

Clough Deuteronomy Session 3  
Deuteronomy 1:1-5 - The Structure and Content of the Preamble  
Fellowship Chapel; 27 Oct 09

Let's begin, we are on our third session and we are going to do a little review and then we'll be on the first chunk of actual text tonight. Let's open with a word of prayer. [He prays] I just want somewhere at the beginning of this series to acknowledge the help of several people over the years. Of course, Tommy Webb back there was the fellow who patiently helped record a lot of the Framework series, and Dr. Connie Vitaliti and a lady in Washington took the old version of the Deuteronomy series, which was I think 73 different sessions and transcribed them all and edited my foolish remarks out of them so I'm using their transcripts to help bring it up to date and make it contemporary with our time. And also Tommy Ice, Dr. Tommy Ice also reviewed and commented on some of the material.

So tonight we're going to just take a few minutes to review the correspondence between the traditional outline of Deuteronomy and the suzerainty-vassal treaties and we do that and it's in your handout, session 3 handout. Now there's six points under that correspondence, and I point that out because it's an interesting case where advanced discoveries in archeology confirm what traditional Bible teachers have been doing over the centuries. This book is pretty easy to outline, and it's interesting, a very stable outline, and the suzerainty-vassal treaties that were found that seem to mirror the same structure have a remarkable correspondence. And so some of the slides I've put on your handout, on the back sheet, there will be some extra photography here tonight on some of the slides because I want to give you a sense of the background of one of the corollary references in this text.

But if you're on the handout, it's on the back sheet, or you can look up here to the screen, you can see where we've taken on the left column the sections that have been found within these treaties, and then on the right side I've shown you kinds of sets of verses, one from Exodus and one from Deuteronomy, both forty years apart. And so you have... in Exodus you have a similar structure in the so-called book of the Covenant, and you have also a parallel in Deuteronomy, with some exceptions and I'll comment on those as we go along.

So we have the preamble which basically is there to identify the great king and corresponds with, "I am the LORD, your God," and so forth and so on, in the Ten Commandments. The historical prologue was the motivation to obey past benevolences, and that's important because this tells you the theology of the Old Testament. People have a caricature of Old Testament theology that God is just a meany God, He's a God of wrath, a God of judgment, and there's no gracious there. Well, that's not true. He has done things for Israel and He expects a response. He took the initiative and He expects people to respond. So that's a historical prologue section, we're going to be in that shortly. Then the stipulations, that's the vast bulk of the book and those stipulations are they because they say in excruciating details what these vassal kings, or the lesser kings were to do with the service of the great king. And the analog, of course, is in the Scriptures, Jehovah becomes the great king, and the tribes, the twelve tribes are the vassals, and they're obligated to do this, this, this and this.

And then we have part two, this section explains why there are strange, apparently strange, references in the book of Deuteronomy. And it's not like we need these to understand it, but it just emphasizes that this is a legal document that has to be taken care of. And so we have a provision for deposit and period readings, and those are given in the verses in Exodus and Deuteronomy. It's also, by the way, some of those are given in the book of Revelation. So you have this theme that if it's an important document it should be periodically reviewed. Would that in our country we would do that to the Constitution. Then we have the invocation of witnesses, which testify that there was a sense among the treaty people of an abiding standard of justice. And then we have the cursings and the blessings, and that would be the part of the motivation that history is rational, there are going to be consequences for choices, and we'll see that again and again. And finally you have the inaugural ceremony. So those are the correspondences.

And then we drew last time six conclusions from those correspondences on page 1 and that's where we review. First of all, that Deuteronomy is a unified piece of literature; it's not something that in the 19th century and the early 20th century higher critics would always say well, there's strains of this and that and Deuteronomy, like all the other Old Testament books were made up from a hodgepodge of lesser and earlier texts. That's not true, and what the conservatives have argued for throughout church history it's been confirmed.

