

Deuteronomy 1:26-46

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[0 : 00] Deuteronomy, Deuteronomy chapter 1. Deuteronomy chapter 1 is where we are at this evening. We're going to finish up the first chapter, connecting it with what we looked at Wednesday night.

If you remember Wednesday night, or if you weren't here, I'll kind of catch you up to speed. The book of Deuteronomy is Moses' final message to the people of Israel, the nation, before they go into the promised land.

And he is encouraging them. He is expounding, as scripture says, he is expounding the law. He's going to really bring the law to flesh. He's going to make it clear.

He's going to clarify what God is requiring of his people as they take possession. They are in a transition period. They're moving from nomadic wanderers who are gathering to people who are going to reside in one location and become farmers.

They're no longer going to be hunters and gatherers. They're going to be farmers and maintainers. And they're going to live in houses. They're no longer going to live in tents. And it's really just a very important time in a nation, if you think about it.

[1 : 03] Because from the time when God called the nation in a man, Abram, from the land of the earth, the Chaldeans, they have never been that resident people who lived in their own land and dwelled in their own houses and really were a settled people.

And God is about to settle the nation. I mean, this is big. This is the first time ever the nation of Israel will be settled when they go into the promised land. And he moves Moses to speak to them, the book of Deuteronomy, as preparation.

He has this final sermon of expounding the requirements and laying forth the blessings and the curses from obedience or disobedience. And Moses spends the first five chapters of the book of Deuteronomy looking at their past.

Because as is often the case, we learn most by looking from where we have been. And he shows them how they've gotten to this place. And he starts not where we would think. He doesn't start in Ur. He doesn't start in Egypt.

He starts in the people living in a covenant relationship with God. He starts at Mount Horeb, right? He starts at a place where they had made that covenant with God. And they are the Lord's people now.

[2 : 21] And in that covenant relationship, they are residing and moving forward. And they will spend the next 38 years, well, actually roughly 39 and a half years, in a covenant relationship with the Lord.

Because they were like 18 months there at the base of the mountain. But they're going to spend the majority of their time as God's covenant people. Most of it in disobedience.

Right? They wander around 38 years in disobedience as rebellious people. And that's really what kind of Moses is laying out to begin with.

Of how they've got from 40 years ago to this place today. How they've got here. Their back. And he's looking back over that. And he starts the first chapter very quickly.

And speaks of the 100 mile journey from where they were at when God told them to move to Kadesh Barnea. And we looked at Wednesday night how God brought them to the edge of the promised land.

[3 : 24] He literally led them to the edge. He said, this is it. This is where I'm taking you. This is the promised land. Go and take possession. Always remember, that's God's command. Here the land lays before you or lies before you.

Go and take possession of all that God has given you. Right? That's the command. Go and have it to land. Because God's promise was, I will drive out the nations before you.

I will go before you. You will live in houses you did not build. You will eat from gardens you did not dig. You will drink from wells you did not dig. You know, go take possession. And we make that transition now because they kind of delayed.

They didn't kind of delay. They did delay. And they said, well, we need a delegation of spies to go before us to make sure this is where we want to live. To make sure it's everything God said it was going to be.

And if you remember, then they found exactly everything God told them. It was a land flowing with milk and honey. It was a land that the produce was rich and abundant. It was a good land.

[4 : 22] But they also found some things that God didn't tell them. Right? He didn't tell them about the fortified cities. He didn't tell them about the giants in the land. He didn't tell them about people that were bigger than them.

But we looked at this reality Wednesday night. God is not compelled to us to offer us full disclosure. How many of us? I mean, I say this.

Okay, I'll say this on the moment. I am thankful God did not fully disclose everything he was going to lead me through or ask me to do the moment he called me to himself. Because I would have ran away.

That's why we call it progressive sanctification. If the Lord had said, I love you. I've paid the ultimate price for you. I want to forgive you and redeem you.

And don't you see how I care for you? And I said, yes. And he said, and I care for you so much. In the next ten years, these are the things I'm going to ask you to do. If he would have been full.

[5 : 21] If he would have given me full disclosure. I would have said, I don't know. Because those things could have never happened. From the moment I accepted Christ to the time now.

