Deuteronomy 1-3 • Preparing to enter the Promised Land

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Let's go ahead and open our Bibles to the Book of Deuteronomy and Chapter 1. In the rocky wilderness of Judea, Jesus– you will remember from the Gospel accounts– became embroiled in a very fierce spiritual struggle with Satan. Three times Satan tempted Jesus to pull back from the Father and operate independently from the provision and submission to the Father and His plan.

Satan was doing that so that he could try to get Jesus to alleviate His suffering, not have to go to the cross or whatever. I want you to know that each and every time Jesus responded to Satan, He responded from the Book of Deuteronomy (Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13).You wondered where I was going with this, didn't you, for a moment?

You thought to yourself, that's not Deuteronomy. Well, actually Deuteronomy, interestingly enough, is quoted by the New Testament authors almost 200 times. I beg your pardon, that's not entirely true. Quoted or alluded to almost 200 times in the New Testament. This is a book that Jesus cited often and particularly three times when he was under spiritual attack.

You guys know what spiritual attacks are all about. If Jesus quoted from the Book of Deuteronomy, this is probably a book that we should pay attention to. Not that any of the books are such that we should not. But you'll remember back in the book of Numbers, which we finished not terribly long ago, we saw how the Israelites were released from their Egyptian bondage. They got to the Promised Land and then promptly rebelled against the Lord in unbelief when they were brought to the entrance of the Promised Land.

The result of that was a period of wandering in the wilderness until all of the adults died off, save two. And that was Caleb and Joshua. But their children, those who were less than 20 years of age, are the ones who are now ready to go into the Promised Land. Moses is giving now in the book of Deuteronomy his final message to the children of Israel before they enter in. And this is Moses' swan song. This is the last thing he is going to say to the nation of Israel. Deuteronomy is his sermon.

It is a sermon given in parts, but a sermon, nonetheless, where he recounts for them their history, gives them an understanding of the covenant again that they have entered into, and renews that covenant. Then after the book of Deuteronomy Moses is going to climb the mountain for the very last time, look at the Promised Land; then he is going to physically die. By the way, the last time we went through Deuteronomy was back in 2004. So you can see that it's time.

So Deuteronomy, Chapter 1. It begins in verse 1 by saying: *"These are the words that Moses spoke to all Israel beyond the Jordan in the wilderness, in the Arabah opposite Suph, between Paran and Tophel, Laban, Hazeroth and Dizahab." (ESV)* That is actually how that's pronounced, the emphasis on the last syllable. Diz-a-hab, by the way.

It says in verse 2: *"It is eleven days' journey from Horeb by the way of Mount Seir to Kadesh-barnea."* All right. What are we talking about? Why? Why is that statement given in the Scripture?

Well, because that is– they were at Horeb when God gave them the Law, and it says that it should have taken them about eleven days. And not necessarily them, because this was like two-and-a-half million people, between two-and-a-half and three-and-a-half million people. Probably would have taken them longer. But a typical travel time of about 150 miles from Horeb to Kadesh-barnea, which is the doorstep to the Promised Land, takes about, as it, as he says here, eleven days.

Now, again, you get a nation of people. You don't normally clock how long it takes a nation of people to travel anywhere. I'm sure it would have taken them longer. There are animals, there are children, the old people and so forth. But typically it would take about eleven days. Now, we know that they spent their first two years in the wilderness hearing the Law, learning from God; the tabernacle was built, all those things that happened.

The first two years were spent in the wilderness, and then God brought them to the border of the Promised Land. But they had been out of Egypt two years by that time. They came to Kadesh Barnea, sent the spies– the twelve spies– in for a period of forty days. They came back with their statement that the land was indeed good, but impassable: There is no way we can conquer these people. They're too strong.

They filled the whole nation of Israel with unbelief, and they all began to murmur and complain. Moses is going to go through all of this in a bit. And he

sent them back out into the wilderness for an additional 38 years, bringing their total time in the wilderness to forty years, during which time all of the adults 20 years and older passed from the scene.

