

Deuteronomy 9-11

Good evening, church.

Let us turn in our Bibles to Deuteronomy Chapter 9, as we continue our study of the Old Testament here on Wednesday Nights.

Remember Moses is giving his final address here to the New Generation of Israelites that are about to cross over the Jordan without him.

Moses has been stressing the importance of obedience to God's Word.

This knowing and obeying of God's Word will be the determining factor toward their success in taking the Land of Canaan.

As they obey the Lord and keep His commandments, His judgements, and His statutes they will be blessed of the Lord.

However, they have been warned that when they forget the Lord, and follow other gods, and serve and worship them, they will be chastened and destroyed.

Now in chapter 9, they will be reminded of who they are, and how insignificant they are apart from Yahweh, and here their failures will be brought before them.

Moses will emphasize that God did not call them because they were a superior nation, or a good people. In fact, their calling comes from nothing in themselves. Understand this too, that you are not in church today, or a Christian today because you were a good person, or a special person.

Your standing before God was not righteous or above reproach.

You see the only people God saves today are bad people.

My 6 year-old daughter Sofia often prays a simple prayer, that has so much truth to it.

She prays, “God, help the bad people to find Jesus, so they can become good people.”

That its church, that is the business God is in today, he saves only bad people.

If you come to God as a good person, and expect Him to be impressed, the Word declares that your own righteousness disgust God, because there is no one righteous, not even one.

I marvel at all the social programs the Church has today geared at making people better, or even trying to make them good people.

It is a lost cause, the only hope for any sinner is that they come to Jesus and be Born Again.

Perhaps this is why the Gospel is losing its power in the Church today, because the culture deems it offensive to be called bad, or a sinner.

Oh, we try so hard not to offend, and bad people remain religious bad people, and never confront the sin that separates them from a Holy God.

Our prayer should be that of my 6 year-old's, that bad people find Jesus, for that is their only true hope.

Our message is one of freedom from sin, not comfort in your sin.

The Nation of Israel, as Moses will remind them were bad people, that God had set apart, they are only special because of what God has done in them, not because of what they have done.

So Moses starts out this 9th chapter, with him for the fifth time saying.... "Hear, O Israel."

Moses was speaking to Israel God's Word, and they needed to listen.

God's people live by faith, and faith comes from hearing the Word of God.

Israel's Rebellions Reviewed(Ex 32)

9:1 "Hear, O Israel: You are to cross over the Jordan today, and go in to dispossess nations greater and mightier than yourself, cities great and fortified up to heaven, 2 a people great and tall, the descendants of the Anakim, whom you know, and of whom you heard it said, 'Who can stand before the descendants of Anak?' 3 Therefore understand today that the Lord your God is He who goes over before you as a consuming fire. He will destroy them and bring them

down before you; so you shall drive them out and destroy them quickly, as the Lord has said to you.

Now this is interesting, God here is giving a report of the land to the people.

And God gives His assessment which is actually worse than the 10 spies who led Israel astray at Kadesh Barnea.

God knows this land very well, and He is not shocked about the conditions there in.

He knows very well that Israel is weaker than these nations.

God tells them their cities are fortified up to heaven, and impossible for them to topple.

He knows very well that there are giants in the land, and that the rumors are true, that no one can stand in opposition to the sons of Anak.

But in verse 3 God explains it is no problem for Him to consume every one of these obstacles.

God will be ahead of them in battle working to destroy these impossibilities.

They will have to join God in faith, and drive out these inhabitants, and participate in the battle, however, God has assured a quick and decisive victory.

God plainly tells them what is awaiting them, and really testing their hearts once again.

Notice God challenges them to keep their eyes on Him, He is a consuming fire...

It was Israel's fear of the giants in the land that kept them out of the promises of God.

Understand when our eyes are on the impossibilities before us, all hope will be lost.

But when our eyes are on our God, who has no trouble with impossible, the trials before us are doable.

I remember for 7 years of me and Jessica's early marriage, when people asked us about having kids.

We would tell them, "The doctors have told us it is impossible."

And for those 7 years we focused on the impossibility of it all, we tried fertility treatments, and surgeries, and surely it was impossible.