Point 2, it is a contract, and that has very serious implications, which we'll mention again and again. The word "covenant" is analogous to the word "contract." And that means that it is a serious document that has to be literally interpreted. You do not have contracts sloppily interpreted. Try it with your bank.

Point 3, because God comes down into human history to enter into a contract that obligates him to man as well as man to him, that is a word, theological word, condescension, and when theologians use that word, condescension, it's a word which means God comes down and enters into a relationship with men and that is theologically important because today Islam rejects that concept. Allah, in Islam cannot condescend because in their thinking a God that would condescend would give up his transcendence. So there's a major, major difference here between Christianity and Islam, and it has to do, of course, with a personal relationship.

Point 4 is that Deuteronomy is a unilateral treaty, rather than a parity treaty. In a parity treaty the parties to that treaty are equal; in the unilateral that is not so, you have the great king and the lesser king.

Point 5, Deuteronomy reveals the interferences that the Kingdom of God makes in both human society and in the physical environment. So when the Kingdom of God operates in history it affects human society and it shapes human society and it interferes with the environment from the standpoint of man, of course. And that means that the dynamics of history, and that's why we have those two words underlined, is providence and revelation; revelation-God is verbally revealing Himself to the human race; and providence is that He is providing non-verbal circumstances to

undergird His verbal admonitions. So that's why we call it "show and tell," God shows like the acts of the Exodus but He also tells us the meaning of those acts. If God didn't tell us the meaning of the acts, we'd be sitting here trying to interpret, you know, why it's raining. We don't have any framework to interpret it unless He tells us. So you have to have verbal revelation along with the works revelation and the two mesh together.

Point 6, Deuteronomy gives us a key example of how the Word of God was taught in biblical times-its focus, in other words. And we said that it focuses on the heart first, and we'll see that again and again, it's comprehensiveness, and the motivations are both "carrot-and-stick." God has a motivation to win people, but frankly, within the law there are threats that if you don't do what I tell you to do you're going to suffer consequences. And that aspect people think is not present in the New Testament when it really is, but we don't like to see it there, but it's more flagrantly obviously in the Old Testament and that's why I think some people are kind of repelled by passages in the Old Testament because the Old Testament does have threats in it.

Now if you'll open your bibles to Deuteronomy we want to look at the first section; tonight we're going to be on the first five verses, along with a passage that gives a historical interpretation of Moses' references. And by doing that tonight and covering the Numbers passage, which is in back of this passage, it'll save us time later as we go through chapter 1, we won't have to cover a whole section in there with depth.

Now let's look, Roman numeral II we look at the structure of the preamble and as we look at the structure of the preamble you want to notice, follow me as I read the first five verses, and ask yourself the following question. What are the main verbs? As you go through these verses think about, not the subsidiary clauses, but what is the subject and what is the main verb. "These are the words which Moses spoke to all Israel on this side of the Jordan in the wilderness, in the plain opposite Suph, between Paran, Tophel, Laban, Hazeroth, and Dizahab. [2] And it is eleven days' journey from Horeb by way of Mount Seir to Kadesh Barnea. [3] Now it came to pass in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month, that Moses spoke to the children of Israel concerning all that the LORD had given him as commandments to them. [4] After he had killed Sihon, king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon, and Og, king of Bashan, who dwelt at Ashtaroth in Edrei. [5] On this side of the Jordan in the land of Moab, Moses began to explain this law, saying," so we consider that the prologue.

Now notice that, there's three times where it speaks of Moses speaking. So obviously the emphasis in this section is on announcing that Moses is speaking; this is Mosaic. And in your notes, the handout, I give you Jesus' references to this where yes, there are editors that came in, Moses is in the third person here, who organized the book, perhaps, but the point is that it's basically Mosaic. That's important. This is not something written down in the 6th or 7th century BC, this is not an invention of the later prophets, this is not some improvement on the so-called primitive beginnings of the Bible, this is Mosaic. And out of this, and thinking about the structure, you remember, as we started the slides tonight we mentioned that there are these analogs and in one in

particular is the preamble that gives the identity of the great king. And we said in Exodus 20:2 that's where, "I am Yahweh, the LORD thy God, that brought you out of the land of Egypt," but in the preamble section of Deuteronomy it's not Yahweh any longer, it's Moses; Moses is the subject, Moses is doing the speaking. In Exodus 20 it was Yahweh that was doing the speaking; forty years ago on Mount Sinai it was Yahweh who was speaking.