And you will remember why God allowed the children to go in. Do you remember what the adults said? They said, our children are going to die. Our babies. They're going to be slaughtered. And God said, fine, I've heard you. You will in fact die in the wilderness. Your children, who you were so concerned about, they will go in, and they will possess the land.

It is those children whom Moses is addressing now. All right? He goes on here, and he says in verse 3, *"In the fortieth year, on the first day of the eleventh month, Moses spoke to the people of Israel according to all that the LORD had given him in commandment to them, [4] after he had defeated Sihon the king of the Amorites, who lived in Heshbon, and Og the king of Bashan, who lived in Ashtaroth and in Edrei. [5] Beyond the Jordan, in the land of Moab, Moses undertook to explain this law, saying, [6] "The LORD our God said to us in Horeb, 'You have stayed long enough at this mountain. [7] Turn and take your journey, and go to the hill country of the Amorites and to all their neighbors in the Arabah, in the hill country and in the lowland and in the Negeb and by the seacoast, the land of the Canaanites, and Lebanon, as far as the great river, the river Euphrates. [8] See, I have set the land before you. Go in and take possession of the land that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give to them and to their offspring after them.'*

[9] "At that time I said to you, 'I am not able to bear you by myself. [10] The LORD your God has multiplied you, and behold, you are today as numerous as the stars of heaven. [11] May the LORD, the God of your fathers, make you a thousand times as many as you are and bless you, as he has promised you! [12] How can I bear by myself the weight and burden of you and your strife? [13] Choose for your tribes wise, understanding, and experienced men, and I will appoint them as your heads.' [14] And you answered me, 'The thing that you have spoken is good for us to do.' [15] So I took the heads of your tribes, wise and experienced men, and set them as heads over you, commanders of thousands, commanders of hundreds, commanders of fifties, commanders of tens, and officers, throughout your tribes. [16] And I charged your judges at that time, 'Hear the cases between your brothers, and judge righteously between a man and his brother or the alien who is with him. [17] You shall not be partial in judgment. You shall hear the small and the great alike. You shall not be intimidated by anyone, for the judgment is God's. And the case that is too hard for you, you shall bring to me, and I will hear it.' [18] And I commanded you at that time all the things that you should do.

19 “Then we set out from Horeb and went through all that great and terrifying
wilderness that you saw, on the way to the hill country of the Amorites, as
the LORD our God commanded us. And we came to Kadesh-barnea. 20 And I said
to you, ‘You have come to the hill country of the Amorites, which the LORD our
God is giving us. 21 See, the LORD your God has set the land before you. Go up,
take possession, as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has told you. Do not fear
or be dismayed.’ 22 Then all of you came near me and said, ‘Let us send men
before us, that they may explore the land for us and bring us word again of the
way by which we must go up and the cities into which we shall come.’ 23 The
thing seemed good to me, and I took twelve men from you, one man from each
tribe. 24 And they turned and went up into the hill country, and came to the
Valley of Eshcol and spied it out. 25 And they took in their hands some of the
fruit of the land and brought it down to us, and brought us word again and said,
‘It is a good land that the LORD our God is giving us.’

26 “Yet you would not go up, but rebelled against the command of the LORD your
God. 27 And you murmured in your tents and said, ‘Because the LORD hated us
he has brought us out of the land of Egypt, to give us into the hand of the
Amorites, to destroy us. 28 Where are we going up? Our brothers have made our
hearts melt, saying, “The people are greater and taller than we. The cities are
great and fortified up to heaven. And besides, we have seen the sons of the
Anakim there.”’ 29 Then I said to you, ‘Do not be in dread or afraid of them.
30 The LORD your God who goes before you will himself fight for you, just as he
did for you in Egypt before your eyes, 31 and in the wilderness, where you have
seen how the LORD your God carried you, as a man carries his son, all the way
that you went until you came to this place.’ 32 Yet in spite of this word you did
not believe the LORD your God, 33 who went before you in the way to seek you
out a place to pitch your tents, in fire by night and in the cloud by day, to show
you by what way you should go.

