

first generation - continued to disbelieve God. They disbelieved at the Mountain of the Law, Mount Sinai (or Mount Horeb), and continued a pattern of disbelief all the way to the Jordan River. When the ten spies brought

1. The title of the Book, *Deuteronomy*, means _____.

back an evil report, God condemned the first generation of Israel to wander in the wilderness until all of those who disbelieved died. The first generation's failure is recorded in the first chapter of Deuteronomy:

Deuteronomy 1:25-26 (KJV) "And they took of the fruit of the land in their hands, and brought it down unto us, and brought us word again, and said, It is a good land which the LORD our God doth give us. {26} Notwithstanding ye would not go up, but rebelled against the commandment of the LORD your God ..."

The Book of Deuteronomy is a *second giving and a renewal of the Law* for Israel, a *second chance*, a new day.

2 The words of Deuteronomy are important because they are the Words from God through one of the greatest prophets who ever lived. Moses was born the son of a Levite (Exodus 2:1-3) father and mother, a son of a conquered and enslaved people. Moses' was a birth that should have never been. Egypt ruled the nation Israel with a rod of iron, and Pharaoh decreed that all baby boys born to Israel be murdered:

Exodus 1:22 (KJV) "And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive."

Moses' mother hid him until he was three month's old, then put him in a little ark, and turned him loose on the River Nile. Pharaoh's daughter found Moses' and had compassion on him:

Exodus 2:5-6 (KJV) "And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself at the river; and her maidens walked along by the river's side; and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it. {6} And when she had opened it, she saw the child: and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, This is one of the Hebrews' children."

Moses' was subsequently raised by his mother, though he was raised as an equal with Pharaoh's children. God preserved Moses' life until the day He called him to service at the burning bush.

By the way, here's an interesting Biblical truth. Moses' parents were of the House of Levi. When Moses leads Israel out of Egypt and to Mount Sinai, this great Prophet would go up the mountain to receive the commandments of God on two tablets of stone. When Moses descends from the mountain he discovers that Israel had *melted down it's jewelry*, and used God's blessing of grace to create a golden calf to worship. We read:

Exodus 32:26-28 (KJV) "Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the LORD'S side? let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him. {27} And he said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor. {28} And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses: and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men."

The *sons of Levi* gather together and stand with Moses

2. Moses and Aaron were of the House of _____, a tribe that also stood with Moses

_____.

and God, punishing all those who fell away into idolatry. When God later establishes the priesthood in Israel, He gives the High Priesthood of Israel to Aaron and his children (**Exodus 28:4**), and all in the tribe of Levi would be priests as well.

3 The words of Moses are also important because that venerable leader *failed God, just as the first generation of Israel failed God*. This is partly recorded in Deuteronomy chapter 1:

Deuteronomy 1:37 (KJV) "Also the LORD was

angry with me for your sakes, saying, Thou also shalt not go in thither."

Yet this is only an abbreviated account of what happened. The first generation of Israel had come to a place called Kadesh, and there was no water in that place. So God told Moses to go before Israel and *speak to the Rock*. When Moses did that, the Lord was going to bring water out of the Rock to bless this disobedient people. But Moses allowed the failures of the people to cause him to lose his focus. Rather than *speaking* to the Rock:

Numbers 20:9-14 (KJV) "And Moses took the rod from before the LORD, as he commanded him. {10} And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? {11} And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also. {12} And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them. {13} This is the water of Meribah, because the children of Israel strove with the LORD, and he was sanctified in them. {14} And Moses sent messengers from Kadesh unto the king of Edom, Thus saith thy brother Israel, Thou knowest all the travail that hath befallen us:"

Moses struck the Rock, and boasted that he would bring

water out of the Rock. His failure in leadership caused him to share in Israel's punishment. Moses would not enter the Promised Land, but Joshua and Caleb, the two faithful spies, would lead the next generation into this land. Oh, how many preachers and leaders have failed to appropriate the promises of God by falling in the same way? The failure of Moses, a *bitter failure*, is a reminder to every leader to remember that his or her focus must be to *do all as unto the Lord*. When we serve remembering that we are doing it *for the Lord*, then our service is always blessed and precious. When you give, give as unto the Lord (**Matthew 6:1**). When you pray, pray as unto the Lord (**Matthew 6:6**). Remember this truth:

Romans 14:8 (KJV) "For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's."

