

Deuteronomy 1-4

“Remember your History”

Introduction

- Tonight we are going to begin a study in the book of Deuteronomy.
 - The word Deuteronomy literally means “the second law”.
- And that is what Deuteronomy is – it is Moses repeating to the children of Israel everything they have heard before.

Great – you mean to tell me we have taken months to go through Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers and now we have to have it repeated for us again.

- Yes absolutely.
 - We are going to go through what Israel needed to remember again.
 - And I am so excited about it – why???? - There is something about the book of Deuteronomy.
 - Couple of reasons.

#1 – When Moses re-gives the Law to this next generation, he does it in a different way.

- With the laws in Exodus and Leviticus and even Numbers those were done with the priests and the elders of Israel in mind.
 - Lots of detail or how many lambs are to be offered for this sin and how many cup of meal are to be offering for this sacrifice and on and on it goes.
- This second law is really for the people – so Moses skips over most of the detail and focuses on what the people really need to remember.
 - He adds warning and blessings as well.

#2 - Deuteronomy is quoted in the New Testament more than 80 times, making it the 3rd most quoted book in the New Testament other than Psalms and Isaiah.

- More than that – Jesus quoted from Deuteronomy over and over again.
 - Maybe you remember when he was tempted in the wilderness by Satan – with every temptation Jesus answered Satan with – the word of God.

“But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’” – Matthew 4:4

“Jesus said to him, “It is written again, ‘You shall not tempt the Lord your God.’” – Matthew 4:7

“For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.’” – Matthew 4:10

- But did you know everyone of those quotes come from the book of Deuteronomy.
 - Jesus apparently loved the book of Deuteronomy and used this book to fight temptation.

So if Deuteronomy is important enough for the New Testament writes to quote, for Jesus to memorize and use.

- Then it is important enough for us to commit to a faithful study of this book, even if the subject matter is a retelling of the law.

Man I didn’t know Deuteronomy was so important.

- Then I bet you are not going to fly through this book like you did through Leviticus and Number right?
 - You are going to slow yourself down?
 - And we will take the next few months to work through this book? – Right?

Wrong – 5 weeks, just like Leviticus and Numbers.

- Why?
 - Understand – this is key!

Deuteronomy is series of five sermons given by Moses over a period of 5 weeks, 37 days to be exact from what we are told in the text.

- And guess what – we are covering this book one sermon at time, for five weeks.
 - Each sermon of Moses, each Wednesday Night over the next five weeks together, except Thanksgiving Eve.

Which means we are covering this book at the exact same speed in that Moses did.

- He gave five sermons.
 - We will cover this book in five sermons.
- Those five sermons were spread out over 37 days.
 - We are going to cover this book over 35 days.

Listen friends.

- The pace is biblical – so stop your complaining!
 - No one is actually complaining to me about the speed we are going through the Word on Wednesday Nights, but I hear rumors – so repent!

Deuteronomy, this second law is the repeating of the Law without so much detail is about remembering.

- And the five sermons that Moses gives will break down as follows:

The Book of Deuteronomy – 5 Sermons.

- #1 - Remember your History – Chapters 1-4**
- #2 - Remember your God– Chapters 5-11**
- #3 - Remember your Law– Chapters 12-26**
- #4 - Remember your Covenant– Chapters 27-30**
- #5 - Remember your Leader– Chapters 31-34**

And tonight we start with Moses first sermon to the people before he dies, and he wants them to remember their history.

- It has been said that those who will not learn from history are destined to repeat it.
 - And knowing this Moses reiterates for the children of Israel their journey from Mount Sinai to where they were presently at this moment – the edge of the promise land.
- This first sermon of Moses in the book of Deuteronomy is 4 chapters long and has 4 points.

Deuteronomy 1-4 – Remember your History

- #1 – Our choices matter – Deut 1:1-46**
- #2 – The Lord is faithful – Deut 2:1-15**
- #3 – The Lord will fight for us – Deut 2:16-3:29**
- #4 – So obey Him and enter in – Deut 4:1-40**

- Lets consider those one at a time tonight.

Deuteronomy 1-4 – Remember your History

#1 – Our choices matter – Deut 1:1-46

- Lets consider those one at a time tonight.

Chapter one gives an overview of their journey from Mount Sinai to Kadesh-Barnea, the edge of the promise land.

- And it is amazing to me the clarity that Moses has to remember at the age of 120.
 - I mean even if you equate the average life span then to now he is about the equivalent of being 80 years old today.
 - If I am above ground at 80 that will be a surprise to most but to be able to recount camping spot by camping spot – it just goes to show you how amazing a mind Moses had – truly he was the instrument God used to record and write down the first five books of the Bible.