34 “And the LORD heard your words and was angered, and he swore, 35 ‘Not one
of these men of this evil generation shall see the good land that I swore to give
to your fathers, 36 except Caleb the son of Jephunneh. He shall see it, and to him
and to his children I will give the land on which he has trodden, because he has
wholly followed the LORD!’ 37 Even with me the LORD was angry on your
account and said, ‘You also shall not go in there. 38 Joshua the son of Nun, who
stands before you, he shall enter. Encourage him, for he shall cause Israel to
inherit it.”

Oh, I just love that verse there. *“Joshua the son of Nun,* (verse 38, he says) *who stands before you,* (he says) *he shall enter. Encourage him, for he shall cause Israel* (notice that) *to inherit it.”*

You say, well, why is that so significant? Because Joshua is a type, just as Moses is a type, just as the Promised Land is a type, just as Egypt is a type. We have all these wonderful, glorious types. Examples from the Scripture, Egypt, that type of sin; Satan is depicted or typified in Pharaoh who wants to keep us in bondage. And then we were released from bondage, and we go through the waters of baptism, and then we come to the border of the Promised Land.

But remember something about Moses. Moses can't take us in there, because the Promised Land is a picture of our inheritance in Christ as believers. It is not a picture of heaven. It is a picture of walking with God in our daily life. And the Law can't bring us there. The Law can't bring us into the promises of God, right?

Moses is a picture of the Law, and the Law can't take you in. Who can take you in? Yeshua. This is the same name as Jesus. This is the same Hebrew name. And so you see this beautiful picture here of the one who can bring you in to the inheritance. See, you and I, we have an inheritance in Christ, and we are to walk it out and claim it on a day-by-day basis.

It is before us. And these are the promises that were given in God's Word. It is a wonderful inheritance. How many of us actually lay hold of it? That is probably the real question we need to ask ourselves. How many of us have laid hold of the promises, and of God, regarding the inheritance that is ours. The victory that is ours in Jesus Christ.

The victory in our marriages, in our homes, and– you name it. But those things are apprehended by faith. We go into the Promised Land by faith. What keeps us out of the promises of God? Unbelief. Same thing that kept Israel out of the land of promise. Their unbelief. They wandered in the wilderness.

We have today what we call wilderness Christians, who, because of their unbelief and recurring unbelief, don't enter into the promises of God's Word. And so there are such beautiful pictures here of the work that God wants to do in our lives.

Look what he goes on to say in verse 39 once again, and we made reference to this in the introduction. But it says: *“‘And as for your little ones, who you said would become a prey, and your children, who today have no knowledge of good or evil, they shall go in there. And to them I will give it, and they shall possess it. [40] But as for you, turn, and journey into the wilderness in the direction of the Red Sea.’”*

What a horrible word that must have been for those adults who responded in unbelief. And then God says, Fine, you won't go in then. Your children will go in, but you won't go in. Now, turn and go back. They've been two years in the wilderness. And he says, turn and go back. And by the way, you will not live in your own home for the rest of your life. Those of you who are 20 and older, you will live in a tent for the rest of your life, and you will die in the wilderness.

Now, I don't know how you would have responded if you heard the Lord say that to you. It is interesting how the people of Israel responded. Look at verse 41: *"Then you answered me, 'We have sinned against the LORD. We ourselves will go up and fight, just as the LORD our God commanded us.' And every one of you fastened on his weapons of war and thought it easy to go up into the hill country."* See, they forgot that it was God who went before them.

"42 And the LORD said to me, 'Say to them, Do not go up or fight, for I am not in your midst, lest you be defeated before your enemies.' 43 So I spoke to you, and you would not listen; but you rebelled against the command of the LORD and presumptuously went up into the hill country. 44 Then the Amorites who lived in that hill country came out against you and chased you as bees do and beat you down in Seir as far as Hormah. 45 And you returned and wept before the LORD, but the LORD did not listen to your voice or give ear to you. 46 So you remained at Kadesh many days, the days that you remained there."