So what do we make of that? Here is an example of what a prophet does in the Old Testament, he stands in for God. So in Exodus you have God Himself speaking publicly such that if you were there with a digital voice recorder or tape recorder, you could have heard the God of the universe speak in Hebrew. That's an amazing thing to think about, just think about that a moment; that is a powerful statement against unbelief, that if that actually ever did happen in the past human history, wouldn't that by definition settle the question of the authority of Scripture? See, this is why you want to think in terms of concrete events of history. So there was God speaking, now Moses is speaking, and he's speaking in God's name. So here the prophet speaks and he's now taking the place of God; forty years later God does not speak any longer verbally, publicly so you could take a tape recorder and record it, but now Moses is speaking. So in this covenant renewal forty years later Moses takes the position that Yahweh did forty years before, because he is a prophet.

Now Roman numeral III, we come to the content of the preamble. And now we get into some of the observations of the text itself. It says: "These are the words," and in the Hebrew, and I brought a Hebrew Bible in, in case any of you have never seen one, so you can see it down in the front afterwards, and realize, of course, it starts in the back, but it's interesting to see if you've never seen a Hebrew Bible you can see one afterwards, look at what the Hebrew text is, this is what the text was before it was translated into Greek later on in history, and then into our English language. But in the Hebrew the books are titled off of the first few words. So in this case, "These are the words," [says it in Hebrew], "which Moses spoke to all Israel." So that's the title; so emphasizing "the words," that means this is a serious document. And the place is given, "the plain opposite," on this side of Jordan, on the east side of Jordan. So we're talking in general, looking at the slide here, we're talking in general this area, Mount Ebal up in here where Moses is going to die, the Israelites have come up in Transjordan here, they've moved over here, they are now in a position, Jericho is right there, this is just the north end of the Dead Sea, and they are going to move over and conquer and begin the conquest of the land. So this is the legacy of the document because Moses is going to die before this, and so these are his last words and they are given in a place. You'll notice how the Bible is talking about real history; it's not a mirage, it happened at a point in history, a place.

Now there's something else to notice about this text; you'll notice, if you skip verse 2, it seems to flow from verse 1 to verse 3 and indeed that's the flow of the language. "These are the words which Moses spoke," so forth and so forth, and [3] "it came to pass in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month... Moses spoke to the children of Israel," and that skips verse 2 because verse 2 in the original languages is actually an interruption, and you'll see that sometimes in Hebrew narrative; it's just a pause and it's an interruption, it doesn't flow in the grammar as you

would expect one event after another event after another event. And the reason for that is there's a little sarcasm here on the part of the editor. This was put in, and it could have been Moses actually in his speaking, but the information is stuck in there.

Now look at verse 2 and see if you can figure out why someone would stick that in there ahead of verse 3. Anybody got an idea about that? [Someone answers] Yes, it's clearly sarcastic because in verse 3 he's saying, "it came to pass in the fortieth year," they're going to do something that they could have done in eleven days. And that verse 2 is stuck in there to say hey folks, there's something we want you to know about this whole deal, that we could have finished this very quickly. So that immediately raises the issue of what on earth happened that it took forty years to do what they could have done in eleven days. And this features something else about biblical literature, that it is brutally honest, and the reason it can be so brutally honest is that the writers understood who God is, that He is a holy, sovereign, righteous Lord, and we are His fallen creatures. And it's an attitude of humility and by having that attitude of humility of being willing to admit our mistakes, admit our failings, that makes us real people. See, phonies can never admit their faults. And there's a brutal honesty to Scripture. And so people can laugh at confession of sin and they can laugh at us Christians for doing this, but it's what makes us real, because we have to, in the final analysis, live not in the world of our imagination, but in the world that God has created and supervises.