The things that he's done. The things that he's led me through. The places he's taken me. The things he's asked me to give up. The things he's asked me to take up. Those things don't happen without the power and the presence of Christ.

Right? So he calls us to himself. And then he leads us. He leads us through these things. But they pause and they're like, God didn't tell us about the giants and the cities and the walls and the people and all this.

And God said, that was secondary issues, not primary issues. Because the Lord God told them to take possession of the land. That's enough. So we looked at how they got to the edge.

I want us to see this evening as we start in verse 26 and go to the end of the chapter. Which gets us down to verse 46. Verses 26 through 46. I want you to see how they step back from the promises of God.

[6 : 24] Stepping back from the promises of God. By the way, I need to let you know this. If you get one of the outlines from tonight, there's a typo. Because it says 26 through 49. There are not 49 verses in the first chapter.

There's only 46. Just full disclosure on my behalf. You'll have to change that, right? I guess I hit it with the wrong finger. But we see in Deuteronomy chapter 1 starting in verse 26.

Yet you were not willing to go up, but rebelled against the command of the Lord your God. And you grumbled in your tents and said, Because the Lord hates us, he has brought us out of the land of Egypt to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites to destroy us.

Where can we go up? Our brethren have made our hearts melt, saying, The people are bigger and taller than we. The cities are larger and fortified to heaven. And besides, we saw the sons of Anakim there.

Then I said to you, Do not be shocked nor fear them. The Lord your God who goes before you will himself fight on your behalf, just as he did for you in Egypt before your eyes and in the wilderness where you saw how the Lord your God carried you, just as a man carries his son in all the way which you have walked until you came to this place.

[7 : 29] But for all this, you did not trust the Lord your God who goes before you on your way to seek out a place for you to encamp in fire by night and cloud by day, to show you the way in which you should go.

Then the Lord heard the sound of your words, and he was angry, and he took an oath, saying, Not one of these men, this evil generation, shall see the good land which I swore to give your fathers, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh.

He shall see it, and to him and to his sons I will give the land on which he has set foot, because he has followed the Lord fully. The Lord was angry with me also on your account, saying, Not even you shall enter there.

Joshua the son of Nun, who stands before you, he shall enter there. Encourage him, for he will cause Israel to inherit it. Moreover, your little ones who you said would become a prey, and your sons who this day have no knowledge of good or evil, shall enter there, and I will give it to them, and they shall possess it.

But as for you, turn around and set out for the wilderness by the way to the Red Sea. Then you said to me, We have sinned against the Lord, and we will indeed go up and fight just as the Lord our God commanded us.

[8 : 33] And every man of you girded on his weapon of war and regarded it as easy to go up into the hill country. And the Lord said to me, Say to them, Do not go up nor fight, for I am not among you, otherwise you will be defeated before your enemies.

So I spoke to you, but you would not listen. Instead, you rebelled against the command of the Lord and acted presumptuously, and went up into the hill country. The Amorites who lived in that hill country came out against you and chased you as bees do, and crushed you from Seir to Horema. Then you returned and wept before the Lord, but the Lord did not listen to your voice nor give ear to you. So you remained and condensed many days, the days that you spent there. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for this evening, and we thank you for the opportunity of opening up your word.

And we pray as we have read it now that we would clearly see it. And again, by the power and presence of the Spirit, that we would come to a spiritual understanding of the truths that it contains, so that they may be applied to our life for your glory and for yours alone.

We ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. I want you to see this evening what it looks like to step back from the promises of God. What it looks like when God brought them literally to the very edge of the promised land, and yet they chose in rebellion to step back and not follow the Lord fully.

[9 : 51] And something that we see over and over and over again among God's people, that God calls us to himself in a relationship, in a covenant relationship, and that covenant relationship always brings us to the confrontation of what God has promised us as his people.

And those promises, the claiming of those promises, takes a leap of faith or a step of faith. And too often we get to that place where God has laid clearly out before us what it is he is determined to do among us.

And yet we resist. Yet we pull back and we step away from what God is promising us, and therefore we lose the very benefit that God has determined that he would bestow upon us.

I want you to see three things which are highlighted for us among the people here who step back. Number one, we see the priorities of the rebels.

