Each day of our lives presents us with an opportunity to make choices that affect our destiny. Many people continue to make choices that effectively takes them backwards in life or going in circles and wasting precious days on earth. As we study the Word of the Lord recorded in Deuteronomy and spoken by Moses, we can learn from the mistakes of others, choose not to repeat them, and enjoy the blessings of fellowship with our Lord.

As this book opens, Israel has spent nearly forty years wandering in the wilderness because of their lack of faith and trust in God. An entire adult generation has lost their lives, with the exception of Moses, Joshua, and Caleb. Moses has allowed his frustration to cause him to lose his opportunity to enter the Promised Land (Numbers 20). He will preach a series of sermons to prepare the next generation to understand their history in a way that will encourage them to obey the Lord and enjoy the blessings He has prepared for them.

The English book title Deuteronomy comes from the words found in Deut.17:18 (copy of the law; second law; repetition) The Hebrew title (Words) comes from Deut.1:1 “These are the words” (elleh haddebarim) which Moses spoke.”

God reminds His people of their covenant relationship with Him, based upon His promise to Abraham and his descendants, and ratified again at Mount Sinai (Horeb). The Israelites spent about a year there, and then spent years wandering towards a destination that should have taken 11 days. They camped at Kadesh Barnea and sent the spies out from there. (THAT DID NOT TURN OUT WELL DID IT?) It takes eleven days to travel from Horeb to the border of Canaan (Promised Land; Palestine). It took thirty-eight years from border of Canaan to prepare to enter Canaan itself. (WHY?? DISOBEDIENCE!)

HOW LONG HAS IT TAKEN YOU TO GET FROM WHERE YOU MADE A COVENANT WITH THE LORD TO GET TO WHERE YOU ARE TODAY? HOW LONG SHOULD IT HAVE TAKEN??

The sermonic conversations in this book follow a pattern that was prevalent in those days among the Hittite nations and used for treaties between an owner and his “tenants”, referred to as a “Suzerain-Vassal” treaty, similar to saying from a superior to a servant.

1. **PREAMBLE:** Announces the treaty and those who are a part of it. (Deut. 1:1-5)
2. **HISTORICAL PROLOGUE:** Remembering previous relationship between parties (Deut. 1:6-4:49)
3. **GENERAL STIPULATIONS:** Conditions that govern the future relationship between the parties. (Deut. 5-11)
4. **SPECIFIC STIPULATIONS:** Detailed requirements that apply to the weaker party (tenant) (Deut. 12-16)
5. **WITNESSES:** Pagans invoked their false gods as witnesses. The Lord calls heaven and earth (Creation) to witness His words and Israel’s words. (Deut. 32)
6. **BLESSINGS AND CURSES:** The consequences of loyalty and disloyalty; obedience and disobedience (Deut. 27-28)
I. DISOBEDIENCE WILL ALWAYS SLOW YOU DOWN. (Deuteronomy 1:1-3)

A. There are frequent reminders in Scripture of the brevity of life and how precious time should be to us. To waste your time is to waste your life. Israel was still on the east side of the Jordan instead of having crossed over into Canaan. WHY ARE YOU WHERE YOU ARE TODAY??

B. Forty years after leaving Egypt, the children of Israel had still not arrived at their promised destination. Imagine the frustration and painful memories that must have flooded the heart of Moses. Countless friends had died because of being faithless, rebellious, and disobedient. We should likewise be grieved as we look around and see the unnecessary loss of life around us from similar reasons.

C. Moses spoke to the people according to all the LORD had given him to say (Deut. 1:3) Our job as leaders, and as those that care about those around us, is to speak the words of God rather than our own assessments of life’s experiences. (Deut. 1:3)

II. AS WE ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER TO MOVE FORWARD IN CHRIST, LET’S REMIND ONE ANOTHER OF THE POWER AND FAITHFULNESS OF GOD IN THE PAST. (Deuteronomy 1:4-5)

A. Israel had come out of slavery and had a nation full of men that were workers but not warriors. It is helpful to remember the LORD who fights our battles and defeats our enemies as we walk in obedience. (Deut. 1:4) KNOWING HISTORY IS VERY IMPORTANT! The victories over Sihon and Og are mentioned 17 times! Don’t forget what God can do!

B. Most people need to be motivated to keep fighting and moving forward when challenges lie ahead, especially during times of transition. Moses was (like we all should be!) wise enough to not depend upon his eloquence or charisma, but to direct people to the Word of God and the power of God. Jesus quoted and obeyed Scripture at every challenge of life.

“This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make you way prosperous, and then you will have good success. (Joshua 1:8)

“Sanctify them in the truth. Your word is truth.” (John 17:17)

III. THE LORD WILL GIVE GUIDANCE TO ANYONE WHO WANTS TO FOLLOW HIM. WHAT GOOD ARE DIRECTIONS IF YOU ARE GOING TO STAY IN “PARK OR NEUTRAL”? (Deuteronomy 1:6-8)

A. Israel had stayed at Mount Horeb long enough. After receiving instructions and making a commitment to obedience, it is time to move forward towards victory! (Deut. 1:6)

B. Just as the Lord had promised a specific territory to Israel, He has conquests prepared for you if you are willing to trust Him and pursue Him. WILL YOU BE ONE OF THE MANY THAT LIVES THEIR ENTIRE LIFE WITHOUT COMING CLOSE TO ACHIEVING ALL THE LORD WANTED YOU TO ENJOY? (Deut. 1:7)

C. Israel was promised a land that was full of enemies and obstacles. Possession would not occur until they believed God for the victories in spite of the opposition. DO YOU ALLOW YOUR OBSTACLES TO LOOK BIGGER THAN YOUR GOD?

THE COMMAND TO TAKE POSSESSION IS REPEATED ABOUT FIFTY TIMES IN DEUTERONOMY. THE OATHS AND PROMISES OF GOD TO HIS PEOPLE ARE LIKewise FREQUENTLY REPORTED. HE KEEPS HIS PROMISES. HE WILL ALWAYS DO WHAT HE SAYS HE WILL DO. WILL YOU CHOOSE TO OBED OR STAY IN YOUR WILDERNESS?

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