So we're going to get into now what went on, what happened. [3] "It came to pass in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month, Moses spoke." Well, I want to take you now to a passage in the Old Testament that is in another book that tells us what happened, and if you think about the sequence, if you look at the index of the Old Testament, it starts out Genesis, Exodus, and now we come before Deuteronomy there's a book called Numbers and if you turn to Numbers 13 we're going to spend some time in here because we want to learn about failure and recovery. So most of this tonight, our time, we're going to look at why it took forty years to do what could have been done in eleven days. Now these slides are not on your outline because photographs don't work too well in black and white in handouts, so I'm having to show you slides that just aren't on the printout. I want to show you where they were for thirty-eight years to give you a sense of the fact that this was not a nice camping trip; this was pretty tough environment that they went through for thirty-eight years, until an entire generation basically was killed, was killed off. This is one of these hard things about the Old Testament, God is serious.

And so here's a picture of Mount Jabal Musa which is the traditional Mount Sinai, back at least when I was there many years ago. It gives you an idea of the terrain, I want to just show you some photographs that I took as we drove around the Sinai. There are a few trees there, but as you can see it's not the best landscape in the world. Here's some more, it's just very quiet, by the way, if you've ever been to White Sands in New Mexico where it just seems to absorb your voice, it was like that, it was very, very quiet. Not his is Kadesh Barnea, and it's part of this water supply, I didn't show the whole picture but you can start to see the water here. So out of all this dryness, no vegetation, then suddenly you see this

water. That's why Kadesh Barnea became such an issue with them and why they finally settled there.

So let's look at this incident and it's a famous incident, Christians of ages ago would use Numbers 13 and Numbers 14 as a source of encouragement, and I think we can be encouraged by this; it's a challenge to us. The book of Numbers is basically in the Canon to explain what went wrong, the bridge between Exodus and Sinai and gee, in eleven days we can get in there and do our thing, but it fell apart, something went systematically wrong with the nation. So right at the beginning we have failure and this is an analysis of the failure and the Holy Spirit gives us the history. So let's look at the history and look at some of the mechanics that were involved.

Numbers 13:1, "and the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, [2] Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the children of Israel; from each tribe of their fathers you will send a man, every one a leader among them." In verse 16 he gives you the names of these men, so it's a matter of history. You'll notice the text that it's saying look, historically here the guys are, so when they come back and they give their report, there's going to be a disagreement here, and by listing these men they can't hide. This name has been put in the Canon of Scripture so these guys go down in history for the report that they signed. We come, then, to verse 21 where "they went up and they spied out the land from the Wilderness of Zin, as far as Rehob, near the entrance of Hamath." Now Hamath, the best we can tell, is up near where Syria is; later we'll see the surprising size of the land that God was offering them. Had they taken this, had Israel been successful, we wouldn't have a Middle East problem today because there wouldn't be any Arab nations, like Lebanon and Syria and so on because Hamath is up in where modern day Syria is. So when we talk about Eretz Yisrael, the land of Israel, we're talking about a pretty big domain. It's not just a little sliver of fourteen miles along the eastern end of the Mediterranean.

So they went up and they spied out this land, they covered a lot of real estate, and then they began to report what they saw. In verse 22, "And they went up through the South and came to Hebron:" this is the center, and "the descendants of Anak were there." Now we'll get into these guys later in chapter 2 but the sons of Anak, either they were genetic freaks or something, but they were giants. I have seen reports but I have never been able to confirm the reliability of the sources, of finding of large human skeletons in this part of the world. We do know from biblical dimensions that Goliath was nine and three quarter feet tall. So these guys would make quite a big basketball team. They could drop the ball in the basket without jumping. So when we're talking about these guys, nine and ten feet tall, I mean, this was a little disturbing to these short guys coming out of Egypt. So it was a real threat, it was a real physical surprise.