The *place* where Moses' words are given to Israel is also very important. As Moses spoke these words, the second generation of Israel could see landmarks all around them that reminded of the *first generation's failures* to appropriate the blessings of God.

I am not responsible for what you do, I am responsible for what I do. If you do poorly, or if you disobey, I must obey nonetheless. Unto my Master do I stand or fall:

Romans 14:10-12 (KJV) "But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. {11} For it is written, As I live, saith

the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. {12} So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."

3. Moses _____, and boasted that he would bring water out of the Rock. His failure in leadership caused him to share in Israel's _____.

4. I am not _____ for what you do, I am _____ for what I do. If you do poorly, or if you disobey, I must obey nonetheless.

I am to do my job for Jesus, and you are to do yours. If you fail, I will not be judged for your failure. Therefore I am exhorted to avoid Moses' sin by focusing, not on your failure or success, but on what the Lord has told me to do.



Deuteronomy 1:1-2 (KJV) "These be the words which Moses spake unto all Israel on this side Jordan in the wilderness, in the plain over against the Red sea, between Paran, and Tophel, and Laban, and Hazeroth, and Dizahab. {2} (There are eleven days' journey from Horeb by the way of mount Seir unto Kadeshbarnea.)

The words which Moses spoke were **to all Israel**. This is an important phrase that is used throughout the Book. It is used *twelve more times* in the Book in contexts like:

Deuteronomy 5:1 (KJV) "And Moses called all Israel, and said unto them, Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them, and keep, and do

them."

Deuteronomy 13:11 (KJV) "And all Israel shall hear, and fear, and shall do no more any such wickedness as this is among you."

Deuteronomy 21:21 (KJV) "And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die: so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear."

Deuteronomy 27:9 (KJV) "And Moses and the priests the Levites spake unto all Israel, saying, Take heed, and hearken, O Israel; this day thou art become the people of the LORD thy God."



Though God blesses individual people, it is His Will to work through *groups of people*. God worked through Israel in the Old Testament, through the Church in the New Testament. God works best through His chosen people when they are *in one accord with Him, and with one another*.

Hebrews 3:15-19 "While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. (or "rebellion", A quotation from Psalm 95:7b-8) [16] For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. [17] But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? [18] And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but

to them that believed not? [19] So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief."

Just as unbelief kept Israel from entering the Promised

5. What is the significance of the words *all Israel* in the Book of Deuteronomy? _____

Land, *unbelief in the Christian's life prevents him from entering the full blessing of God in this life*. We are called to reject unbelief and apathy, and to strive to please God in all we say and do.

1.2 This Is The Vision



Deuteronomy 1:4-6 (KJV) "After he had slain Sihon the king of the Amorites, which dwelt in Heshbon, and Og the king of Bashan, which dwelt at Astaroth in Edrei: {5} On this side Jordan, in the land of Moab, began Moses to declare this law, saying, {6} The LORD our God spake unto us in Horeb, saying, Ye have dwelt long enough in this mount:"

Israel wanted to pass through the land of the Amorites, but King Sihon refused them passage (**Numbers 21:21-35**). Who were the Amorites? **Easton's Dictionary** states:

... "highlanders, or hillmen, the name given to the descendants of one of the sons of Canaan (Genesis

14:7), called Amurra or Amurri in the Assyrian and Egyptian inscriptions. On the early Babylonian monuments all Syria, including Palestine, is known as "the land of the Amorites." The southern slopes of the mountains of Judea are called the "mount of the Amorites" (Deuteronomy 1:7, 19, 20). They seem to have originally occupied the land stretching from the heights west of the Dead Sea (Genesis 14:7) to Hebron (13. Comp. 13:8; Deuteronomy. 3:8; 4:46-48), embracing "all Gilead and all Bashan" (Deuteronomy 3:10), with the Jordan valley on the east of the river (4:49), the land of the "two kings of the Amorites," Sihon and Og (Deuteronomy 31:4; Joshua 2:10; 9:10). The five kings of the Amorites were defeated with great slaughter by Joshua (10:10). They were again defeated at the waters of Merom by Joshua, who smote them till there were none remaining (Joshua 11:8). It is mentioned as a surprising circumstance that in the days of Samuel there was peace between them and the Israelites (1 Samuel 7:14). The discrepancy supposed to exist between Deuteronomy 1:44 and Numbers 14:45 is explained by the circumstance that the terms "Amorites" and "Amalekites" are used synonymously for the "Canaanites." In the same way we explain the fact that the "Hivites" of Genesis 34:2 are the "Amorites" of 48:22. Compare Joshua 10:6; 11:19 with 2 Samuel 21:2; also Numbers 14:45 with Deuteronomy 1:44. The Amorites were warlike mountaineers. They are represented on the Egyptian monuments with fair skins, light hair, blue eyes, aquiline noses, and pointed beards. They are supposed to have been men of great stature; their