Moses recounts every place they have been and major events that happened to them along the way and if there is one big take away from the chapter it is that Moses wants them to remember, every time we chose to follow the Lord, it was a blessing to us and every time we chose to rebel, it never worked out good.

- Or in other words – our choices matter.
 - When I choose to believe God and follow Him – I am the one who gets blessed.
 - And when I choose to believe my rebellious heart that I know better than Him. – I am always the one who loses out.
- It doesn't change how God feels about me.
 - It doesn't change His love He has for me.
 - But my choices can sure affect my quality of life.
 - The people of Israel testify that was the case.

The children of Israel took what should have been an 11-day journey from Mount Sinai or the range of Horeb as it is called in verse 2 of chapter, to the promise land.

- But instead it took 39 years.
 - They spent one year at the foot of Mount Sinai, building the tabernacle, receiving the law.
 - But 39 of the 40 years were on them and their disobedience.

And that is the big time lesson.

- If you obey – you will be blessed.
 - And if you disobey – you will suffer.

But what I also love about chapter 1 is God also tells them why their fathers failed.

- In other words – learn from your history or you are destined to repeat it!

This is so important to consider.

- You see when we fall away from the Lord or have a time of just walking distant from him there is always a reason.
 - Something we got involved with
 - Something we aren't doing anymore.
- And part of the key to walk in victory when you come back to the Lord is to think through what it was that led you in that direction as Pastor Rob taught me.
 - And make changes as necessary.

When someone has given his or her heart to God, and I find out it was a recommitment. I always ask what made you fall away because then I can find out how to counsel them. This needs to go because it made you fall away. This needs to be done – it led to your distance from God.

- We need to learn from our failure.
 - Well what was it in Israel's case.
 - We notice 2 things.

Why did the previous generation fall?

#1 – They complained in their tents – verse 26-27.

- After they sent in the spies when they word came back that there were giants in the land and that the road would be hard, the talk began to spread throughout the camp.
 - And as people began to murmur, (love that word) – how it sounds it what it is.
 - Trouble and failure were sure to follow!

That is why we are exhorted in Philippians 2 – “Do all things without complaining and disputing...” – Philippians 2:14

- When we complain, when we murmur, the normal action that follows is disobedience to the Lord.

- Its not deeper trust or a resolving of the issue in question that follows complaints; no disobedience to the Lord is what normally follows.

Now some of us would say, but I don't complain.

- I mean when have you ever heard me Pastor Jason complaining.
 - I have never said anything to you, about you or this church or my job, or my spouse.
 - I don't complain... to you.

Awesome.

- But the danger is not just in complaining outwardly; the danger also comes from complaining at home, in our tents, to our family.
 - It says in verse 34, the Lord heard their words.
 - That is a sobering thought right there – that God is listening my conversations. – Him we are speaking about – He takes that seriously.
 - And not just the ones we have openly.

Deuteronomy 1:27 says they did it in their tents.

- It was with their friends, with their husbands, and their wives.
 - It takes two to murmur – and please don't think that it is okay to murmur and complain, even to your husband or wife, or best friend.
 - It was in their tents and it brought failure.
- It did with Israel and it will for you.

But – if I don't complain to my husband, if I don't bring people that irritate me to my wife, then how can I express my feelings?

- Are you saying to keep them inside, to bottle them up, to not express myself?
 - No way.
- But why don't you try prayer instead.
 - What does the Word say?
 - Cast your cares? – On your husband.
 - Pour out your burdens on your wife, because her burdens are light.
 - Cast your cares upon Him, for He cares for you.

Your Husband bothers you – bring it to the Lord, not your girlfriends.

- Your wife drives you crazy; bring her to the Lord, not your buddies.
 - Someone around you, you can't stand, take it to Jesus.
 - Don't murmur, don't complain.
- Something bothers you at work, here, wherever.
 - Take it to the Lord.
 - Beware murmuring in your tents.
 - If you share – husband pray for me on this, and leave it at that.
 - Wifey help me in this area – leave it at that.
- Murmur, complaining – lead nowhere but failure.

Why did the previous generation fall?

#1 – They complained in their tents – verse 26-27

#2 – They spied out the land – verse 22

- They had God's will; they knew God's direction.
 - And yet they seem to have this desire to check it out first.

Now what I want you to notice is nowhere in the text does it say God said, send out some spies.

- It doesn't say Moses brought this before the Lord.
 - It says this is what they thought the best course of action would be.
 - We know what God wants for us, but lets check it out anyway.
- And maybe you read that and think, seems smart to me.