You know it took us seven years, to finally let go of that impossibility, and simply focus on God, we served Him regardless of our own desires, and we found contentment in serving Him.

And I remember once our view changed from our own heart break toward our God, He then made a mockery of our impossibility, here we are now waiting for our fourth impossible.

I don't know what giants you have before you tonight, but I do know our God, and time and time again He has shown Himself faithful to His people.

Focus on Him, and His attributes, and serve Him, and watch those giants fall.

He tells the Israelites of the hardships that await them, and that God will grant them victory, and perhaps He is expecting them to feel pretty privileged here, and

maybe even a little haughty because God is going to do this marvelous work on their behalf.

So, God next makes things clear as to why He is using them.

In fact, it has nothing to do with them as a people, they are nothing special as far as God is concerned.

Verse 4 goes on to clarify...

4 "Do not think in your heart, after the Lord your God has cast them out before you, saying, 'Because of my righteousness the Lord has brought me in to possess this land'; but it is because of the wickedness of these nations that the Lord is driving them out from before you. 5 It is not because of your righteousness or the uprightness of your heart that you go in to possess their land, but because of the wickedness of these nations that the Lord your God drives them out from before you, and that He may fulfill the word which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. 6 Therefore understand that the Lord your God

is not giving you this good land to possess because of your righteousness, for you are a stiff-necked people.

God makes it clear, that He is the Landlord of Canaan, and He is dispossessing the wicked inhabitants and He is simply using the Israelites as His tool of judgment.

Now when the Jews are living in the Land, they are not to think of themselves as more righteous.

This new land has nothing to do with them and their accomplishments before God, in fact, it has nothing to do with them at all.

The nations within Canaan had degenerated so much they had no more hope of being saved from their lost condition.

The sexual barbarity and idolatry had reached its limit, and the depravity of their hearts needed to be judged.

Even their own children fell victim to their demonic worship.

Because of their wickedness, God has raised this nation up.

The second reason again has nothing to do with the Israelite's righteousness...

God had promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that their decedents would possess the Land, and God was true to His Word.

Notice in verse 6 the emphasis here, this bountiful land was not given to them based on merit, because they themselves are a stiff-necked people.

But it was the Mercy of God, and the Grace of God, who heard their cry in Egypt, under the burden of their task masters that God found them and rescued them.

The land was a gift from God not a reward for their own righteousness.

Now today, God has not changed, He calls out His church by this same Grace and Mercy.

Understand we are nothing apart from His Grace and Mercy.

We deserve nothing, we are owed nothing, we are have been given such privilege and such a great

and noble calling to serve God and others, not because of our own merit.

I don't know where God found you, but He found Jess and I in the gutter.

Never, can Jess and I arise to an arrogant standing before God and His people, and think anything is owed to us.

Remember tonight where God found you, ponder that man or woman you were when Christ saved you from your sins.

That is something you never want to forget, because when you do that is when you begin to stand on your own righteousness, and begin to think something of yourself.

You know the Biblical narrative never changes, all throughout the Old Testament, God used men like Moses who were taken from nothing and failure, from places of self-defeat, and that is where God lifts the person up from.

One of my favorite depictions of this is Peter in Luke 5:1-11.

Jesus asked the proud man Peter to cast his net again after a night of failed fishing.

Peter argued with Jesus, but nonetheless cast his net once more and Christ filled it abundantly with fish.

But Peter's response to Jesus, tells of the condition a man of God needs to view himself before he can be used of God.

Luke 5:8 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"

Now it was from this realization that Peter is then called into the ministry of fishing for men.

You see it is when we are depleted of self that God can get the greatest Glory from our lives.

Today people have so many demands and expectations on the church, what it is or is not doing for them, but that is backward Christianity.

True Christianity is coming to God empty of ourselves, and handing Him the reigns to our lives, and serving Him and others purely.

If you don't think remembering our past is part of God's dealing with His people, you will have a hard time with the next part of our reading, because every mistake Israel made is laid out before them, to help them understand who they are apart from faith in God, and so they can be grateful for God's Mercy in their lives.

Failure is one of the greatest teachers God has in His toolbox, now, remembering and learning from your mistakes is different from being condemned by them.