The people could not bear to leave for quite some time. He says, for many days. We don't know exactly, but for many days they just camped there at Kadesh. They knew they couldn't go in, but they just couldn't bring themselves to move back toward the Red Sea. They eventually did, but for a long time they just stayed there in sorrow. And it says they wept before the Lord, but notice, it says God did not respond to their weeping or their cries.

Why? Because it wasn't a true godly sorrow, Number one, He told them very clearly, and they rebelled against him two times related to this whole process. But even then, there wasn't true repentance. Do you guys understand? The New Testament tells us there are two kinds of sorrow. There is godly sorrow, and there is worldly sorrow.

Godly sorrow leads to repentance and leads to life. (2 Corinthians 7:10) And godly sorrow is true regret, true sorrow that will do anything to make it right, and to do whatever needs to be done. Worldly sorrow, on the other hand, is, I'm sorry I got caught. It was really fun, but it's over, and, man, am I sorry that it's over.

And we didn't get what we wanted, we didn't get– and it's going to be a big fat inconvenience to me now. That's really where they were. Here they were sitting in Kadesh, the land of promise in front of them, which they can't enter, the land of wilderness behind them, which they don't want to enter, and they are just sitting there. Sorrowful, but not truly repentant. Oh, what a horrible place to be. Just gives me the shakes talking about it. Terrible thing.

As we get into Deuteronomy, Chapter 2, this chapter continues with Moses recounting past history, but he's going to jump. He is not going to tell every story that happened in 38 years. Thank you, Moses. He is going to jump 38 years into the present time speaking now, and here is one of the reasons why. He is talking to the people now who are alive, who are going into the land, and these are the things they need to know. He is going to recount some of the things that have happened here.

This chapter specifically recalls Israel's peaceful passage through the territory of three nations that were distantly related to them, until they come to the land of the Amorites, where they will actually find themselves in battle prior to getting into the Promised Land. You knew that, right? That they actually fought some battles before they got in the Promised Land. Anyway, we'll deal with that as we go.

But first, it says in verse 1, *"Then we turned and journeyed into the wilderness in the direction of the Red Sea, as the LORD told me. And for many days we traveled around Mount Seir. [2] Then the LORD said to me, [3] 'You have been traveling around this mountain country long enough. Turn northward [4] and command the people, "You are about to pass through the territory of your brothers, the people of Esau, who live in Seir; and they will be afraid of you. So be very careful.'"*

They were not to take advantage of the fear of these people. And, by the way, the people of Esau. You'll remember also referred to as the Edomites are the descendants of Esau, the twin brother of Jacob, who is later renamed Israel. You can see that this is a close relation. Their forefather Jacob had a twin brother named Esau. These are now his descendants.

And therefore, God says in verse 5, regarding the Edomites, *"'Do not contend with them, for I will not give you any of their land, no, not so much as for the sole of the foot to tread on, because I have given Mount Seir to Esau as a possession.*(He says,) [6] *you shall purchase 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 hands*

He knows your going through this great wilderness. These forty years the LORD your God has been with you. You have lacked nothing.'" So don't start getting worried now. I threw that in there at the end but that was the point of what he was saying.

"[8] So we went on, away from our brothers the people of Esau, who live in Seir away from the Arabah road from Elath to Ezion-geber. And we turned and went in the direction of the wilderness of Moab."

Now we come to the people called the Moabites. You will remember that Ruth is the very famous Moabite woman who eventually married– actually married two different– Jewish men, one who passed away and then one with whom she had a child. And so she became a part of the lineage of the Messiah.

So God's grace has been on the Moabites in some respects. But boy, did they come about through weird circumstances. You remember when God told Abraham that He was going to get rid of Sodom and Gomorrah, literally nuke the place, send fire from heaven upon it. (Genesis 18) Moses began to intercede.