- Seems like the right thing to do – Trust but verify may be good Middle East strategy or dealing with an abusive relationship – but it is not a good with God.
- No it is not.

Whether we are taking about not walking in the direction God has clearly laid out for your life, or walking in a direction He has said is harmful to your life.

- When you know what God is calling to do – do it, don't spy out the land.

Calvary Chapel Vista – where I was the youth pastor for 5, almost 6 years, is known for sending people out to start churches and those churches do well. 30 or so thriving Calvary Chapel's out of one, but 2-3 thousand, not the biggest church ever. Why are they so good at sending out, and having the churches work?

- Well I believe it is the way they do it.
 - Every guy knows, leaving Vista that you will get two months of support, and then you are cut off, no matter what, no matter what the circumstances.
 - And not only that – you know that no one ever comes back – you don't go and try it and if it works great, and if not, come back and do the youth – except me and Rob before me.
- And personally I think that is so good, because every guy that goes out from that fellowship knows, I'm not spying out the land.
 - I'm not seeing if this works.

The reason this is so important is there are always trials, and warfare in anything God is doing in your life.

- And if you at any moment think you can turn tail and run, you will.
 - Don't spy out the land; you know God wants you to be in.

With marriage – you know God wants you to marry that person, and then get married with no thought of divorce, no out.

- Don't spy out the land.

Well we are going to see if this works, and if it's hard then, well try something else.

- If it's hard??? – Who did your premarital counseling – of course it going to be hard – wonderful and hard.
 - And if you have the option in your mind – just spying out the land.
 - Then you are setting yourself up for failure, as did Israel.

And this applies not to just things you know are from the Lord, we do this when it comes to things the Lord tells us not to do.

- We have commandments clearly from the Lord for our lives.
 - But there is something within us – I'm going to spy it out – try it out – see it applies to me.
 - Don't do it.
- "I'm going to see if marrying a non Christian will work in my case.
 - Don't spy out the land – you will fail.
- I know the Bible says – sex before marriage is wrong, but lets just spy out the land.
 - You going to buy a car, you need a test drive.
 - Let me spy it out, see if it works.
 - Let me see if God word applies to me.

Oh precious church, don't be so foolish – it does.

- And when you know what God is calling you to do, or when you know what God is calling you to avoid, don't spy out the land.
 - Don't see if what God has said is true.
 - Don't spy out the land.
- Why????? – Look with me - [verse 32-33](#)

He has already spied it out for you

- God knows you.

- He knows everything about you.
- Things you don't even know.

And not just in a general sense, but I believe in a personal sense.

- He leads and directs your life in a direction made for you.
 - He knows it best for you, because He has spied out the land already for you.

Mature is the Christian, Victorious is the believer who listens to what God is leading them to do – and does not murmur, does not complain – but by faith walks in what God says is best, no matter if they understand or not.

- And maybe that is word for one of two of you tonight.
 - If it is – heed it.
 - For not heeding it what caused Israel to fail.
- And the reason for that failure is what God wanted them to remember from their history.
 - Oh we really need to keep moving tonight.

Deuteronomy 1-4 – Remember your History.

#1 – Our choices matter – Deut 1:1-46

#2 – The Lord is faithful – Deut 2:1-15

- As God recounts their history through Moses, in chapter two he moves on from the 11-day journey from Sinai to Kadesh Barnea to the 40 years wandering in the wilderness.

And He recounts how he brought them through the land inhabited by the relatives of the nation of Israel.

- Edomites being the descendants of Esau, Jacobs's brother.
 - Amorites and the Moabites were descendants of Lot.
 - And because they were children of Abraham – Israel was not to take anything from them or trouble them.
- Sometimes when you go to Israel the Arab traders will call our Jewish guides, "cousin" because they are.

Now there are a couple of things concerning their wanderings that I believe Moses wanted them to remember.

- The main one in verse 7 was the fact that God was with them.
 - Even after their failure, even wandering around outside of God's will.
 - God was still with them all the way.
- Truly Paul tells Timothy in 2 timothy 2:13 – even when we are faithless, he remains faithful.
 - What a wonderful truth that is.

That doesn't mean that there aren't consequences for sin.

- Just ask the whole previous generation.
 - God was faithful to them in the wilderness, but they all also died in the wilderness because of their sin.
 - They would be the first to tell you, God was good to us, but we still suffered because of the choices we made.

And even the next generation, I mean if you were 19 when your Father's failed, and you have been wondering in the wilderness for 40 years, sure you are glad you get to go in, but at the same time you are now 59.

