

Message #6

Deuteronomy 3:1-29

No matter who you are here today, no matter what you are here today, no matter what you have or don't have here today, no matter what you believe here today, I guarantee you there is a giant in your world that is out to prevent you from obeying and believing what God wants you to obey and believe.

Let's say you are here without Jesus Christ. There is some major obstacle in your world that does not want you to believe in Jesus Christ and experience all of the wonderful blessings of God.

Let's say you are a believer in Jesus Christ, there will be some major obstacle in your world that will try to stop you from experiencing all of the wonderful blessings of God. Whatever the giant is, it is out to prevent you from going where God wants you to go and becoming what God wants you to become.

That point is very clear when we look at Israel.

When Moses wrote Deuteronomy, he did so because he wanted this new generation to make it. He did not want them ending up like the previous generation. So he has been telling them stories that show what happened when they did not obey God and what happened when they did obey God.

In Chapter 1 and the first part of Chapter 2, Moses told them how they failed to obey God and missed out on what God wanted to do for 40 years. But in the second part of chapter 2 and here in chapter 3, he reminds them that they had seen God bless them when they obeyed Him.

Now when he first told them about the failures at Kadesh-barnea, this generation was not even alive. But during the next 38 years of wandering, this new generation was born. Moses did not want what happened to the first generation to happen to the second generation.

Many of the things that he has been sharing at this point were things they had experienced. They had literally traveled up the borders of the Edomites, Moabites and the Ammonites. They had literally seen God give them victory over Sihon and now Moses wants them to remember one more major victory over the biggest enemy they had ever faced.

One of the major problems the first time was the Israelites were afraid of giants in the land. The ten spies came back and told them there were giants in the land (Num. 13:28-29, 31-33). So prior to this the new generation was hearing stories from Moses of how God gave land to other nations and in some of that territory, He defeated major giants. He told them how God took out the giants for the Moabites (2:10, 11, 12) and the Ammonites (2:20, 21, 23). **Now Moses reminds Israel that He did the same thing for them.**

There were giant enemies over which God gave them victory. We need to know that. Sometimes we think we are up against giant enemies that intimidate us and we have no chance. God does not abandon His people when they face those big obstacles; He is with them every step of the way.

AS GOD'S PEOPLE JOURNEY THROUGH LIFE TOWARD THEIR ULTIMATE DESTINY, THEY WILL FACE VARIOUS MAJOR, GIGANTIC THREATS AND INTIMIDATIONS; BUT AS THEY CONTINUE TO OBEY GOD, THEY HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR.

In fact, as God's people obey the word of God, they will see God give them various victories.

The victories of Sihon and Og are critical because it showed how God goes with His people to give them victory in life when facing various major threats and intimidations.

Moses is recounting what the nation had experienced when the nation obeyed God. Just as soon as Israel had victory over Sihon, here came the biggest of all, Og.

There are 13 facts we want to see here:

FACT #1 – Og, the giant, who was the king of Bashan, came out to fight Israel. **3:1**

After Israel had defeated Sihon, the king of Heshbon, she moved along the road, heading to Bashan. This was land east of the Sea of Galilee today known as the Golan Heights. It was a heavily forested area, known for its oak trees.

As they were going, they came face to face with the most intimidating opponent they had ever faced. His name was Og.

Og was an intimidating giant to fight. He was one of the last surviving giants of the land. The dimensions of his bed are given in **verse 11**. We tend to think that our king size beds are really big (76 by 80 inches, which is 6.3 feet wide by 6.6 long). His bed was 9 cubits long which is 13.5 feet long and 4 cubits wide which is 6 feet wide. So comparatively speaking, a king size bed today is about the width of this bed, but you would need to double it in length. This was a huge man.

Every now and then we see giant type people who are very tall. Many are in the NBA. The tallest man in the world right now is a farmer in Turkey who is 38 years old. His name is Sultan Kosen, and he is 8'1" tall.