The priorities of the rebels. The people here are defined as rebellious. Not just disobedient, but rebellious. To rebel is to know what God has commanded and to choose in full knowledge of what God has commanded and also being fully aware of the power of God to accomplish it, but rather in spite of all these things to choose not to move forward.

[11 : 11] This is not to be uncertain. To be uncertain is much like we would see Mary and say, well, how can the Lord do this? When the angel Gabriel showed up and said, behold, highly favored one, the Lord your God has chosen you, and you shall give birth to a son.

And she said, but how? There was an uncertainty there. Remember that? And we always kind of contradict that with the passage of when Zacharias was in the temple, and the angel Gabriel would stand before Zacharias, and Zacharias asked what appears to be a similar question.

How can it be since I am old and my wife is advanced in years? We look at that and say there's wisdom for men because their wives never age. They just advance, right? Men get old. Ladies advance. And we see Zacharias asking the same question, and yet he is smitten.

He is chastised. He is made mute until these things come about. And we say, well, how can it be? Zacharias was operating in rebellion. Where was he at? He was inside the temple at the altar of incense, which was a representation of the prayers of God's people ascending into the throne room of heaven, and God hearing those prayers.

And how did the angel come to Zacharias? Your prayers have been answered. Zacharias should have been fully aware of the fact that God is a God who hears prayers, and therefore answers prayers.

[12 : 28] And when he did not take action based upon those things which he was aware of, he rebelled. On the other hand, Mary, being a young lady, not walking through those similar circumstances, was uncertain.

And the angel did not chastise her, but rather fully disclosed the truth to her. What we find among the nation of Israel is rebellion. They have been led out of the nation of Egypt. They have been led through the Red Sea.

They have been carried through that great and terrible wilderness, which they have seen with their own hands, and I mean with their own eyes. They have seen the Lord provide for them meat and bread. They have seen water come from a rock.

They have seen unclean water made clean. They have seen God provide over and over and over again. And now when he commands them to move forward, they are not uncertain. They are rebellious.

Because God gives his command based upon things which he has already exhibited that are true of himself. This is one thing that I have found. And I know I'm preaching to the faithful tonight, but it's okay if we do that.

[13 : 30] This is one thing that I have found. The longer we walk with God, the more he discloses of us, but the more he expects from us. And then when we do not step forward, we are no longer literally disobeying because of uncertainty.

We are rebelling because of unwillingness. This is why Jesus says, to whom much has been entrusted, much will be expected. Right?

And we see this here. We see the priorities here of the rebels because they were not willing to move forward. They were not willing to go up, though the report came back and it testified of the truthfulness of all that the Lord their God had said.

They were not willing. And their unwillingness really centered around their priorities because their priorities show themselves in what they are grumbling and complaining about.

Now keep in mind that they are inside their tents murmuring, which by the way is where most murmuring happens, right? In our private quarters amongst one another, not necessarily always out in the open, but I find great comfort here.

[14 : 37] I'll go ahead and put this out there for you because it says the Lord their God heard them because it doesn't matter if we murmur in silent or if we murmur in public, He hears us just the same. But yet while they were in their tents, they were murmuring and complaining and talking to one another and discouraging one another.

And each and every one of them, save four men, were not willing to go up because their thought was God was strong enough to bring them out, but He did not have the ability to take them in. He has brought us out of Egypt to give us into the hand of the Amorites and they will destroy us because He said these people are bigger than us. They're taller than us. Their cities are fortified to the heavens.

They are stronger than us. They are giants compared to us. They will wipe us out. Do you see what the priorities are? The priority of the rebellious is self-preservation.

It's all about us at this point. If I do this, it could be bad for me. And the most important thing the rebel is saying is me.

[15 : 38] Those people are bigger than me. Their cities are stronger than me. Those giants are giants compared to me. No longer is the priority the God that is leading them.

That priority begins to be turned inward and looking at self-preservation. It would have been better for us had I had stayed a slave in Egypt because then at least I would have been an alive slave instead of a dead free man.

They began to look at self-preservation rather than self-surrender. God had called them to be His people. He called them to trust Him completely. He called them to follow Him in obedience.

And they were unwilling to move forward simply because they began to prioritize self-concern over faithful obedience. And when we understand that all rebellion comes down to this.

What is our greatest priority at that time? All rebellion simply is melted down to the priority we keep.