- You are no spring chicken.
 - Not that you who are 59 and above are old, just not spring chickens.
 - Hey I'm not a spring chicken anymore – I'm just digging the whole deeper, lets move one.

Of course there were and there will always be consequences to our sin, it is why God tells us to run from it in the first place.

- So don't let the enemy diminish the seriousness of sin because of grace.

But also don't let the enemy diminish the wonder of grace because of sin.

- He will be faithful to you.
 - And that is one of the things I love best about the Lord.
 - He always wants to know if you are ready to move to what's next.
- We blow it in sin and rebellion, and there will be ramifications.
 - But God is not done with you.
 - God is not sitting in heaven ashamed of you.
 - He wants to know are you ready to walk with Him and take Him at His Word.
 - And you ready to venture into the promise land.
- To see those cities as promises God has for you and by faith and by the power of His Spirit to claim them one at a time.
 - Oh Lord you love me – I want to lay hold of that stronghold.
 - Oh Lord you want to set me free from bondages – I want to take that city by faith.
- Listen to me precious ones; the Lord doesn't want to talk about last week or last month or yesterday for that matter.
 - The Lord wants to know where are you going from here.
 - Where are you going from this day forward!

Deuteronomy 1-4 – Remember your History.

#1 – Our choices matter – Deut 1:1-46

#2 – The Lord is faithful – Deut 2:1-15

#3 – The Lord will fight for us – Deut 2:16-3:29

- Just read the rest of chapter 2.

We see in the rest of chapter 2 and very similar events mark chapter 3 is that the Lord is telling them to remember, I have been faithful to fight for you in the past and I will be faithful to fight for you in the future.

- The children of Israel were about to head into the promise land, which at first meant fighting many battles.
 - And the Lord at first reminds them – remember your history!!!
- Remember what I did to King Og of Bashan.
 - Those people should have destroyed you guys, you are not a trained army and yet you had a great victory, not one Israeli soldier died.
 - That was amazing.

And as we say so often around here – the Lord's past faithfulness is one of the greatest evidences your heart needs that God will be faithful in the future.

- It is why we encourage you to write down things you are praying about, write down what God is doing in your life.
 - Because later when you go back and read you realize, man – God did this and that, He is so good, He is so big.
 - And your faith begins to grow.
- God has been faithful in the past, God fought for you in the past, and He will again in the future.

God points this out another way my mentioning all over chapters 2-3 that the cousins of the Jewish people had to face giants to inherit their land too.

- In other words what the Jews were about to experience was not unique.
 - Other nations had a promise from God to give them land, and they had to trust Him to drive out the giants as well.

God is saying I have a long track record of being faithful to people, of keeping my promises to people, not only to my own people, but also to other nations.

- God past faithfulness to you strengthens your faith.
 - And even His past faithfulness to others builds your trust in Him.
- That is why we don't just encourage you to write down what God is doing in your life.
 - But to read this book – and see His faithfulness in the lives of others.
 - Why?
- Because as I read the Word and I see God being faithful to Abraham, to Moses, to Joshua, and to David.
 - I was just reading Ezra this morning and here are people who are trying to rebuild the temple in the city of Jerusalem and the people all around are discouraging them.
 - And then in chapter 6, King Darius, a pagan king tells the children of Israel, you keep working, you tell those people who are discouraging you that the King says stay away and in fact – I will pay for your rebuilding project.
- What? – Who does that? – who does that happen to?
 - God's people that's' who.
 - He holds the hearts of Kings in His hand.

We see in that in our chapters tonight in verse 30 of chapter 2

- God hardened the heart of King Og and used it for His purposes.

Wait a second Jason is this one of those examples of when God does something just completely because He wants to and poor King Og is just a pawn in His sovereign hand?

No – again the word for “strengthen” here means literally “to make firm.”

- What is means is that to destroy the Jewish people was already in the heart of King Og.
 - God strengthened what was already in King Og's heart.
 - That is why we always the see the balance between God doing something sovereignly and yet still holding man responsible for the decision he made.

God was strengthening what was already in hearts of King Og, to fight for the nation of Israel.

- And he will do the same for you and me.
 - We think why is that guys' heart hardening toward me.
 - Why is that girl treating me that way?
- Maybe – God is trying to do something great.