Satan will take your mistakes and paralyze you, but Jesus will teach you from your mistakes not to repeat them.

Church remember who you were when God found you, because that is all you can amount to without Him...

Next we see their failures laid out before them....

Notice that first word here in verse 7...

7 "Remember! Do not forget how you provoked the Lord your God to wrath in the wilderness. From the

day that you departed from the land of Egypt until you came to this place, you have been rebellious against the Lord.

Remember at their departure even at the banks of the Red Sea when they saw Pharaoh's army approaching they said **Ex 14:11 "Because there were no graves in Egypt, have you taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you so dealt with us, to bring us up out of Egypt?**

Immediately they began to doubt their God who worked all the wonders and signs in Egypt, and Moses explains this rebellion continued...

8 Also in Horeb you provoked the Lord to wrath, so that the Lord was angry enough with you to have destroyed you. 9 When I went up into the mountain to receive the tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant which the Lord made with you, then I stayed on the mountain forty days and forty nights. I neither ate bread nor drank water. 10 Then the Lord delivered to me two tablets of stone written with the finger of God, and on them were all the words which the Lord

had spoken to you on the mountain from the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly. 11 And it came to pass, at the end of forty days and forty nights, that the Lord gave me the two tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant.

Now Moses recounts to them this supernatural encounter he had with the Lord, where God although it was impossible for a man to live this long without water, sustained Moses, and gave him the first covenant or contract, written in stone.

But before Moses could even bring this agreement before them they rebelled against it and voided the contract.

12 "Then the Lord said to me, 'Arise, go down quickly from here, for your people whom you brought out of Egypt have acted corruptly; they have quickly turned aside from the way which I commanded them; they have made themselves a molded image.'

They were making the golden calf while Moses was receiving their law, which the first two commandments spoke directly against this offense.

They were to have no other God before Yahweh, and they were to make no idols.

Aaron, the coward, bowed to the demands of the people.

He like the people looking to him as the leader, and as he claimed to Moses, he put the gold in the fire, and out came this golden cow.

And because of this great error Moses explains next...

13 "Furthermore the Lord spoke to me, saying, 'I have seen this people, and indeed they are a stiff-necked people. 14 Let Me alone, that I may destroy them and blot out their name from under heaven; and I will make of you a nation mightier and greater than they.'

God was so angry He offered Moses a nation from his own decedents.

God was going to wipe out the stiff-necked children of Israel.

Moses, had he been an arrogant, selfish man, could have taken this offer, and established the Mosesites as God's chosen people.

But Moses, passes his own test of heart, and intercedes for the people and spares them the wrath they deserve.

We read next...

15 "So I turned and came down from the mountain, and the mountain burned with fire; and the two tablets of the covenant were in my two hands. 16 And I looked, and behold, you had sinned against the Lord your God — had made for yourselves a molded calf! You had turned aside quickly from the way which the Lord had commanded you. 17 Then I took the two tablets and threw them out of my two hands and broke them before your eyes.

Moses sees with his own eyes the sins of the people, and breaks the first contract of stone, because they failed to meet the terms of the agreement.

Moses returns to appeal to the mercy of God, and ask for another covenant...

18 And I fell down before the Lord, as at the first, forty days and forty nights; I neither ate bread nor drank water, because of all your sin which you committed in doing wickedly in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger. 19 For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure with which the Lord was angry with you, to destroy you. But the Lord listened to me at that time also. 20 And the Lord was very angry with Aaron and would have destroyed him; so I prayed for Aaron also at the same time. 21 Then I took your sin, the calf which you had made, and burned it with fire and crushed it and ground it very small, until it was as fine as dust; and I threw its dust into the brook that descended from the mountain.

Moses, the great intercessor, pleads on behalf of the children of Israel and his brother.

The Lord listened to his plea.

Then Moses took the golden idol and burned it, crushed it, and ground it into dust, and through it into the brook, where he also made them drink their foolish golden god.

Moses understood that God hates sin, and extreme measures are taken to deal with the sin.

Sin, all throughout scripture is to be dealt with radically, not theoretically, as it is today.

