

## NO KNOWLEDGE BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL >>>

### DEUTERONOMY 1:34 – 4:2

~ Our Spiritual Safari rolls into giant country in this leg of our expedition, and Moses is still reviewing the first thirty-eight years wilderness journey with the second generation of the children of Israel. I think Moses was personally sitting around a campfire with the elders giving this oration. Moses is also interpreting the spirituality of the very real experiences Israel had in the desert. We know very definitely that Moses made a huge mistake so long ago appointing the seventy elders, which later became the Sanhedrin. That was truly a regrettable mistake compounded by the people themselves electing another committee to go spy the land. They are still steeped in unbelief – they simply didn't believe God. At least they are willing to hear Moses out. God promised that it was a good land for them, but the children of Israel said amongst themselves, "... we need to verify." Well, you'll miss one hundred percent of your opportunities dealing with God on that basis, friends. God said He would put them in the land, but they said, "... we're just not sure." Well, they saw it WAS a good land, just as God had said it was - but they also saw those giants.

As Christians, we find ourselves confronted by giants many times in this life. As a child of God, I am sure that you have found yourself facing a formidable foe in giant country at some point in your life. Well, if you're just a little pygmy like me, you'll have to admit it's always difficult to know just how to handle the seemingly insurmountable obstacles of this life. We can now find comfort that God has told us that He will handle the giants for us. All we have to do is believe. Our external circumstances are not our problem; no, it's the circumstances INSIDE our hearts that always cause our problems. Likely, the number one sin that is unconfessed is the breaking of the Sabbath by not resting in Christ continuously.

Alright, we witnessed the end of the first generation of the children of Israel in our previous report as they all perished in the desert. Remember, they had been turned back into the wilderness because of their unbelief. God commanded them to go in and occupy the land. They said, "... we don't think we can." So, back into the wilderness they went. We also saw

that every single man, woman and child who came out of Egypt in the exodus died in unbelief – except for three – Moses, Joshua and Caleb; the bones of all the others are being picked by vultures out there underneath the intolerably hot sun of that frightful dessert at the time in which we are studying. A new generation has come along now, and God is having Moses review the journeys and the Levitical Law for them. God is taking the time to speak to these people so that they might profit by being educated properly about the experience of their fathers. This is also part of their preparation for entering into the Promised Land....

I

***34 And the LORD heard the voice of your words, and was wroth, and swore, saying,***

***35 Surely there shall not one of these men of this evil generation see that good land, which I swore to give unto your fathers,***

***36 Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children, because he hath wholly followed the LORD.***

~ Caleb was a member of the spy committee, but he brought back an accurate and good report – as opposed to the false report of the others. Caleb reported that they could lay hold of the land. In the book of Joshua, we're told that Caleb took EXACTLY the land that he wanted, too. What do YOU want from God, friends? Many of you dear readers are parents, and many others are young people who are just starting out. If you think you are going to sit on the sidelines of life and get the things you want from God, I have some very disappointing news for you. Many people say that if we just pray and pray some more, God will hear us. Okay – I'll agree with that – but – even when we do get in fellowship with Him, we are going to be required by God to get up, get out and take possession of whatever it is we want. If a farmer prays for a good crop, he had better say "a-men" with a hoe in his hand.

Caleb said he had “trodden upon” the land he wanted. Well, God gave Caleb the ground that Caleb had “trodden upon.” I dare say many of us spend too much time sitting around doing nothing – while calling it prayer – and then we wonder why we are simply not blessed in our life at all. Well, that’s the entirely wrong approach to a successful Christian life. So much is said in the Word of God about the Christians walk; not much at all is said about the Christians sitting around idle – except for bad things. We really need to lay hold of these truths today, my friends. Caleb knew what he wanted from God, and he was prepared to go take it. We’re going to see a tremendous example as we get well acquainted with the man that is Caleb....