[16 : 47] Are we the greatest priority at the moment or is He the greatest priority? Is His command the greatest thing that we know? Is His command, though we do not understand it, we may not have full disclosure of every bit of it, is that which He is commanding us to do greater than ourselves?

Or is the greatest thing in our life that which is most beneficial to us, so we think? We see here the priorities of the rebels. And He says, though God had done all this, you would not trust Him. Because look at what He says. He says, Do not be shocked nor fear them. The Lord your God who goes before you will Himself fight on your behalf just as He did for you in Egypt before your eyes in the wilderness where you saw how the Lord your God carried you just as a man carries his son in all the way which you have walked until you've come to this place.

But for all this, you do not trust the Lord your God. Because He was not more important than them at that time. And when we understand this again, go even tight to what we saw this morning in the book of Hebrews.

When we consider Jesus, obedience, it reorients our priorities. And we begin to see that they pulled back and they rebelled simply because they saw themselves as greater than Him.

[18:11] Anytime obedience is an option, we are operating in sinful priorities. To them, obedience was optional because they still had the right to choose.

And it was self-focused, self-centered priorities. Secondly, we see here the penalty for sin. And one of them is very glaring. And we see that. We see the penalty for sin. We've already read this once in the book of Numbers.

As a matter of fact, this is why we have the book of Numbers. If you remember the Jewish name for the book of Numbers or the Hebrew name for the book of Numbers is wilderness wonderings.

It's a two-fold name. It literally means this is the book of our wilderness wonderings. So, if there was not a penalty for sin, there were not wilderness wonderings. There would not have been the book of Numbers.

For that matter, there wouldn't have been the book of Deuteronomy because there wouldn't have had to been the second telling of the law. But God, knowing these things, you know, He allowed these things. He even ordained these things.

[19:09] And He appointed these things for our benefit. Paul would say that in the book of 1 Corinthians. All these things happened as an example to us. All these things happened so that we would take heed.

And we see here the penalty they have for their sin because it says in verse 34, Then the Lord heard the sound of your words. Again, that reminder that though we may be complaining in silence, we may be murmuring in secret, we may think the counsel that we are having amongst one another really is a private affair.

The Lord hears. The Lord heard the sound of your words and He was angry and took an oath saying, God took an oath against them. Just as He had made an oath or a covenant promise to them for the land, now He is taking an oath against them for a cursing or a penalty.

And we see this. He took an oath. Not one of these men, this evil generation, shall see the good land which I swore to give your fathers except Caleb, the son of Jephunneh. He shall see it. And I love how Caleb is defined here.

He shall see it and to him and his sons, I will give the land on which he has set foot because he has followed the Lord fully. Full following does not deny the existence of the obstacles.

[20:23] Full following does not deny the existence of the struggles. Full following says, in spite of the struggles and the obstacles and the danger, I'm still going to move on.

But here is the penalty which God gives them for their sin. The Lord was angry with me also in your account saying, not even you shall enter there. Joshua, the son of Nun, who stands before you, he shall enter there.

Encourage him for he will cause Israel to inherit the land. So the first thing we see is God says, you're not going in. The first penalty that he bestows upon them, he says, you're not going to enter in if you don't want to move forward in faith, if you don't want to lay a hold of what I'm promising you, if your priority is self-preservation, then I'm going to let you have yourselves.

You're not going to go in, right? He tells them they're not going to inherit the land. Now Moses here says he couldn't enter in because of them as well. Now wait a minute, because Moses couldn't enter in for his own sin, right?

Moses' sin was a failure to revere the Lord God before the nation and rebellion because God had said, speak to the rock.

[21:32] Moses said, should I or should we bring forth water from you out of this rock? and he struck the rock again. He rebelled against God's clear command. God didn't say chastise the people.

God didn't say rebuke the people. God said, just speak to the rock and let water come forth. They're my people. If I want to be gracious to them, I'll be gracious to them. I can rebuke them when I want to in my own time, right? And he failed to revere the holiness of God and in rebellion, again, knowing what God had commanded him to do, knowing clearly that God could do it, he chose to do something else.

But, on the other side, while Moses died in his own sins and was held out of the land because of his own sins, it was also as a result of the sin of the nation.