People always want to philosophize their sins away and find some kind of justification to continue in it.

Moses modeled the right way to handle it. Destroy and end the sin immediately.

Jesus called for this same extreme approach...

Matt 5:29-30 If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your

members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.

Listen, if your computer at home is causing you to sin, and fall into immorality, throw it away, if you cannot use it purely.

If your smart phone is causing you to fall into immorality, trade it in for a dumb phone, a flip phone, I was just at Verizon they still have them.

What is your life worth?

Oh, I can't give that up pastor, I need it to do life.

Well, Jesus over and over again told us to live for the next life.

What if you gain the whole world and lose your own soul?

Deal with the sin in your life severely, if it is a sinful relationship, cut it off immediately.

If you have cheated a person out of money, deal with it as soon as you can.

We like to sit around a debate today, is this really sin, and we hang on to our molten images way too long.

I remember a young man in the youth room dealing with pornography on his iPhone.

After months of him doing better than failing again, I told him to get rid of the phone.

And he turned into Sméagol from Lord of the Rings.

“Not my precious,” and he panicked at the thought of not having his iPhone.

I guess that is what his soul is worth, for iPhone, he was willing to forsake the One True God, to dance around his Golden Calf.

Church, there is an apathetic spirit that has come over the Church of Jesus Christ, and the Fear of God has left God’s people.

If we, who are called by our God’s Name, will humble ourselves under the mighty Hand of God, and repent of our sins, which is to turn from them, deal with them speedily, grind them up, and cast out our idols, then

God who hears from heaven will hear our prayers, and heal our land.

God help us to do as Moses does here, and severely remove the sin from our lives.

Next, they are reminded of another incident...

22 "Also at Taberah

Taberah means burnings, and this is where the people complained against God, and the Lord sent a burning in the camp that killed many Israelites.

Next, we see...

and Massah

Where they tempted God, and God brought out the water from the rock...

and Kibroth Hattaavah you provoked the Lord to wrath.

Kibroth Hattaavah is where the people lusted for meat to eat because they were sick of God's supernatural provisions through the manna.

And God sent meat to their fill, and as it was still between their teeth when God struck them with a severe plague, and the people buried the slain their at Kibroth Hattaavah.

Then verse 23...

23 Likewise, when the Lord sent you from Kadesh Barnea, saying, 'Go up and possess the land which I have given you,' then you rebelled against the commandment of the Lord your God, and you did not believe Him nor obey His voice. 24 You have been rebellious against the Lord from the day that I knew you.

Kadesh Barnea is where the 10 spies brought back the bad report and the people believed the word of man over the Word of God.

And the New Generation is commanded to remember their errors, so they do not get prideful and say it is because of their own righteousness.

This was a nation steeped in failure, and they are commanded to learn from these mistakes...

Because of their mistakes, Moses their leader was having to continually intercede for them...

25 "Thus I prostrated myself before the Lord; forty days and forty nights I kept prostrating myself, because the Lord had said He would destroy you. 26 Therefore I prayed to the Lord, and said: 'O Lord God, do not destroy Your people and Your inheritance whom You have redeemed through Your greatness, whom You have brought out of Egypt with a mighty hand. 27 Remember Your servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; do not look on the stubbornness of this people, or on their wickedness or their sin, 28 lest the land from which You brought us should say, "Because the Lord was not able to bring them to the land which He promised them, and because He hated them, He has brought them out to kill them in the wilderness." 29 Yet they are Your people and Your inheritance, whom You brought out by Your mighty power and by Your outstretched arm.'

Moses pled with God not on the merit of the people but on the merit of God's own reputation.

Moses persistently prayed and petitioned on behalf of the people.

Moses appeals to God's Word and His promises, which never fail.

This is a great template for those of you praying for your Prodigal sons or daughters.

Don't pray for them on the basis of their own merit, pray for them according to God's Word, appealing to His Grace and Mercy.

Pray understanding they are bad, they are sinners, they are in rebellion toward God, and deserve nothing but hell for all eternity, but our God in His mercy has made a way for them to be saved.

Pray that they would surrender to His Way, and come through His Grace.

It is the only hope.

To many of us look at our children like they are good innately, and that humanistic viewpoint keeps them out of heaven.