And he said– because he knew his nephew lived there, Lot and his family– and so he said, Okay, Lord, let me ask you a question. If you find this many people there, will you still get rid of it, but will you still destroy it? And you'll remember how that conversation went. Abraham kept giving him less and less people. What if you find this many people? What if you find this many people?

No, if I find that many people, I'll spare the whole place on behalf of those that I find who are righteous. If you find ten righteous, will you destroy the whole city? Just, if there's ten? No, I'll spare it even for them. Well, we get down to, it's just Lot's family.

You'll remember that some angels who had been there talking with Abraham went down to Sodom and Gomorrah, found Lot sitting in the entryway of the city. (Genesis 19) He encouraged them to come into his home for some hospitality. And it tells us that the men of the city got together and you know the story. They wanted to accost these angels and so forth in a sexual, physical sort of a way. And they were struck with blindness, and they told Lot and his family, Listen, God is going to destroy this place. You need to leave.

And they just– I don't know what their deal was– but they just hesitated until the point that the angels finally grabbed him by the arm and said, We're leaving, and they pulled him out of the city. You'll remember Lot's wife looked back and

died because of it. And so Lot and his two daughters ended up living up in the hill country alone, afraid.

Each of his two daughters on different successive nights got their father drunk so that they would conceive a child by him. And so one of those was (the descendants of the, or) the forefather of the Moabites. The other, you'll hear more about this in a moment. We'll get on to the other son here as well, but right now we are at the Moabites.

So what we are dealing with is a people that originated out of incest. Isn't that crazy? And yet, as I already mentioned, Ruth came out of that line and became part of the lineage of Messiah. Talk about God's grace, huh? Talk about God's forgiveness. Anyway, so you're going to see here in just a little bit, the other son that was born to the other daughter of Lot is going to come up in a bit. She named him Ammon, and he's the father of the Ammonites. Not to be confused with the Amorites. I know that can be difficult.

Anyway, verse 9 says: *"And the LORD said to me, 'Do not harass Moab or contend with them in battle, for I will not give you any of their land for a possession, because I have given Ar to the people of Lot for a possession.'"*

All right. Now, as I get ready to read the next two verses, you are going to notice if you have a modern language translation that you are holding in your hands, that these verses 10 through 12 are in parentheses. You won't find it that way in the old King James, but all of the newer modern translations put parentheses around verses 10 through 12. That is because they are parenthetical, and they were added by whoever compiled some of these documents, perhaps after the time of Moses, because they speak of things even after Israel came in to possess the land.

It says this in verse 10: *"(The Emim formerly lived there, a people great and many, and tall as the Anakim. [11] Like the Anakim they are also counted as Rephaim, but the Moabites call them Emim. [12] The Horites also lived in Seir formerly, but the people of Esau* (disposed them– I'm sorry. Well, they did that too, but they) *dispossessed them and destroyed them from before them and settled in their place, as Israel did to the land of their possession, which the LORD gave to them.)"*

And there is that anachronistic remark there of Israel past-tense possessing the land. All right. Again, that is the reason that some scholars do believe that this parenthetical section was added after, perhaps even by Joshua.

Verse 13: *"'Now rise up and go over the brook Zered.' So we went over the brook Zered. [14] And the time from our leaving Kadesh-barnea until we crossed the brook Zered was thirty-eight years, until the entire generation, that is, the men of war, had perished from the camp, as the LORD had sworn to them. [15] For indeed the hand of the LORD was against them, to destroy them from the camp, until they had perished.*

[16] "So as soon as all the men of war had perished and were dead from among the people, [17] the LORD said to me, [18] 'Today you are to cross the border of Moab at Ar. [19] And when you approach the territory of the people of Ammon, do not harass them or contend 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 sons of Lot for a possession.'"

