has ears, let him hear."

Matthew 13:18-23 NIV "Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: (19) When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path. (20) The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. (21) But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away. (22) The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful. (23) But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

- In this parable, Jesus is teaching us that unless the seed of God's Word is met with the supple soil of our minds and hearts, there will be no fruit.
- While we're given the different reasons all the others did not grow and produce a crop, there does seem to be some similarities with all of them.
- One hears it but doesn't understand it, another is shallow with no root, and the other is worried about, deceived by, and choked with life's riches.

- Now, here's the common denominator with all of them; they all had a faulty mindset thinking the Christian life is a playground not a battleground.
- The trampled down don't understand - the shallow with no root deep down don't last - the rich choked with worries they'll go down don't produce.
- They all become disillusioned when the trampling by the wayside, the heat of the day, and the troubles of life come on and in their Christian life.

- Perhaps this is one of the main reasons that Moses goes into this detail for this next generation. He prepares them for battles prepared for them.
- There's one more thing here before we move on; if the truth be known, we really don't want it any other way. If it's not hard, it's not worth it.
- We are wired to devalue that which comes too easy because the end product is cheapened by virtue of how that the process is weakened.

- I've heard it said this way; "the bitterness of poor quality lingers on long after the sweetness of a cheap price." Yes, you can quote me on that : ).
- Like with the Israelites entering the Promised-Land too easily, so too are we prone to cheapen the quality of God's promises by wanting it easily.
- Then, when the spiritual battles in the Christian life trample us down, burn us out, and choke us up, we become disenchanting and disillusioned.