***37 Also the LORD was angry with me for your sakes, saying, Thou also shalt not go in thither.***

***38 But Joshua the son of Nun, which standeth before thee, he shall go in thither: encourage him: for he shall cause Israel to inherit it.***

~ Joshua will be appointed by God to succeed Moses after Moses’ death. Joshua is chosen because he was a man with experience; as well as being a man who had wholly followed God. Only two of the spies – out of how ever many spy's there were – and I’m sure it was quite a few that went, based on the massive area that they spied out – at least one hundred from each tribe is probably a low guess – well, only Joshua and Caleb brought back a true, good and correct report. If you’re actually reading these reports of mine, and reading them properly, you might want to make some notes here. Our responsibility is to believe God completely - and then step out in faith. How many of you have really done that? We are NOT going to simply sit around claiming great blessings and we are NOT blessed unless we move out for Him....

***39 Moreover your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, and your children, which in that day had no knowledge between good and evil, they shall go in thither, and unto them will I give it, and they shall possess it.***

~ Remember, the main excuse the children of Israel had given God for not going into the land was that their children would not be safe. That was purely pious pretentiousness. See, we're going to learn that the age of accountability is much older than we likely think it is. Some of these people who enter the land are teenagers, as we shall see. Further, children who die in infancy are very definitely saved. So, what's the problem? - Here, we have people who hadn't reached the age of accountability, and God did not hold them responsible for their elders refusal to enter the land. The old generation made an excuse not to enter. God made it very clear that was an insult to Him. What they really said was, "... God doesn't care for our children." Well, friends, God does care for your children; more than you do. The little ones they said would be in danger are the ones going into the land – and those parents who made excuses not to enter are dead and decomposing as this instruction is being given. This is an important road into the Promised Land....

***40 But as for you, turn you, and take your journey into the wilderness by the way of the Red sea.***

***41 Then ye answered and said unto me, We have sinned against the LORD, we will go up and fight, according to all that the LORD our God commanded us. And when ye had girded on every man his weapons of war, ye were ready to go up into the hill.***

***42 And the LORD said unto me, Say unto them, Go not up, neither fight; for I am not among you; lest ye be smitten before your enemies.***

~ You will recall from previous studies that when the first generation of the children of Israel arrived at Kadesh, they refused to enter into the land because of unbelief. So, they were turned back into the wilderness by God, and they were immediately met by the enemy. They saw a dreadful wilderness on one side, an enemy on the other, and they were scared to death. That's when they decided they would fight after all, and possess the land, as God had commanded them. Tragically, we saw God tell them that would not be acceptable. God's chosen people were out of His will in rank unbelief, friends; and when we are out of the will of God, His will simply

cannot be done – not at the time we are studying – and not in our lives today. We come to God on His terms - not ours. We do well to know what His terms are.

See, the children of Israel didn't suddenly repent and start believing God. Oh, no, they just didn't want to face the problems in front of them. The only reason they decide to do that which God had commanded was out of pure dread of the wilderness. They knew all about desert dwelling - and they didn't care for it. When fear motivates us, as opposed to faith in God, His will cannot be accomplished in our lives; particularly when we have disobeyed previously. God told them, after they disobeyed, that He was NOT with them. God spoke very clearly; but they still refuse to listen. So, the children of Israel went up now – presumptuously – up the hill – and it's not going to end well because that's not faith....

***43 So I spake unto you; and ye would not hear, but rebelled against the commandment of the LORD, and went presumptuously up into the hill.***

~ If the children of Israel had simply obeyed God the first time, there wouldn't be any problem now. Do you know anything about presumption in your own dealing with God, friends? I do. I know it never ends well. So, we should be sympathetic that there is a fine distinction sometimes between faith and presumption. Ultimately, God places the onus on us as believers to identify the distinction properly, correctly and completely between faith in Him and the presumption of our hearts. This where things get real with God, my beloved.

Most people proceed blindly with the plans they have created for their lives; erroneously and tragically believing the Lord has told them to do this thing or that. Then, they fail and lose everything. Some go spiritually bankrupt trying to make their lives work. Well, when you really talk to these people, you'll discover their "message from the Lord" didn't really come from the Word of God. Some get their message at a motivational seminar, and they claim God spoke to their hearts. They never seem to define the method of communication God had with them because they didn't consult their Bible first – or, at all. I heard of one man who did just such a thing and

his company slogan was, "God Is My Partner!" This man had a canned speech about how he took God along into the business capital venture world and how God had blessed the works of their hands and all of that. The success was unimaginable – until everything was stolen from him. He was left on the sidewalk in front of his multi-million-dollar condo wondering why God had suddenly abandoned him. Well, God didn't abandon him – that man was NEVER led by God in the first place. Trust a man that just happens to know what he is talking about when I tell you there's a world of difference between faith and presumptuousness....