Back when I was in the college group here I was dating a girl and things were going pretty good and then her heart just changed. It was so weird. It was like the emotions just suddenly changed and I was talking with a friend on the beach about it, just pouring out my heart, “I don't understand what happened, why the change of heart?” And He said I think I know, because it's that she and I are dating now. What? That explains it. But then I went to the Lord and said why? Why would her heart just change and my “friends” heart change, I don't get it and it wasn't but three months later I started working here that I met this teachers assistant named Christy Apple – what a babe – loved Jesus, heart for ministry, loved me – awesome – thank you Jesus for changing hearts. You weren't working for my destruction, you were working for my good, as God always seems to be doing, we see in the end.

Deuteronomy 1-4 – Remember your History.

#1 – Our choices matter – Deut 1:1-46

#2 – The Lord is faithful – Deut 2:1-15

#3 – The Lord will fight for us – Deut 2:16-3:29

#4 – So obey Him and enter in – Deut 4:1-40

- You understand choices matter.

- You understand I have been faithful to you even when you were faithless.
- You understand that I have been fighting on your behalf and will continue to do so.
- So once again – choice matters – so obey Him and enter into everything God has for you.

Obey – Worship God, obey God, do things the right way - do not live in idolatry.

- To study ancient idolatry is so interesting because it has so many correlations to what we do today.
 - Not just that the names change but the things man worship instead of God remains the same. You all know that.

But the way they would worship.

- The reason they would worship was to obligate that god to bless them.
 - Ancient writings reveal that the gods of Canaan could do anything except feed themselves and they ate worship and sacrifice, - so they needed man to survive.
 - And if you fed them, well then they were obligated to bless you.
- A second thing to consider is idol worship was easy compared to the worship of Jehovah or Yahweh.
 - To worship Him you had to go to Jerusalem and obey commandments.
 - Idol worship was on every hill, and there were no commandments – it was easy.

And one last thing to consider is in idolatry everyone had a national god and then a personal god.

- We read of the Northern Kingdom of Israel one day would fall into Idolatry, but it wasn't that they stopped believing in God - He was their national god.
 - But then they also had these other things they served that were personal.

I mention this all to you, because to me it shows how idolatry is so prevalent today.

- Again not just in worshiping something that used to be called Ashtoreth and now is called pornography.
 - Or used to be called Baal, now success and money.
- But beyond that to the way we worship is so often idolatrous.

We come to church and worship and give and yet do we do it because we think it obligates God to do something for us.

- Well no – but I mean it couldn't hurt, I'll scratch your back, you scratch mine.
 - Friend, God doesn't need you to scratch His back.
 - We come here because of all He had already done, because He is worthy of praise and obedience.

Do we see our worship as easy?

- Well I know there is that book with rules and stuff, but I just related to God in my own way, we have an understanding of what He really wants from me.
 - Its cool -
 - Is it???? Because it sounds like idolatry?

No I believe in the God of the Bible, like most American's He is my God, my home god, and my national god.

- I just have these other personal things that captivate my time, my heart and my checkbook.

Precious ones – it is idolatry

- And God wanted His people back then to run from it and He wants His people tonight to do the same.
 - Our choices have consequences.
 - God wants to be faithful to us and to fight for us.
 - But our choices will have consequences.

And God pours out His heart and in fact says, I don't want you running after other things and other gods, other passions, because, verse 24 because I am a jealous god.

- What???
- Oh understand – not jealous like your high school stalker boyfriend – “who is that?”
- But jealous – like I am jealous for my kids and my wife and you guys.
- I want my kids to know and walk with God because I have seen of the other path.
- I want my wife to be blessed as my wife; I don't want to have to find joy and fulfillment in another.
- I want you guys to be the best loved and fed men and women around
- I am jealous for these things.

And God says I am jealous for you.

- Because if we go after other things, our choices have consequences.
 - God is trying to conform you into His image.
 - And if you were paying attention as we read – there is no one like Him.
 - No one so faithful, so amazing! – That is what I want to be like, that is what God wants me to be like.

Israel would have a time of national failure; they would be taken to Babylon, the center of Idolatry.

- And one of the reasons was, God wanted to them see what a nation and people were like that were totally given to those things.
 - And it was ugly and wicked.
 - And one of the good things that came out of the Babylonian captivity is Israel had never again struggled with idolatry in its history.

But do we have to go through the same fate.

- Experience is the best teacher, but I would rather learn from someone else's sinful experience than my own.
 - I would rather, God would rather we understand – choices have consequences
 - I will become like what I worship.
 - God will be faithful, God will fight for me – there is no one like our God.
- He wants to shape me into His image, so I want to run from other passions, and other gods and I want to run to Him and obey.
 - Every time I do – amazing.
 - Every time I don't – I always regret it.

Learn from your History, Moses would tell the people.

- And the Lord would remind our hearts of the same thing tonight.