Because, just like Warren Wiersbe says, at any given moment, at any length of time, given enough time, given enough struggles, and given enough obstacles, any man could fall in the area where he is strongest.

This is why Paul says, that he who thinks he stands, take care, lest he himself also fall. Moses is known for his meekness, right?

[22 : 45] He is known for his meekness. Forty years of complaining, murmuring, people in the wilderness will remove any man's meekness. I'm just going to go ahead and say. Okay? And at one moment, he was not meek any longer.

He began to take matters into his own hands and was a little upset and he lost his cool. This is what we find out, that when the rebellious multitudes, priorities center on themselves, it will often affect others around them too.

The sins of the majority begin to affect even the faithful minority. All too often. And Moses says, as a result of your sin, one of the consequences is, I don't enter in the land either.

Because if you had walked forward in faithful obedience, I could have walked forward. Now, we don't need to get caught up in the if-thens because God does not operate in the if-thens. God was fully aware of the fact, being omniscient and omnipotent, God is fully aware of the fact that they would never go into the land the first time around.

God knew that, right? And we're thankful for that because these are some of the four ordained plans and purposes of God because those 38 years of wilderness wanderings are beneficial to us because it is at this time, Moses wrote the Pentateuch and we have it today to read and we have it today to learn from and we have it today to see his examples from us.

[24 : 11] But Moses is saying, you know, your unfaithfulness really created an environment for my unfaithfulness. And here's one of the penalties for our own sin, our unfaithfulness will create an environment to allow others to be unfaithful as well.

One other penalty of this sin that we see in verse 39, moreover, this is again still the Lord God speaking to his people through Moses, moreover your little ones who you said would become a praying your sons who this day have no knowledge of good or evil shall enter there and I will give it to them and they shall possess it, right?

So that's a further to continue on God's promises. But look at this penalty. But as for you, turn around and set out for the wilderness by the way of the Red Sea. Here's the penalty for sin. Go back. Go back.

The wilderness. How is that wilderness described? That wilderness is described in verse 19, that great and terrible wilderness which you saw on the way. So the penalty for their rebellion was to go back to that great and terrible wilderness which they saw on their way.

wilderness. Sometimes, one of the greatest penalties God can ever give for sin is to let man have his way and go back to where he just came from.

[25 : 30] they had to go back. not only were they not allowed to go in, they also could not stay where they were at.

They had to go back into that great and terrible wilderness which they had already seen. They had to go back into that place of discomfort, that place of really inconvenience, that place of total dependence upon God.

God, they couldn't stay in the hill country of the Amorites. They couldn't stay in the location where they were at. They couldn't stay in the region of fertile provisions. They had to go back because they were not allowed to go in and God doesn't let you hang out in between, right?

You can't stand on the edge of his promises and reap the benefits without rebellion, without, while living in rebellion and faithful disobedience. The only way you get to go in is to fully claim the promises of God.

God says you're either going to go in or you're going to go back. He says so go back because it's only here and that great and terrible wilderness that that generation that's coming up behind them

will understand their dependence upon God.

[26 : 42] Sometimes we see that when we live in rebellion, one of the greatest penalties that God ever gives us is to tell us you like it, go back to it. See how enjoyable it is and we see the priorities of the rebels, we see the penalty for their sin.

Third and finally we've seen this also in the book of Numbers but it is told us again here in the book of Deuteronomy and I think we pay attention to it because it is repeated and we see the presumption which they made.

The presumptive sin or the presumption which they made. Then you said to me we have sinned against the Lord. Now when did they say it? Remember we looked at this in the book of Numbers. When did they say it?

When they realized they had to go back. Right? When they realized they have to go back to that great and terrible wilderness which they have seen and they had already passed through. So their remorse here is not over their sin.

Their remorse here is over the consequences of their sin. They would have been content to not go in and stay there but when they realized that they couldn't go in and had to go back all of a sudden we have sinned.

[27 : 46] We're sorry we shouldn't have done that. We messed up. We would have been content to stay right here and you leave us alone. But if you're going to put us back over there if we have to go back there then we're sorry. So therefore it is the consequences for their sin not the avenue that led to them to sin.