***44 And the Amorites, which dwelt in that mountain, came out against you, and chased you, as bees do, and destroyed you in Seir, even unto Hormah.***

***45 And ye returned and wept before the LORD; but the LORD would not hearken to your voice, nor give ear unto you.***

~ The weeping of crocodile tears and the appearance of repentance these people exhibited was pious and dramatic. The problem was: it wasn't genuine regret of their disobedience, and it certainly was not a change of heart.

*2 Corinthians 7:10 For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death ~*

Of course, they're crying – because the Amorites have chased them down and may kill many of them – they're not weeping for their sins. We all know the thief weeps not for his crimes; he only weeps when he gets caught. This is the same age-old story we have always had. Human nature never changes. Something else we're going to learn soon is that there's nothing new under the sun. Well, maybe some new bones dead under the desert sun; but I digress....

***46 So ye abode in Kadesh many days, according unto the days that ye abode there.***

**1 Then we turned, and took our journey into the wilderness by the way of the Red sea, as the LORD spake unto me: and we compassed mount Seir many days.**

**2 And the LORD spake unto me, saying,**

**3 Ye have compassed this mountain long enough: turn you northward.**

~ Chapter two is further discourse by Moses to the second generation of the children of Israel laying out the unbelief of the first generation that came out of Egypt. They went around in circles at Seir for many years. Don't think for a moment God won't play along with your presumption. He does so because He has spoken clearly to you in His Word; irrespective of whether you have availed yourself of that information – and He knows He is going to win – and YOU are going to lose – by playing presumptuous games and calling it "faith." Remember, when the children of Israel left Kadesh, they arrived at Mount Seir. They had no idea where to go when this happened, and they were defeated. They are going round and round the mountain with Moses - and they may have been singing, ".... she'll be coming round the mountain when she comes" - but likely, it was more ring around the rosy, because I am certain it was only a game to them. Round and round – what comes around goes around – and the children of Israel could have told you why. So many Christians are living this life today. They usually label it "my best life now" or something like that. So, how about you, friends? Have you talked to the Lord about these things? Do you have it worked out with Him? This section of Scripture teaches some critical lessons....

**4 And command thou the people, saying, Ye are to pass through the coast of your brethren the children of Esau, which dwell in Seir; and they shall be afraid of you: take ye good heed unto yourselves therefore:**

**5 Meddle not with them; for I will not give you of their land, no, not so much as a foot breadth; because I have given mount Seir unto Esau for a possession.**

~ This remarkable statement is easy to read right over without a second glance. You will recall that God had said to Jacob, concerning Esau – who became the nation Edom – when Esau left the home of Isaac and Rebekah – that God had given Esau this particular land. This is where the rock-hewn city of Petra is today – utterly desolate. That was Esau’s possession. Well, it wasn’t desolate at the time we are studying, and God respects what He had given Esau. God isn’t about to take that away from Esau at this time. Later, God will tell Esau in prophecy to turn to Him or it will become desolate. If you go over there today, that land is uninhabitable. There would just not be any possible way to sustain civilization on that geographical topography. God Himself sets the boundaries of nations, friends – make no mistake. Most wars are fought because none of those national leaders respect God. God ALWAYS makes good on His promises! Even when we are talking about old man Esau – God stands by and honors His Word. So, now we’re going to go over some of the same old ground again....