Now, this is the other son. This is the other son born by incest to Lot's daughter. Ammon, and his descendants. Here is what is interesting. Not only has God been gracious to these people, but they still exist today. The land is now called Jordan, and the capital of their land is called Amman, which comes from the ancient name Ammon. These people exist today by God's incredible grace, again, like the Moabites, the Ammonites, distant relatives, and they are told not to accost them in any way, nor will any of their land be given them.

Verse 20: *"(It is also counted* (and again, a parenthetical comment) *as a land of Rephaim. Rephaim formerly lived there—but the Ammonites call them Zamzummim— [21] a people great and many, and tall as the Anakim; but the LORD destroyed them before the Ammonites, and they dispossessed them and settled in their place, [22] as he did for the people of Esau, who live in Seir, when he destroyed the Horites before them and they dispossessed them and settled in their place even to this day. [23] As for the Avvim, who lived in villages as far as Gaza, the Caphtorim, who came from Caphtor, destroyed them and settled in their place.)"*

All right. Verse 24: *"'Rise up, set out on your journey and go over the Valley of the Arnon. Behold, I have given into your hand Sihon the Amorite,* (notice that– the Amorite. Not Ammonite, but Amorite) *king of Heshbon, and his land. Begin to take possession, and contend with him in battle."*

Now stop there for a moment. This is not part of the Promised Land, and yet God is going to give this land to the people of Israel, and these are descendants of the Amorites. Notice that God tells them ahead of time, Rise up, I'm going to give you this land. I want you to remember that.

It says in verse 25: *“This day I will begin to put the dread and fear of you on the peoples who are under the whole heaven, who shall hear the report of you and shall tremble and be in anguish because of you.’”* Look what Moses says. After hearing from the Lord that God had given the land of Sihon into his hands.

It says: *“[26] “So I sent messengers from the wilderness of Kedemoth to Sihon the king of Heshbon, with words of peace, saying, [27] ‘Let me pass through your land. I will go only by the road; I will turn aside neither to the right nor to the left.”*

Stop there for a moment. I find that very interesting, don't you? Instead of Moses simply saying, All right, boys, strap on your swords. God has given the land of Sihon, the Amorite, to us. So let's go. Let's just– we'll break up into raiding parties or whatever. And we're going to– God's done it. But what does Moses do? He sends a messenger to Sihon, a message of peace. And he says, Hey, let me pass through your land. I'll, we're just, we're not, we're just going to follow the road, and we're not going to turn aside. We promise neither to the right nor to the left.

What I find interesting about that is that, so often– this is a picture of God's grace and mercy extending another opportunity, yet another opportunity to respond properly. Sihon did not have to be destroyed. He and his people did not have to be destroyed, at least not at this time.

Now God knew how they were going to react, because He knows everything, but that doesn't mean God made him react that way. And you'll notice that, again, Moses puts out that word saying, Hey, we're just going to pass through your land where we want. We're not going to accost the land. We're not going to accost you. You leave us alone. We'll leave you alone. We're just going where we're going. And just let us pass. God's grace.

So many times people will look at the Old Testament and they'll say, God just seems so angry in the Old Testament. It's all of just judgment. There's nothing but judgment and killing and slaughtering and stuff like that. Well, I beg your pardon. Here's a picture of grace, a picture of mercy. An opportunity, yet again, to make the right decision.

Notice what Moses goes on to say: *“[28] You shall sell me food for money, that I may eat, and give me water for money, that I may drink. Only let me pass through on foot, [29] as the sons of Esau who live in Seir and the Moabites who live in Ar did for me, until I go over the Jordan into the land that the LORD our God is giving to us.’”*

So not only does he say we will come through in peace, he promises to pay him! For anything they eat and anything in the water that they drink. And you know what you could be– get pretty rich from a nation of 2.3 to 3.3 million people eating and drinking off your land. You know what happens in McCall every year when the campers come into the city. The city makes money off of people.