God came to save the sinners, let your kids know this, and also let them know you are chief of sinners.

This is interesting, being in youth ministry for almost a decade.

The parents, I noticed, worked so hard to present themselves as devout to their children, they hid their past from them, and sheltered them from the reality that they too were sinners.

This was so damaging.

I just talked to one young man a couple weeks ago, who found himself in great addictions, and bound to tremendous sins.

His mother went and picked him up from the streets, and he is about 20 years old now, and she told him of her own struggles in addiction.

She never revealed to her son that she was a sinner once that God saved.

And he felt lied too his whole life.

Teach your children that you too are a sinner in desperate need of saving Grace.

They need to know that it is God's Grace that allows you to walk as you do today, or else they will try to mimic your religion, and not the relationship.

God saves bad people, He does not save on a merit system.

This is important, morality will not save your children. They need a propitiation for their sin.

I know how difficult this is, my daughters have me wrapped around their finger, and I catch myself thinking they are good kids, which they can be, but their natural condition is lost and sinful, that is the reality of their being.

And you know, they are not offended by it at all.

A child has a way of understanding their need for a Savior, better than most adults understand.

Sofia's own descriptions of the inward battle is profound at times, and leaves Jess and I in awe at the depth of her understanding.

Sometimes when she is having a bad night, being disrespectful, she will simmer down a little, and we will pray, and she will ask Jesus for help, and apologize for listening to the bad voice in her heart.

We cannot be afraid to teach our children the truth about ourselves and even the truth about their sinful state.

We were bad, and God saved us and is making us good.

So after Moses prays according to God's promises, God answers Moses' appeal by giving another covenant written in stone.

Moses came down from the mountain, and then went up for another 40 days...

The Second Pair of Tablets(Ex 34:1-9)

10:1 "At that time the Lord said to me, 'Hew for yourself two tablets of stone like the first, and come up

to Me on the mountain and make yourself an ark of wood. 2 And I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets, which you broke; and you shall put them in the ark.'

3 "So I made an ark of acacia wood, hewed two tablets of stone like the first, and went up the mountain, having the two tablets in my hand. 4 And He wrote on the tablets according to the first writing, the Ten Commandments, which the Lord had spoken to you in the mountain from the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly; and the Lord gave them to me. 5 Then I turned and came down from the mountain, and put the tablets in the ark which I had made; and there they are, just as the Lord commanded me."

Moses brings the second covenant which was made up of the words of the first tablet.

And God's Mercy is before us, as the contract is renewed and put into the ark made of acacia wood.

Next, Moses tells of the Aaronic priesthood's first generational transfer to Eleazar and mentions the Levitical Priesthood's ordination.

6 (Now the children of Israel journeyed from the wells of Bene Jaakan to Moserah, where Aaron died, and where he was buried; and Eleazar his son ministered as priest in his stead. 7 From there they journeyed to Gudgodah, and from Gudgodah to Jotbathah, a land of rivers of water. 8 At that time the Lord separated the tribe of Levi to bear the ark of the covenant of the Lord, to stand before the Lord to minister to Him and to bless in His name, to this day. 9 Therefore Levi has no portion nor inheritance with his brethren; the Lord is his inheritance, just as the Lord your God promised him.)

10 "As at the first time, I stayed in the mountain forty days and forty nights; the Lord also heard me at that time, and the Lord chose not to destroy you. 11 Then the Lord said to me, 'Arise, begin your journey before the people, that they may go in and possess the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.'

With the covenant renewed, the people were to move into the Land....

Next, Moses transitions from this remembering who they were, to emphasizing obedience to the terms of the covenant.

The Essence of the Law

12 "And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, 13 and to keep the commandments of the Lord and His statutes which I command you today for your good?

We see here a sequence of five requirements for them to follow; they are fear, walk, love, serve, and keep.

They are to fear their God, revere Him because He alone is God.

They are walk in the way the Word of God has laid out for them.

Us Christians are also called to walk the walk of faith.

We are Eph. 4:1 to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called

This walk comes about from daily fellowship with God through His Word, and as His Word speaks to us, we walk in the direction it lays out before us.