***6 Ye shall buy meat of them for money, that ye may eat; and ye shall also buy water of them for money, that ye may drink.***

***7 For the LORD thy God hath blessed thee in all the works of thy hand: he knoweth thy walking through this great wilderness: these forty years the LORD thy God hath been with thee; thou hast lacked nothing.***

~ Even in their unbelief and disobedience, God understands our troubles and trials. This should be a great comfort to you. It is to me. God was with them the entire time. God was faithful even when they weren't. These people didn't lack anything, either; you may want to just write all of that down. When David was an old man, he could look back over his life and write, "... the Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." – King David had never wanted. Even in the caves when he was hiding from Saul, David lacked nothing. Of course, those caves David hid in weren't the Hyatt luxury hotel; no, more like snake and spider-infested, damp and dank holes in the mountains – but God gave David the necessities of life and God certainly brought David through that dark period. That holds true for you and me



today, too, by the way; and, frankly, this truth is where most people say "good-bye" to Jesus....

***8 And when we passed by from our brethren the children of Esau, which dwelt in Seir, through the way of the plain from Elath, and from Eziongaber, we turned and passed by the way of the wilderness of Moab.***

***9 And the LORD said unto me, Distress not the Moabites, neither contend with them in battle: for I will not give thee of their land for a possession; because I have given Ar unto the children of Lot for a possession.***

***10 The Emims dwelt therein in times past, a people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakims;***

***11 Which also were accounted giants, as the Anakims; but the Moabites call them Emims.***

***12 The Horims also dwelt in Seir beforetime; but the children of Esau succeeded them, when they had destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their stead; as Israel did unto the land of his possession, which the LORD gave unto them.***

***13 Now rise up, said I, and get you over the brook Zered. And we went over the brook Zered.***

***14 And the space in which we came from Kadeshbarnea, until we were come over the brook Zered, was thirty and eight years; until all the generation of the men of war were wasted out from among the host, as the LORD sware unto them.***

***15 For indeed the hand of the LORD was against them, to destroy them from among the host, until they were consumed.***

***16 So it came to pass, when all the men of war were consumed and dead from among the people,***

**17 That the LORD spake unto me, saying,**

**18 Thou art to pass over through Ar, the coast of Moab, this day:**

**19 And when thou comest nigh over against the children of Ammon, distress them not, nor meddle with them: for I will not give thee of the land of the children of Ammon any possession; because I have given it unto the children of Lot for a possession.**

**20 (That also was accounted a land of giants: giants dwelt therein in old time; and the Ammonites call them Zamzummims;**

**21 A people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakims; but the LORD destroyed them before them; and they succeeded them, and dwelt in their stead:**

**22 As he did to the children of Esau, which dwelt in Seir, when he destroyed the Horims from before them; and they succeeded them, and dwelt in their stead even unto this day:**

**23 And the Avims which dwelt in Hazerim, even unto Azzah, the Caphtorims, which came forth out of Caphtor, destroyed them, and dwelt in their stead.)**

**24 Rise ye up, take your journey, and pass over the river Arnon: behold, I have given into thine hand Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land: begin to possess it, and contend with him in battle.**

~ There are many things given to us as a result of the Holy Spirit producing fruit in our lives. However, there are some things we are going to have to contend for. The Zamzummims of verse twenty were giants. We still see giants today as some men grow to seven and eight feet tall. Well, this was a whole countryside full of potential basketball players. These giants were amongst the Amorites on the eastside Jordan. Here, we have a great principle of possession. The children of Israel were afraid to enter the land because of these giants. God now tells them to take the land of the

Amorites and God says He will give them the land through warfare. God is doing this to show them that He is with them and that He will enable them to overcome the giants; and this is all done to prepare the children of Israel to enter the Promised Land. The Lord sometimes permits us to have certain experiences; and many times, they are very difficult – sometimes profoundly challenging and emotional experiences. Well, these are always and only done to prepare us for life – that is – to be helpful to others. God very definitely permits these things to happen for a very definite purpose....