Imagine 2 to 2.5, to 3.5 million. People passing through your land, you can charge pretty much what you want for a cup of water. And then he even cites the fact that the Edomites and the Moabites both let him pass through, and there wasn't any problem.

Verse 30 says: *"But Sihon the king of Heshbon would not let us pass by him, for the LORD your God hardened his spirit and made his heart obstinate, that he might give him into your hand, as he is this day. 31 And the LORD said to me, 'Behold, I have begun to give Sihon and his land over to you. Begin to take possession, that you may occupy his land.' 32 Then Sihon came out against us, he and all his people, to battle at Jahaz. 33 And the LORD our God gave him over to us, and we defeated him and his sons and all his people. 34 And we captured all his cities at that time and devoted to destruction every city, men, women, and children. We left no survivors. 35 Only the livestock we took as spoil for ourselves, with the plunder of the cities that we captured. 36 From Aroer, which is on the edge of the Valley of the Arnon, and from the city that is in the valley, as far as Gilead, there was not a city too high for us. The LORD our God gave all into our hands. 37 Only to the land of the sons of Ammon you did not draw near, that is, to all the banks of the river Jabbok and the cities of the hill country, whatever the LORD our God had forbidden us."*

What is Moses doing? He's recounting victories. He's recounting victories, making it so when they get to the Promised Land the second time, they are going to be prepared more by the building up of their faith to finally enter in to the land.

We will go through Chapter 3 rather quickly. And *"Then we turned and went up the way to Bashan. And Og the king of Bashan came out against us, he and all his people, to battle at Edrei. 2 But the LORD said to me, 'Do not fear him, for I have given him and all his people and his land into your hand. And you shall do to him as you did to Sihon the king of the Amorites, who lived at Heshbon.'"* By the way, Og, the king of Bashan, is also an Amorite king

" 3 So the LORD our God gave into our hand Og also, the king of Bashan, and all his people, and we struck him down until he had no survivor left. 4 And we took all his cities at that time—there was not a city that we did not take from

them—sixty cities, the whole region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan. [5] All these were cities fortified with high walls, gates, and bars, besides very many unwalled villages. [6] And we devoted them to destruction, as we did to Sihon the king of Heshbon, devoting to destruction every city, men, women, and children. [7] But all the livestock and the spoil of the cities we took as our plunder. [8] So we took the land at that time out of the hand of the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, from the Valley of the Arnon to Mount Hermon [9] (the Sidonians call Hermon Sirion, while the Amorites call it Senir), [10] all the cities of the tableland and all Gilead and all Bashan, as far as Salecah and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan. [11] (For only Og the king of Bashan was left of the remnant of the Rephaim. Behold, his bed was a bed of iron. (He was a big man. Or he just had a big bed) *Is it not in Rabbah of the Ammonites? Nine cubits was its length, and four cubits its breadth, according to the common cubit.)*

[12] "When we took possession of this land at that time, I gave to the Reubenites and the Gadites the territory beginning at Aroer, which is on the edge of the Valley of the Arnon, and half the hill country of Gilead with its cities. [13] The rest of Gilead, and all Bashan, the kingdom of Og, that is, all the region of Argob, I gave to the half-tribe of Manasseh. (All that portion of Bashan is called the land of Rephaim. [14] Jair the Manassite took all the region of Argob, that is, Bashan, as far as the border of the Geshurites and the Maacathites, and called the villages after his own name, Havvoth-jair, as it is to this day.) [15] To Machir I gave Gilead, [16] and to the Reubenites and the Gadites I gave the territory from Gilead as far as the Valley of the Arnon, with the middle of the valley as a border, as far over as the river Jabbok, the border of the Ammonites; [17] the Arabah also, with the Jordan as the border, from Chinnereth as far as the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, under the slopes of Pisgah on the east.

[18] "And I commanded you at that time, saying, 'The LORD your God has given you this land to possess. All your men of valor shall cross over armed before your brothers, the people of Israel. [19] Only your wives, your little ones, and your livestock (I know that you have much livestock) shall remain in the cities that I have given you, [20] until the LORD gives rest to your brothers, as to you, and they also occupy the land that the LORD your God gives them beyond the Jordan. Then each of you may return to his possession which I have given you.'"