And we come now down to the discussion in verse 26, "they departed," and oh, by the way, notice in the ensuing verses, verse 23, 24, they're taking samples of the fruit of the land back, so that proves that it was a land of milk and honey, there was agricultural prosperity in the land at that time and they took it back as proof, as evidence, so you didn't have to trust them just at their word. "Now they departed," that is, from the

land and from their spy mission, and they "came back to Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of the children of Israel," so they're out in the wilderness now, and this is back before the incident... before the writing of the book of Deuteronomy, this is back when they were first told to go into the land forty years ago.

And the report comes back and in verse 27, "they told him." Now watch the behavior, that's the key in this passage, because mentally we go through the same thing and it's a neat model; "they told him, 'We went to the land where you sent us. It does flow with milk and honey.'" So, is that report saying exactly what God said? Yes. He said he was going to give them that and the empirical evidence was that that land was there, and this is its fruit, but.... Now we have the negative, "Nevertheless, the people who dwell in the land are strong; the cities are fortified and they are very large; moreover we saw the descendants of Anak there." And besides, [29] "The Amalekites dwell in the land of the South; the Hittites, the Jebusites and the Amorites dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea," in other words, it's inhabited, we're not walking into a garden that's uninhabited, there are people here and they're tough people, and you'll see they have fortified, see where it says their cities are fortified, so there's a strong militarily significant population there. [30] "So Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once and take it, for we are well able to overcome it." So there's one member of the committee and his analysis of the situation.

[31] "But the men who had gone up with him said, We are not able to go up against the people, they are stronger than we are. [32] And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, The land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature. [33] There were giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight." So keep in your memory verse 13 because as this discussion unfolds watch the shift in the metaphors. In verse 33 the metaphor is grasshopper, we are grasshoppers.

So that's one of the key take-away pictures, that's their picture there. Well now in chapter 14, now we have the reaction of the congregation, and this shows a fundamental thing about unbelief and an emotional reaction that you always have to watch and that is unbelief and fear are contagious. And this is uniformity, this is the Gideon story; fear is a contagion and two or three people can flip out a whole group of people because fear spreads. [14:1] "So all the congregation," notice the word "all," "all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night." Now we have a real emotional reaction here. So by verse 1 we've got emotions in high gear and when emotions are in high gear we don't think correctly. When you're emotionally upset you cannot think correctly and objectively, you're just too upset to do that. So now we've got a crisis; here are a group of believers falling apart, emotionally upset and the theme is God has led them into a mess. And so, [2]"All the children of Israel complained," this is number two, not only do we find that unbelief is contagious, but unbelief and emotional revolt often leads to blame shifting, we've got to blame somebody for it, we can't assume personal responsibility so we blame

someone else for it. So the first people who are the targets are Moses and Aaron. And so the whole congregation said... they "complained against Moses," and said "if only we had died in the land of Egypt! And if only we had died in the wilderness! [3] Why has the LORD brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and children should become victims? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt? [4] So they said to one another, 'Let us select a leader and return to Egypt.'" So now we're in a wonderful position.

And what we want to do here is show some slides that I've shown before but I want to show them the mechanics of what's going on here. This is my little famous amoeba slide and this is an attempt on my part to picture unbelief and disaster. When we grab, maybe a chunk of truth and we disconnect it from the overall message of Scripture, and the overall framework reference of Scripture, unbelief swallows up, strategically envelops the whole thing. So the issue here is which is it that is going to interpret reality. When you're in this state, unbelief controls my interpretation of the situation. And we've got a situation here where so far there's only one believer... only one man here that has it together and it's Caleb. Caleb is looking at the same set of circumstances and look at the difference. "We are able," he says, in verse 30, "we are well able to overcome it." But he's out voted. And this, by the way, shows you how cute democracy works. See, the majority is not always right and here the guys that were holding firm were a very, very small minority. And that's because in these kinds of situations the people who are stable, who know what they're doing, who rest in the Word of God, are rare indeed, and they're usually outvoted and they're, in the census they are the minority.