king, Og, is described by Moses as the last "of the remnant of the giants" (Deuteronomy 3:11). Both Sihon and Og were independent kings. Only one word of the Amorite language survives, "Shenir," the name they gave to Mount Hermon (Deuteronomy 3:9). "

God blessed Israel to defeat these kingdoms, and brought them to the border of the Promised Land. Now that Israel was ready God told them:

Ye have dwelt¹ long enough in this mount

Dwelt¹ is the Qal Infinitive of the Hebrew *yashab* {pronounced yaw-shab'}, which means "*to sit down, be set, remain, to stay, to take up residence*". Israel had settled down in the shadow of Mount Horeb (also called Mount Sinai), the Mountain of God. They got settled in one place, relaxed, but this was not where God wanted them to be. They needed to *cross the Jordan* to reach the Promised Land - and they would never reach their potential while they stopped and stood in one place.

It is necessary that the people of God understand *who they are*, and understand that God sends tests to *strengthen* them so they can reach their potential in Him. For instance, God used water to test the first generation of Israel. Israel was tested at the Red Sea (see Exodus 14.10-12), at the bitter waters of Marah (see Exodus 15.22-26), and at Rephidim (later called Meribah, see Exodus 17.1-7). The first generation of Israel failed every test put before it, and failed miserably at Kadesh Barnea. This is why they received God's discipline (see Deuteronomy 1.19-40).

God wants His people, the people He died for, to achieve greatness. He has promised to see us through every test no matter what. God told Israel:

Isaiah 43:2-3 (KJV) "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. {3} For I am the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee."

God gives tests to His people to build us up, not to destroy us. We are told in James:

James 1:2-4 (KJV) "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; {3} Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. {4} But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

6. It is necessary that the people of God understand _____, and understand that God sends tests to _____ them so they can reach their potential in Him.

God can only test us and strengthen us in *this life*, for when we reach eternity there is no more suffering. Tests are an opportunity for the people of God to *work together, believing God*, and in so doing to achieve great things for His glory.

1 Peter 1:6-7 (KJV) "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: {7} That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:"

There is a danger of *staying in the shadow of the mountain* too long, becoming complacent and relaxed, forgetting that our mission is to glorify God while telling others about Him. God had already given Israel victory over Sihon - surely He will give them the land He has promised them, if only they move!



Deuteronomy 1:7-8 (KJV) "Turn you, and take your journey, and go to the mount of the Amorites, and unto all the places nigh thereunto, in the plain, in the hills, and in the vale², and in the south³, and by the sea side, to the land of the Canaanites, and unto Lebanon, unto the great river, the river Euphrates. {8}

Behold, I have set the land before you: go in and possess the land which the LORD sware unto your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give unto them and to their seed after them."

The vale² that God refers to is the Hebrew word shephelah² {pronounced shef-ay-law³}, which is the geographical region between the Mediterranean coast plain and the hill country of Judea. The south³ is the Hebrew negeb {pronounced neh³-gheb}, meaning *desert*,

and refers to the area south of Beersheba and generally west of the Arabah Valley between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Aqaba. Israel was also given all of Canaan and Lebanon as far as the Great River Euphrates. The dimensions of the Promised Land are found in Genesis 15:19-21 and Exodus 23:31. The land which Israel was to possess is a tract of land over five hundred miles square containing between 250,000 and 300,000 square miles, some *fifty times greater* than the land of Palestine as we speak of it today. It would include today most of Jordan and the southern part of Iraq (the ancient "fertile crescent").

God promised Israel a great land. The land was Israel's, they just had to believe God and step forward on faith. The *vision of the people* remains vibrant only when the people pursue that vision believing in God. The phrase:

The Lord our God

occurs in verse 6, and *seventeen more times* throughout the Book of Deuteronomy. What God is emphasizing is that His people are both governed as well as led by **the Lord** who created all things, and by **our God**, that is, a Savior who is intimately acquainted with our needs.