As Israel walked in God's ways, we see here it is to be done in love.

This is tantamount to God's people finding success, it cannot be laborious obedience, but it should be loving, grateful obedience.

You know the environment of church today is difficult. Commitment and stability are hard to find in the people of God today.

I know however, if and when the Spirit of God moves in His people, then they will be stirred by their love for Him, and their thankfulness to Him to serve and give to the work that is before us.

It must be a labor of love, or it is a religion that you are practicing and you will find no joy in the work.

The fourth thing they are commanded here is to serve the Lord with all their heart and with all their soul.

And when Love is the motivating factor this comes naturally.

When a servant of God begins to complain about the work of God, and what is or is not happening for them, their motivation is amiss.

But when it is a labor of love, the service is sweet and right, and your whole heart and soul are poured into it.

You know Greg and Julie Peterson work professional, demanding jobs, and yet when they do the marriage class, they give up their Sunday Nights to minister to the married couples here.

But for them it is a labor of love, the rest they could be getting is not even a thought for them, the anticipation they have on what God is going to do through their service motivates them.

This is true service. Their love gives them the energy to stay at it.

Understand each of you have a place in serving God with your heart and soul, every one of you have a purpose in the work of God.

And when you find that place, God consumes your life.

I think of Maria Gibson, she is a shy introvert, like me.

But she faithfully mans (woman's) our information table each week in the back.

I watch her, you know she comes in every Friday, and gets the info from Ashley, and then she joyfully goes to her post on Sundays and serves the Lord out of Love.

You see her reward for her faithfulness is just as grand as the donkey preaching the sermon on Sunday.

You see church, find your place in the service of God, find your place to serve in Love.

Lastly here, they are commanded to keep the Word of God.

This involves more than simply reading it.

It is living it, keeping it.

The Word of God is the central element for the Israeli way of life.

And the same goes for us today as believers.

The Word of God is useless if it is only read daily, and not lived out.

The power is in obeying it.

Listen, today many just like to sit around and talk about the Word of God, debate about it, discuss it, but very few choose to keep it and live it.

God has given us His Word to know Him, and to obey Him.

This is so important church.

You know, church attendance is pointless, Bible Study is worthless if it just remains head knowledge.

When Jesus walked this earth, He opposed no one more than those who knew the Word of God, and did not lift one finger to obey it.

It was Psalmist who declared... **Ps 119:105**

Your word is a lamp to my feet

And a light to my path.

There is nothing that is before you in your life that pertains to godliness that is not found in God's Word.

Read it daily, meditate in it, and obey it.

Understand the Authority of the One who has given it to us, as Moses proclaims next...

14 Indeed heaven and the highest heavens belong to the Lord your God, also the earth with all that is in it.

15 The Lord delighted only in your fathers, to love them; and He chose their descendants after them, you above all peoples, as it is this day. 16 Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer.

God in His Great Authority and Power chose the decedents of Abraham out of all the people of the earth.

It was His Sovereign Choice, and they should be humbled enough by His decision as to not stiffen themselves up against God's ways.

Their hearts were to be circumcised, as the fleshly covenant declared.

17 For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality nor takes a bribe. 18 He administers justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the stranger, giving him food and clothing. 19 Therefore love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

Because God cared for the least and the weakest, Israel too was commanded to love the stranger.

Obedience to this would show this special calling, for God had called them when they were strangers in Egypt, and is taking them into the promise land.

It is amazing how Israel became so prideful in their calling, and in the end they kept the stranger out from knowing their God.

It is not much different, for those who are called and saved by grace to look down upon the sinner they come across on the street.

It amazes me how quickly someone who was saved from vile sins, can raise themselves up in pride and arrogance, and began to look down their nose at others.

Paul rebukes such a mindset of legalism in **Rom 2:3-5**
3 And do you think this, O man, you who judge those practicing such things, and doing the same, that you will escape the judgment of God? 4 Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?

Never be haughty in your calling, for it is only by Grace have we been saved, and it is through the same Grace those who are lost can be saved.

May we not forget our own salvation, lest we be judged.