So let's look at the outline on page 1, I go through the faith-rest drill and I'm going to use that framework tonight as we go through chapter 14 so you can watch the mentality that's involved. There is a mental process here. Point 1 under that faith-rest drill is that we need a promise from God to stabilize our mind to subdue it. When you're in a momentary stress situation the only way you can think and be objective in the situation is you've got to quiet the emotional turmoil. And the way you have to do it is to go back and pick up a piece of truth from Scripture that you have in your memory, because if you don't have it in your memory you're not going to be chasing around trying to open your Bible at the last minute.

See, this is the fallacy of people who never open their Bible. One of the frustrations that Bible teachers have these days is putting Scripture up on power point because what we've all noticed is every time you put Scripture on power point everybody closes their Bible and looks at the power point. The problem with that is you never get familiar with your own Bible. So when the crisis hits, or a disaster hits you don't know where you're going. And we have people that will sit for years under Bible teaching ministries that have no more idea in the Scripture where to find anything, I mean, they couldn't find John 3:16 simply because they're not familiar with their own physical Bible. So that's one of the things. So we have to have a promise or a truth or a fragment of Scripture that we can latch onto to begin to control and subdue the emotions. That doesn't solve the problem, that only gives you a few moments to start thinking; it's sort of like a starter engine on your car; a starter engine isn't going to move you car but it's going to start your engine so the engine



can move your car. So that initial claiming of a promise or a truth of Scripture is just like the starter, it just gets your mind started but it's not going to carry you too far unless you do the second thing. And point 2 here is where you have to be able to interpret the situation, be able to think under pressure and extract from the Scripture some sort of a frame of reference so that when you... let me go back here to this slide, so that you deal with the situation with a network of truths, that's why I call it the biblical framework, you can call it what you want, the biblical theology or whatever, but these are a collection of truths.

For example, Caleb, let's take this guy, he's the guy that's the model. What do you suppose Caleb is thinking. Now this is somewhat speculative but we're certain Caleb knew these things. Did Caleb know about the Exodus? Yes he did. Had he seen God do all the miracles through Moses against the Egyptian pantheon? Had he seen the crushing of Pharaoh's army, the greatest power in the Ancient Near East at that particular time and place? Yes. Well somehow that made an impression upon him that apparently everybody else forgot. They all experienced it, but it was Caleb that was going back, getting hold of those truths and realizing wait a minute here, these clowns that are into the promised land, they're no bigger than Pharaoh and his army and we already saw what God, Jehovah, did to Pharaoh at the Exodus. So he had a whole chunk of truth called "Exodus." He also, probably, remembered creation, he remembered that God created the heavens and the earth, the Anak people may be tall but they're not reaching into heaven, so he had the Creator's size and power and sovereignty in mind. He remember the fall, he remembered the flood, what God did in judgment.

And so he had a collection of these truths that he then used to not only subdue his own emotions, but to put it together and start thinking through the conclusion that he gives you in verse 33 of the previous chapter. That's how he could say "we are well able to overcome it." He wasn't saying we're bigger than the sons of Anak, but we are able because I can interpret this crisis situation and control it by the Scriptures. And that's why we say down here, the "Word of God controls my interpretation of the situation." It's either unbelief or it's the Word of God, and there's no in-between; the question is, which one is dominating in my mental patterns.