Now when you see pictures of him, he obviously stands out. But when Israel was moving toward the Promised Land, the land was full of giants. It was intimidating.

FACT #2 – God told Moses not to be afraid of him for God had given Israel victory. **3:2**

Again those spies had turned Israel away from the Promised Land by the report of these giants. Well this second time around God was very clear that the size of this man or his army was no reason for Moses to fear him.

He was a king of the Amorite, also a king of the Amorite army (**v. 8**), so Moses had no need to fear because God would do to him what He had already done to Sihon.

When we are faced with an intimidating threat, the natural tendency is for us to be afraid. Certainly when you looked at the physical size of this threat, it was something that would make you afraid.

God says don't worry about it; I will give you victory. God says I have already handed him over to you. All Israel needed to do was to stay the course and obey God. If God's people would do what God told them to do, the outcome was already predetermined.

FACT #3 – God gave Israel victory and they destroyed their enemies. **3:3**

The outcome of this battle was exactly as God had predicted. Moses is very careful to point out it was God who gave us this victory. The enemies were so defeated that there were no survivors.

The victory was not due to their great ability or military prowess. It was due to God. God gave the victory and God deserves the credit for it. All the people did was to obey what God told them to do.

FACT #4 – God's people captured all the cities. **3:4-5**

There were 60 of these cities and Israel captured every one of them. These cities comprised a district known as Argob, which was the center of Og's kingdom. These cities were the heart of a larger area known as Bashan. They were well-fortified cities but that was no match for God.

Archeologists have concluded that cities back in this time comprised an area of 5-15 acres. A city contained a few thousand people. But fortified cities were not easy to take. They had high walls and barred gates. In fact, there are still some of the ruins of these cities that may be seen today. But I think the key is they are ruins. No matter how fortified they were when they were up, they are all ruins today.

No matter how impressive it looks, it is nothing compared to God.

FACT #5 – God's people destroyed all the people and kept all the animals. **3:6-7**

People do not want to think about a God who would actually sanction the destruction of people. But both the O.T. and the N.T. clearly teach that God is a God who is to be revered and feared and one of the things He does do is destroy God-mockers.

The depravity and the evil of these people prompted God to totally and completely destroy them. People don't want to think about the fact that God destroyed all people in the world by a flood. People don't want to think that God would destroy all who were in Sodom and Gomorrah.

People want a concept of God that is sentimental and emotional, but not Biblical. People don't want to know God in the way the Bible reveals Him to be and the Devil wants it that way. He does not want people knowing truth about God.

Those people who think when they die God will just love them into heaven are making an eternal mistake. They are going to burn forever. You either believe on Jesus Christ to save you or He will eternally destroy you and you will burn forever, whether you like it or not.

In the book of Revelation, God warns His own people in the church that if they persist in sin, He will start killing people.

God is a God of grace and salvation, but He is also a God of judgment and condemnation.

FACT #6 – God's people took all the land. **3:8-11**

God is not stingy with His people. He longs to bless His people. The land was from Arnon to Mount Hermon, which is a distance of about 140 miles. There were cities on the hillsides and in the plateau areas and all of them were captured.

Gilead describes the territory east of the Jordan river between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea. The actual bed of Og was in Rabbah, which is the modern day city of Amman, Jordan.

God wanted His people to remember that when they obeyed Him, they succeeded and prospered. Through their trust in God and obedience to His word they experienced one victory after another, even victory over a giant who had a huge bed.

FACT #7 – Moses gave a portion of the land to the Reubenites and the Gadites. **3:12, 16-17**

As the children of Israel were nearing the Promised Land, the land was so good that two and one half tribes wanted to remain and have that land for their land.

Moses gave the southern portion of land on the east side of the Jordan to these two tribes.

FACT #8 – Moses gave a portion of the land to the half-tribe of Manasseh. **3:13-15**

Moses gave the northern portion of land on the east side of the Jordan to the ½ tribe of Manasseh.