***25 This day will I begin to put the dread of thee and the fear of thee upon the nations that are under the whole heaven, who shall hear report of thee, and shall tremble, and be in anguish because of thee.***

***26 And I sent messengers out of the wilderness of Kedemoth unto Sihon king of Heshbon with words of peace, saying,***

***27 Let me pass through thy land: I will go along by the high way; I will neither turn unto the right hand nor to the left.***

***28 Thou shalt sell me meat for money, that I may eat; and give me water for money, that I may drink: only I will pass through on my feet;***

***29 (As the children of Esau which dwell in Seir, and the Moabites which dwell in Ar, did unto me;) until I shall pass over Jordan into the land which the LORD our God giveth us.***

***30 But Sihon king of Heshbon would not let us pass by him: for the LORD thy God hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, that he might deliver him into thy hand, as appeareth this day.***

***31 And the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have begun to give Sihon and his land before thee: begin to possess, that thou mayest inherit his land.***

***32 Then Sihon came out against us, he and all his people, to fight at Jahaz.***

***33 And the LORD our God delivered him before us; and we smote him, and his sons, and all his people.***

***34 And we took all his cities at that time, and utterly destroyed the men, and the women, and the little ones, of every city, we left none to remain:***

***35 Only the cattle we took for a prey unto ourselves, and the spoil of the cities which we took.***

***36 From Aroer, which is by the brink of the river of Arnon, and from the city that is by the river, even unto Gilead, there was not one city too strong for us: the LORD our God delivered all unto us:***

***37 Only unto the land of the children of Ammon thou camest not, nor unto any place of the river Jabbok, nor unto the cities in the mountains, nor unto whatsoever the LORD our God forbad us.***

III

~ So, we take one giant leap into this third chapter of Deuteronomy, because I have no intention of explaining the repetitious wilderness wandering again. If you have not read all of the safari reports from Exodus, and our first report from Deuteronomy, you should take the time to go back and read all of that for yourself before continuing. We have more details given than we had in Numbers regarding this log of destinations. However, along the way there were certain lessons that were to be learned. We're only going to hit the high points but, again, I highly suggest you read the Bible account completely after praying for wisdom, judgment and spiritual discernment....

***11 For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of giants; behold, his bedstead was a bedstead of iron; is it not in Rabbath of the children of Ammon? nine cubits was the length thereof, and four cubits the breadth of it, after the cubit of a man.***

~ Well, a "cubit" is about eighteen inches long, so we have a bed nearly fourteen feet by six feet wide. That's larger than any California King Size

bed they make today. This didn't just fit inside some little mud hut, either. Only kings had this in the palace. The lesson is that the problems in our lives are sometimes going to seem larger than anything we have ever seen in the world. Only God can overcome those problems, friends. There are things in this life that you are not capable or qualified to handle. When those storms arise, we either trust God completely or end up shipwrecked on the tragic isle of hopelessness....

***23 And I besought the LORD at that time, saying,***

***24 O Lord GOD, thou hast begun to shew thy servant thy greatness, and thy mighty hand: for what God is there in heaven or in earth, that can do according to thy works, and according to thy might?***

***25 I pray thee, let me go over, and see the good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain, and Lebanon.***

***26 But the LORD was wroth with me for your sakes, and would not hear me: and the LORD said unto me, Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto me of this matter.***

~ I hope you'll pay careful attention to what the Lord just told Moses in verse twenty-six, because that sums up our study of this chapter. There comes a time when God tells us not to speak to Him any more on a certain matter – and that should be sufficient for us. I don't know about Moses – or you – but I know I don't care much to hear that from God. If I were the Author of the Word of God, I might have left that part out. But, then again, I doubt I would have....

IV

***1 Now therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the judgments, which I teach you, for to do them, that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers giveth you.***

***2 Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.***

~ So, our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God ends this report with an admonition from the Lord to listen to Him. You'll only ever hear Him in His Word. This fourth chapter is jam-packed with spiritual meat that I trust is going to be a blessing to your hearts. They are told to hear God and do what they are told. We are to do more than hear the Word of God, friends – we are to DO what the Spirit of God tells us to do in His Word. How many of us add a little here and alter away a little bit there when God commands us? Maybe you don't know anything about that? Oh, my friends, if Israel had only kept the law of God there would have been tremendous blessing for the entire nation. Unfortunately, they are a demonstration in our ancient and modern history of a people who were given the law under most favorable circumstances, but they could NOT keep that law. No flesh shall EVER be justified before God. This isn't the product of an arbitrary God – this is so because our flesh is radically wrong – all the time – every time. That's our problem; at least, that's my problem – maybe not yours. Well, I think – I know – it's your problem, too; and that's exactly what we're going to examine in our next report ~

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