They're not remorseful over their rebellion. They're remorseful over their consequences. Right? We don't want to go back. We definitely don't want to go back. We're content to stay here but we don't want to go back.

So they make this presumption. They say we will indeed go up and fight. Now wait a minute. Here's the first thing we need to just kind of pump the brakes on and see here about this presumption. Because the promise was this.

Go take possession of the land and the Lord your God who goes before you will fight for you. The penalty was if you won't allow me to do that go back.

The presumption is well we won't let God give it to us but we'll go take it. Right? The promise go take possession the Lord will fight for you.

[28 : 49] The presumption is well if he was going to give it to us then surely I can go win it myself. We will go fight. Now we can never fight for and earn what God has already freely offered us.

We will never win on the battlefield what God has already promised us in the heavenlies. It's not possible. Because we cannot earn what he's trying to give.

And the very promises of God are not based upon the works and the efforts of man. They're based upon the gracious extended hand of the Father. But man presumes to his own demise that he can earn what God has promised.

And they say well we don't want the penalty. We'd rather have the promise. And since we didn't take God at his promise let me go fight for it. Friend that happens all the time. To reject the gospel message message.

And to say well that sounds too easy. To look at the cross of Calvary and say well that makes no sense to me. But not want to live in hell but want to gain heaven. Man will say well I'm not going to take it based on a promise but I'll take it based on my efforts.

[29 : 58] And man presumes that he can earn what God has freely offered. And every time man starts to fight the battle on his own what he finds is he will never accomplish what the Savior accomplished on the cross in one act.

Because the word says here he says every one of you girded on his sword. Every man girded on his weapon of war and regarded it. Look at this. He regarded it as easy to go up into the hill country. Man has a nasty habit of regarding as easy what God has offered freely. If anyone ever tells you the gospel sounds too easy tell them they have misunderstood the gospel.

There's nothing easy about salvation. There's nothing easy about forgiveness. There's nothing easy about the cross of Calvary. I believe Jesus sweat great drops of blood literally in the garden of Gethsemane due to the burden of my sin that was laid upon him.

I believe when the Bible said he laid aside his glory in heaven and took on the nature of humankind. That was probably one of the most painful acts that history has ever recorded.

[31 : 02] And when it says that he was forsaken of the father and the father could not look upon him because of the sins of mine that were laid upon him. There's nothing easy about that. And when man regards as easy what God has freely promised it is slapping God in the face for the work he's already done.

And we see here they regarded as easy to go into the hill country. And the Lord said to them do not go up nor fight for I am not among you otherwise you will be defeated before your eyes.

And in their presumptiveness they said surely we could earn what God has already offered. And they went up anyway. And the same thing we find even in today's time when man tries to fight what God has already offered they always end up losing.

Because they went up in battle of Ray and they come running back like girls on a playground. No disrespect ladies.

As a matter of fact the Bible tells us in the book of numbers that the Amorites in that hill country drove them over a hundred miles away. That's the same distance they'd already traveled to get there to freely take what God had promised them.

[32 : 18] And now they're driven a hundred miles in the other direction because they tried to win it themselves. Anytime man presumes he can earn what God has already offered he will always be driven further and further and further away.

It says and then you cried and you pleaded with God. It says there and you returned and wept before the Lord. But look at this. But the Lord did not listen to your voice nor give ear to you. Why? Because God had commanded them go to the wilderness. We're done here. Fathers, parents, any of you ever done that. There comes a point, maybe it's just my nature, but there comes a point where I'm done talking with my children.

And I say, you know what I've told you to do? You understand what I've said? I'm done talking about it. When I see you doing what I've asked you to do, then we'll move forward.

Until then, I'm done. It's exactly what God did with his people. Go back to the wilderness. Go back to the wilderness.

[33 : 18] He wouldn't even listen to them. Because they presumed that they could take hold of what he was offering them. Presumptive sin assumes God will bless our obedience even on our own terms.

And friend, that is just not the case. Because unfortunately, once we step back from the promises of God, God says, now go all the way back.

We'll start all over again. Let's pray. Lord, thank you so much for this night. Thank you for your word. Lord, we pray your word would resonate within our hearts and minds and it would draw us closer to you for your glory.

And we ask it all in Christ's name. Amen. Amen.

Thank you.

[35 : 14] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.