FACT #9 – Moses commanded the men to cross over and fight with Israel on the other side of the Jordan. **3:18-20**

It has been often observed that God does not call His people to a playground but a battleground. Moses said that the men who were living on the east side, still needed to go fight for the rest of the Promised Land on the west side of the Jordan. Then he said after they had taken all the land they could return home.

The men needed to go fight and take the land and the women needed to stay with the children. Once they had the land, they could return home and enjoy their inheritance.

FACT #10 – Moses commanded Joshua to remember what he had seen God do to the two powers who opposed them and said God will do the same to all the opponents in the land. **3:21-22**

Joshua had a big job to do. He had to take Israel across the Jordan and into the land. These previous victories would be critical for Joshua to remember. What he had seen God do on the east side of the Jordan was what He would do on the west side of the Jordan if they obeyed Him.

It is critical that God's people move forward for God, and one of the keys to doing that is not being afraid of the future; and one of the keys to not being afraid of the future is remembering that as long as we have obeyed God, we have seen God give us victory.

There is no enemy who can overtake God and if God's people are faithful to Him, He will not let that enemy overtake them.

FACT #11 – Moses said I begged God to let me cross the Jordan with you, but God would not let me and told me to stop praying. **3:23-26**

Now Moses brings up something very personal and private concerning himself. He was literally just feet away from going into that Promised Land, but he would not go in. He was under discipline because he had not obeyed God in an episode that had occurred many years earlier.

Moses was told by God to speak to a rock and it would produce water, but he got so mad at the people that he struck it twice (Num. 20:8-12) and, as a result, God said he would not enter the land. That rock represented God's Son and when Moses struck that rock it was an irreverent and horrible thing to do. Only God was in a position to allow His Son to be struck. His Son would be struck one time to produce the water of life and what Moses did was not acceptable.

Moses said he begged and pleaded with God to let him enter the land, but God said don't talk to Me anymore about this; it is not going to happen. In fact, God said stop praying. Imagine being rebuked by God for praying.

F. B. Meyer said there are some things for which we need to stop praying because God is not ever going to answer the prayer. Let me suggest some prayers you can stop praying right now:

- 1) God will not answer self-centered, self-glorifying prayers.
- 2) God will not answer ridiculous, illogical prayers.
- 3) God will not answer prayers being made by people who know they are not obedient.
- 4) God will not answer prayers that are contrary to His word.

Now why would Moses bring this up? He wants God's people to realize how important it is not to disobey God's word. **You can prevent God from doing what He wants to do with you and for you by disobeying the word of God.**

FACT #12 – God let me see the land but not cross over into the land. **3:27**

What we see here is the faith and obedience of Moses. God would let Moses see the land. He let him ascend up to the top of Pisgah and look over and see what he would be missing.

Moses was not bitter. He was thankful for what God let him see.

It is significant to note that many centuries later, Moses would stand on a mountain top in the heart of the Promised Land speaking with Jesus at His transfiguration (Matt. 17:1-3). So in all reality, 1,400 years later, Moses was in the Promised Land.

FACT #13 – God had me encourage Joshua and charge him to cross over and take the land.
3:28

Moses could have developed a bad attitude. He could have said, look at all I did for God in my life and now He wants me to encourage and support my replacement.

Moses was a true leader. He wanted to encourage Joshua and strengthen him. God told Moses to commission Joshua to take the people across the land and give it to them.

In **verse 29** Moses says we remained at Beth-peor.

PRACTICAL LESSONS:

- 1. God wants His people to obey His word and move forward, not backward.**
- 2. God wants His people trusting Him when they face gigantic obstacles.**
- 3. God wants His people to remember past victories He has given them.**
- 4. God wants His people to pray sensibly.**
- 5. God wants His people to know Him and His true character.**
- 6. God wants His people to remember all that He has done for them and given to them.**
- 7. God wants His people to help encourage and strengthen others to accomplish His will for their lives.**