7. What is the significance of the title **the Lord our God** in our text? _____

Application: Though God never promised us the land He promised Israel, God has made a number of promises

to those who believe in Him. The promises God has made to us are just as valid as the promises that God made to Israel.

1.3 Visionary Leaders Needed



Deuteronomy 1:12-15 (KJV) "How can I myself alone bear your **cumbrance, and your burden, and your strife?** {13} Take you **wise⁴ men, and understanding⁵, and known⁶** among your tribes, and I will make them rulers over you. {14} And ye answered me, and said, **The thing which thou hast spoken is good for us to do.** {15} So I took the chief of your tribes, wise men, and known, and made them heads over you, captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, and captains over fifties, and captains over tens, and officers among your tribes."

People of vision must have *visionary leaders, willing to step out and achieve the impossible through Christ.*

These men were to be wise⁴, *chakam* {pronounced *khaw-kawm*'}, meaning *shrewd, prudent, skilfully proficient in administrative matters*. They were to be understanding⁵, the Niphal participle of *biyn* {pronounced *bene*}, meaning *discreet or discerning*. Finally, these leaders had to be known⁶ men, the Qal Passive Participle of *yada*' {pronounced *yaw-dah*' }, meaning "those who stood out in other's minds". People of vision must have visionary leaders, or else that nation is in danger.

Moses delegated some of his work to other like minded leaders. Moses' failure to select *good leadership* from within Israel led to the first generation's demise in the wilderness. This leadership, in time, became the *discouraging naysayers* that caused the first generation of Israel to lose the Promised Land.



Deuteronomy 1:28-36 (KJV) "Whither shall we go up? our brethren have discouraged our heart, saying, The people is greater and taller than we; the cities are great and walled up to heaven; and moreover we have seen the sons of the Anakims there. {29} Then I said unto you, Dread not, neither be afraid of them. {30} The LORD your God which goeth before you, he shall fight for you, according to all that he did for you in Egypt before your eyes; {31} And in the wilderness, where thou hast seen how that the LORD thy God bare thee, as a man doth bear his son, in all the way that ye went, until ye came into this place. {32} Yet in this thing ye did not believe the LORD your God, {33} Who went in the way before you, to search you out a place to pitch your tents in, in fire by night, to show you by what way ye should go, and in a cloud by day. {34} And the LORD heard the voice of your words, and was wroth, and sware, saying, {35} Surely there shall not one of these men of this evil generation see that good land, which I sware to give unto your fathers, {36} Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children, because he hath wholly followed the LORD."

All of the spies but two, Joshua and Caleb, were guilty of the sin of *unbelief in God*. Unbelief is disease-like in that it has a "communicable property", that is, it can spread and infect the whole community if left unchecked. Notice our text:

Deuteronomy 1:28 "Whither shall we go up? our brethren have discouraged our heart, saying, The people is greater and taller than we; the cities are great and walled up to heaven; and moreover we have seen the sons of the Anakims there."

God considers unbelief, or a failure to appropriate what

8. People of vision must have _____, willing to step out and achieve the _____ through Christ.

He has promised, as something that *is evil*:

Hebrews 3:12-13 " Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. [13] But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

Leaders in God's Kingdom are called to be *encouragers, not discouragers, exhorters, not retorters.* Unbelief stays the hand of God:

Mark 6:4-6 " But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honor, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house. [5] And he

could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. [6] And he marveled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching."

Unbelief robs the believer of the blessing of God because,

1 Unbelief can only exist in a backslidden heart, in a heart divorced from the presence of God, and,

2 Unbelief ties the hands of God. Jesus was hindered, and "he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few" because of unbelief in His homeland. Consider the magnitude of this statement!

9. Leaders in God's Kingdom are called to be _____, *not discouragers, exhorters, not* _____.

Application: The Israelites started out obeying God, but in the end failed to obey fully. Instead of putting their trust in God they began to doubt Him. **Rebellion** against God usually starts slowly by **questioning** His directions, and eventually leads to a rejection of His ways. If we want victory in our walk with the Lord then we need to learn to **trust and obey Him fully**, and not try to second guess His motives or His directions.

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