Now, what's going on here? Moses is recounting how the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh decided to stay on the other side of the Jordan in the land of Sihon and Og, those Amorite kings.

So you have two-and-a-half tribes who decided to not go into the Promised Land. Yes, the land was conquered by Israel. But remember, again, it was never

intended to be part of the Promised Land. At least it wasn't within the borders of the Promised Land. But these people, they saw this land. They thought, hey, it's a good land.

Let's talk to Moses to see if he'll give it to us. So they asked. He said, if you will go into the Promised Land with your brothers, armed for battle, and fight by their side, and help to dispossess the peoples who are there, fine, then you can live in this land. Your women and children stay here, your flocks and herds stay here, you come armed for battle, you fight with your brothers, and then after they're settled, you can go back home.

And they said, Agreed. That's what's going on. These men decided to, these two-and-a-half tribes decided to settle outside the Promised Land. And by the way, it wasn't a good idea. It just wasn't a good idea. They suffered for being as far away as they were. And these areas fell into paganism sooner than the other areas. And it just ultimately was not good to be separated.

Okay, did I read through verse 20? I believe I did. If nobody says otherwise, I'll pick it up in verse 21: *"And I commanded Joshua at that time, 'Your eyes have seen all that the LORD your God has done to these two kings. So will the LORD do to all the kingdoms into which you are crossing. [22] You shall not fear them, for it is the LORD your God who fights for you.'"*

Why am I emphasizing that so much? Because once again, the Promised Land is a picture of walking out the promises of God for you and me. And, Yeah, there are victories that need to be won, and there are battles that ensue. And there are times that we get beaten back, aren't there? Just like the Israelites. But I want you to notice this very important point at the end of verse 22.

God says you will not fear. You shall not fear. Why? Because it is the Lord, your God, who fights for you. And that is so important to remember as it relates to the battles that you and I face as well. God hasn't put you in the Promised Land, in the land of promise– He hasn't given you His promises, let's put it that way, –for you to walk them out in the flesh. *"for it is God who works in you, ... to will and to..."* act according to his good purpose. (Philemon 2:13).

It is God who works in you to will and to act. The battle belongs to the Lord. I want you to be encouraged. If you are in the middle of a battle right now in your life, and you are having maybe a struggle sometime right now holding on to the promises of God. I want to just encourage you with this, that the battle belongs to the Lord.

When we say the battle belongs to the Lord, that's not a Christian cliché, all right? That's not something we just say: Well, the battle belongs to the Lord. Let's make up some t-shirts, so everybody, we can all say it together: The battle belongs to the, hey, remember, the battle belongs to the Lord. Listen, the battle belongs to the Lord. Here it is, right here. It is the Lord your God who fights for you.

And you might say, well, pastor Paul, this is the Old Testament. But this is a picture of what has been given for you and me under the New Covenant in walking out these promises.

Verse 23. Moses gets personal with him and says, *"And I pleaded with the LORD at that time, saying, 24 'O Lord GOD, you have only begun to show your servant your greatness and your mighty hand. For what god is there in heaven or on earth who can do such works and mighty acts as yours? 25 Please let me go over and see the good land beyond the Jordan, that good hill country and Lebanon.' 26 But the LORD was angry with me because of you and would not listen to me. And the LORD said to me, 'Enough from you; do not speak to me of this matter again. 27 Go up to the top of Pisgah and lift up your eyes westward and northward and southward and eastward, and look at it with your eyes, for you shall not go over this Jordan. 28 But charge Joshua, and encourage and strengthen him, for he shall go over at the head of this people, and he shall put them in possession of the land that you shall see.'"*

And once again, the law cannot bring us into the promises of God, so Moses was not allowed. It says *"29 So we remained in the valley opposite Beth-peor."*