20 You shall fear the Lord your God; you shall serve Him, and to Him you shall hold fast, and take oaths in His name. 21 He is your praise, and He is your God, who has done for you these great and awesome things

which your eyes have seen. 22 Your fathers went down to Egypt with seventy persons, and now the Lord your God has made you as the stars of heaven in multitude.

Once again, they are reminded of how insignificant they are, and they are encouraged to keep God the main thing in their lives.

He is your praise, and He is your God, who has done these great and awesome things.

You were only seventy people at the beginning, and now behold the great multitude God has made.

And Moses, dismantles any self-worth they might have in themselves.

Now I understand a message like this will be deemed offensive and culturally unacceptable.

But this is truth, a proud and obstinate heart is offensive to God.

It is in our weakness we are dependent on the Lord, and it is when we see ourselves honestly, that God can use us.

But if there is any hint of selfish motives or over confidence in ourselves, God will take us to the school of hard knocks, and discipline is inevitable.

Love and Obedience are the keys to success as Moses reiterates next...

Love and Obedience Rewarded

11:1 "Therefore you shall love the Lord your God, and keep His charge, His statutes, His judgments, and His commandments always. 2 Know today that I do not speak with your children, who have not known and who have not seen the chastening of the Lord your God, His greatness and His mighty hand and His outstretched arm — 3 His signs and His acts which He did in the midst of Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt, and to all his land; 4 what He did to the army of Egypt, to their horses and their chariots: how He made the waters of the Red Sea overflow them as they pursued you, and how the Lord has destroyed them to this day; 5 what He did for you in the wilderness until you came to this place; 6 and what He did to Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, the son of Reuben: how the earth

opened its mouth and swallowed them up, their households, their tents, and all the substance that was in their possession, in the midst of all Israel — 7 but your eyes have seen every great act of the Lord which He did.

And now the instruction is given to those who were eyewitnesses to these events.

Who would have been 20 and under, who at this point would be the elders in Israel.

But to those who saw these things, they are held to a higher standard...

They saw the consequences first hand, of what rebellion does among God's Chosen people.

8 "Therefore you shall keep every commandment which I command you today, that you may be strong, and go in and possess the land which you cross over to possess, 9 and that you may prolong your days in the land which the Lord swore to give your fathers, to them and their descendants, 'a land flowing with milk and honey.' 10 For the land which you go to possess is

not like the land of Egypt from which you have come, where you sowed your seed and watered it by foot, as a vegetable garden; 11 but the land which you cross over to possess is a land of hills and valleys, which drinks water from the rain of heaven, 12 a land for which the Lord your God cares; the eyes of the Lord your God are always on it, from the beginning of the year to the very end of the year.

In the desert flatland of Egypt, they had to dig irrigation canals to work the land.

Man's hands provided for the bounty in Egypt.

But God is taking them to a land where irrigation will be impossible to build.

They will be dependent on God yearly for water and provision.

God's eyes are always on the land, and their bounty will be dependent on their obedience....

13 'And it shall be that if you earnestly obey My commandments which I command you today, to love the Lord your God and serve Him with all your heart

and with all your soul, 14 then I will give you the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the latter rain, that you may gather in your grain, your new wine, and your oil. 15 And I will send grass in your fields for your livestock, that you may eat and be filled.' 16 Take heed to yourselves, lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them, 17 lest the Lord's anger be aroused against you, and He shut up the heavens so that there be no rain, and the land yield no produce, and you perish quickly from the good land which the Lord is giving you.

So God promises two seasons of rain over the land.

The early rain will start the crop out, and the later rain will complete the crop.

Rarely does it rain in the summer in Israel, even today.

But these seasons were only guaranteed by Israel's obedience towards God and their love showed Him.

It is interesting that for centuries the land laid barren and was a wilderness because of Israel's disobedience.

Today, Israel is one of the world's largest fruit exporters.

The Land is once again bearing fruit.

God is the one who brings the increase in this land, His eyes are always upon it.

God warns them to take heed, that they do not turn to the pagan gods of the Land.

And when we get into the book of Judges in later months we will go on this tragic rollercoaster with the nation of Israel, as they go from bearing fruit, to being disciplined, eventually God would expel them from the land because of their failure in their area.

