
Whose Report Will You Believe?

Disobedience, Fear, & Faith - Deuteronomy 1:19-46

Men's Ministry Teaching - February 2022



Introduction

In the book titled Deuteronomy, we can easily misunderstand its purpose in our bible. In fact the title translation helps give us a clearer understanding of the book's intended purpose as "the second law." Implying not that a second law is being recorded, rather a retelling of the law, as an emphasis from God, given by Moses to the people of Israel. (Deut. 1:3-4)

Now in Deuteronomy, Moses has prepared a sermon style speech to spur the people of Israel to recognize their disobedience and rebellion against God and the alternative rest, protection, and courage offered through, and by the Lord alone.

Bible Study

"We set out...and went through all that great and terrifying wilderness." (Deut. 1:19-25)

Beginning in verse 19 we see Moses retelling the events of Numbers chapters 13-14, whereas the narrative examines how Israel has disobeyed God and their rebellion proves to become the breeding ground for their perils. Moses reminds Israel that they had traveled through the "terrifying" terrain on what should have been an eleven day journey **JUST** to reach the beginning procession into the promised territory. (Vs. 2-3: despite the reality that this journey took 40 years due to the people's rebellion to God) This journey passed through a region known as the Paran Desert, a territory filled with heat, scorpions, and hostile environments for life. The good news? The Israelites are leaving this desert for Kadesh-barnea. Kadesh was only a few miles south of the Amorite Hill Country, the central portion of Canaan that the Israelites were called by God to enter into.

At the edge of the long awaited promised land, Moses recounts their story of disobedience. Their promised land had already been given to them! In fact, Moses makes the statement in verse 20, to illuminate that it simply needs occupation by the Israelites, that is how certain Moses was in God's prescribed word for victory! Their job was to simply "take possession!" (Vs. 21) How? It was the Lord who had already said the land was set before them. (Vs. 21) They simply needed to obey the word of the Lord and trust in this word!

The response of the people was to ask Moses to send men as spies before them so they could explore the land, survey the terrain, and potentially strategize for which path they

should go. (Vs. 22) This would give them a base plan of attack. Surely there may have been some among these people who were interested if God's word would be true about the fertility of the land, and their ability to possess the land. Upon the arrival of the spies, they returned with a cluster of grapes so heavy that two men were needed to carry them! (Num. 13:23) Thus proving the fertility of the promised land, and ultimately the sureness of God's prescribed word for their victory. We may be tempted to assume this is the great turning point of the story, surely God's people would now respond to His command to possess the land. (Vs. 21) Unfortunately, the opposite takes place in the hearts of the people.

“Yet you *would not* go up, but rebelled..” (Deut. 1:26-46)

Rebellion! Their response was rebellion?! This dramatic turn of events further illustrated their depth of distrust in the Lord. Moses charges them for their hidden hearts stating that in the seclusion of their tents they stated “the Lord hated us, he has brought us out of Egypt, to give us into the hand of the Ammorites, to destroy us.” (Vs. 27) This was a complete denial of God's promise to them given in the prior verses of 20-21. To make things worse the people were not simply denying God's command to take possession of the land, but exclaiming that God only brought them from Egypt to kill them! As if it would bring pleasure to the Lord!

The people did not take heed the promised good report from the Lord, the only sure and trustworthy report. Instead they listened to the report of men who had spoke of the fortified cities, the “giants” in the land (an ancient Egyptian letter from the thirteenth century B.C. describes giant warriors in Canaan who were 7-9 feet tall). (Vs 28)

Moses immediately responded to remind them not to let their hearts fail, that there is no need to “dread” or to be “afraid” of what lies ahead. Furthering this thought he reminds the people that **(1.)** It is God who fights for his people as He is the God who led them from Egypt. (Vs. 30) **(2.)** Even in the wilderness God “carried them” like a child (Vs. 31: even in their groaning and complaining). **(3.)** Lastly, He guided them day and night, *never* forsaking them in the wilderness desert. (Vs. 33)

Devotional

Whose report will *WE* believe?

Today I want to encourage you, that you are a man called by the God of the universe who is given the position as one who is created in His image. (Gen. 1:27) It is the Lord who inspired that the words be written that man is “is the image and glory of God.” (1 Cor. 11:7) Our purpose and responsibility is ultimately to serve and obey the will of the Lord. One

detractor of this purpose is the fear that may attempt to prevent us from doing so. In the text above, it is important to recognize that we first must come to accept God and His word. I think about C.S Lewis and his words about being safe. "Safe? Who said anything about safe? 'Course he isn't safe. But he's good!"

The reality is that despite the opposition of fear, and even the need to feel safe. We must come to the conclusion that we can trust God. Why? Because He is good! (Ps. 23:6, 25:8, 34:8, 100:4-5, 145:5-7, 9; 1 Chron. 16:34; Matt. 7:11; Mark 10:18) It is the sure word of the Lord that will *always* be good! Once we have accepted that we can trust God ourselves, then it is important to cultivate that relationship of trust in the Lord. Notice the Psalmist wrote, "Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God; Your Spirit is good. Lead me in the land of uprightness." (Ps. 143:10)

Lastly, let us never forget the power that is found in remembrance. One of the greatest ways we can combat fear is through remembering what the Lord has already done. For example, this can be through the use of scripture. Read God's word, know what he has done for others, and what he can do for you. In addition to this, we can also find a great source of taking courage by our own testimonies of the Lord, who has never left nor forgotten us in our times of need. (Deut. 31:6; Hebrews 13:5)

You **can** overcome fear, through the goodness and the power of the Lord! Don't submit to the fearful "report" of the enemy like those we read above, rather as Moses affirmed, remember the Lord your God! The Lord who delivers us from all of our troubles! (Ps. 34:17, 19; 118:6)

Prayer

Lord we pray that as men created in your image that you would help reveal to us each your clear will. It is your desire, that we continue to grow. It is your desire that we overcome fear. It is your desire that we learn to trust and obey your good report for our lives, recorded in your written word, and affirmed by your Spirit. We thank you for all you have given to us and receive the authority of your son's sacrifice on our behalf for these good promises. In Jesus' name, Amen.