18 "Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 19 You shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. 20 And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, 21 that

your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land of which the Lord swore to your fathers to give them, like the days of the heavens above the earth.

Now the Jews took this very literal as we discussed last time, and although the Word of God was written everywhere, literal bound to their forehead in a little box, and literally on the doorposts, they failed to keep the Word of God in their heart and soul.

It does not matter if scripture is painted all over your house, on your kids pillows, tattooed on your arm, if it is not lived out, it will be powerless.

Now I am all for decorating the home with scripture, but if the kids see you treating your wife like trash, or they hear you cursing, or watch you drink alcohol, your actions will go much further than the wallpaper.

The Word is to be kept and lived out, this will bring blessing to your home, and will influence our future generations.

22 "For if you carefully keep all these commandments which I command you to do — to love the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways, and to hold fast to Him —
23 then the Lord will drive out all these nations from before you, and you will dispossess greater and mightier nations than yourselves. 24 Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours: from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the River Euphrates, even to the Western Sea, shall be your territory. 25 No man shall be able to stand against you; the Lord your God will put the dread of you and the fear of you upon all the land where you tread, just as He has said to you.

They are told the land is before them, it is there, all they have to do is go and possess it.

Everywhere their foot treads God has given to them.

The same is for the believer, as we daily look for victory in our Christian lives over the flesh.

As we step out in faith, God will help us conquer those areas where we are weak and vulnerable.

So many today are living in defeat to their flesh, because they have failed to take the victory by faith.

For so many years, I tried to quit smoking on my own, and I tried the patch, I tried the gum, I tried weaning myself off those filthy cigarettes, and I failed every time.

It wasn't until I realized that God needed to destroy my enemy.

I remember surrendering it over to Him, and by faith getting rid of those cigarettes.

Some people think it is heroic to keep a cigarette around to prove that you have conquered your addiction.

But that never worked for me, I always smoked it.

But when I was able to throw them away, in faith that God has taken it from me, I was able to gain the victory.

You cannot have any conditions, it must be complete faith in God.

Victory is yours, you just have to go take it. Believe me I have used every excuse in the book, and I had every reason for years why I couldn't do it.

But one day I resolved to believe God at His Word, and I experienced a power that conquered that sin.

The victory is promised to you Christian, whatever fleshly stronghold has gripped your life, just take it in faith. God will destroy that enemy and give you the victory.

1 Cor. 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

You know God took some enemies quicker than He took others, but as I faced each one, God showed me nothing can prevail over His power.

So victory was promised to Israel, they just needed to go in, in obedience and possess the Land.

Today this is most of the Middle East; we see Israel came up way short on taking the promises of God.

At the height of their Kingdom under David, they still had only taken about a tenth of the Land Promised to them.

And next we see they had a choice in the matter, two roads, the road of obedience and faith, and the road of disobedience and consequence.

26 "Behold, I set before you today a blessing and a curse: 27 the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you today; 28 and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn aside from the way which I command you today, to go after other gods which you have not known. 29 Now it shall be, when the Lord your God has brought you into the land which you go to possess, that you shall put the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal. 30 Are they not on the other side of the Jordan, toward the setting sun, in the land of the Canaanites who dwell in

the plain opposite Gilgal, beside the terebinth trees of Moreh?

Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal were twin peaks west of the Jordan.

Later Israel will camp there - and listen to the blessings and curses that God pronounces on His people - uttered from these mountains.

“Gerizim” means *“fruitful harvest”* – while “Ebal” means as *“barrenness.”* Sandy Adams

Chapter 11 closes with a prediction of success for Israel...

31 For you will cross over the Jordan and go in to possess the land which the Lord your God is giving you, and you will possess it and dwell in it. 32 And you shall be careful to observe all the statutes and judgments which I set before you today.

God will grant victory to Israel, but it will come through obedience to His Word.

Tonight, the message to us, is obedience to God’s Word, brings us victorious Christian living.

I don't know if you are here tonight fighting God in some area of your life.

Surrender to His way, to His Word, to find healing.

Be a doer of His Word, and believe Him at His Word, and you will have victory.

We are here to pray for you tonight, whatever troubles are on you heart and mind tonight.