Now why do we need to tie Scripture together and have chunks of truth? The Navy and the Army are very similar, here's an Air Force strike package, and I use it as an illustration. When the Air Force goes to attack it doesn't just send planes randomly; there's a whole sequence of actions, of tactics that are carefully managed. When you are involved in a strike package you're talking about a document that can be six hundred to a thousand pages thick. That's how big a strike package is, because you have different aircraft. In this particular case one of the big things is a tanker aircraft; you're not going to fly anywhere if you don't have a gas station, and the enemy isn't going to provide you with gas. So you have to have tankers. So every air plane in this strike package has got to have fuel aboard that tanker, the tanker has to be in the right place, you can't have it in the middle of a jet stream with turbulence because planes can't hook up in a turbulent atmosphere, so you've got to have the right place, you've got to have the right gas, you've got to have

tankers, plural, these things put gas down those tanks at about a thousand gallons a minute, so it's coming out there pretty fast, and it's a very tricky operation to do. Then you have planes like these, that are suppressors, their job is to identify the enemy radars that are controlling the anti-aircraft weaponry, so in effect what they have to do is blind the eyes, that is, destroy the radar sensors that are then making the calculations for the missiles. And then you have a plane like this which is, in this case the F-15, air superiority, and they have to fly on top of the package to prevent the package from being jumped by hostile aircraft.

We could go on and on about that but the point is this is a team; it's just like a football team, baseball team, basketball team. This is a team and it's not just one thing, and that's what we're trying to get at when we come here. Biblical truths are a team, they fit together, they mutually support one another. And it was Caleb that got the point together and these other guys didn't. So let's watch now the result.

Verse 5, Moses and Aaron recognize they've got a real mess going; this is a leadership problem because now they've got the entire congregation, the entire nation, hundreds of thousands of people upset and losing it. So "Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of Israel. [6] But Joshua, the son of Nun, and Caleb, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes; [7] and they spoke to all the congregation of the children of Israel," and this is their answer. Now see the difference? Chapter 14, verses 1-4, that's how to interpret the same circumstances in unbelief and beginning in verse 6 you have Joshua and Caleb interpreting the same circumstances through the authority of Scripture. What does it say? "...the land we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land," so they're pointing out it's a blessing, God is giving us a blessing here. They're looking at the idea that all those fortresses and all the obstacles are going to be overcome because the end result is that God has promised them a good land. So they've got the objective. That's the long-range view of Scripture. See, we need the long-range view of Scripture. Jesus Christ rose from the dead and He's coming back; history is not going to be in the hands of some idiot with a nuclear weapon; it's going to be in the hands of our Savior, He is coming back, and that's our anchor. We have the long-range view; in the end God wins. We know the last chapter.

So, the land we possess is going to be good. [8] "If the LORD delights in us," notice the condition, "If," and that's something else he realizes because the blessing is going to come only when we respond in faith to God's Word; "If the LORD delights in us, then He will bring us into the land and give it to us, a land which flows with milk and honey. [9] Only do not rebel against the LORD, nor fear the people of the land, for they are our bread; their protection has departed from them, and the LORD is with us. Do not fear them."

Now there's a second word, remember I told you about the grasshoppers in Deuteronomy 13:33, remember he said keep the word, that was their idiom, that's their picture, we're just little grasshoppers. Look at the metaphor that these guys used; they're our bread, we're going to eat 'em. So there are two graphic illustrations that show you the tremendous difference in mental attitude. One people are in a panic palace thinking

of themselves as a total set of victims and the other ones are the ones who are stable, are looking at the situation and saying no, by God's grace these people don't have a chance. Notice the qualifying, after he says "they are our bread, their protection has departed from them." See, the idea back in chapter 13 was why, they've got these big walls that are going to protect them. What's going to happen to Jericho? Jericho hasn't happened yet, but their protection is gone. Remember later on they go into the land and they talk to Rahab. What does Rahab say? Where you guys been? We've been fearing you for years. See, their protection is gone, [9] "the LORD is with us, don't fear them." That's the fundamental difference in the way they are thinking.

Let me just kind of capsulize this before we finish out this particular text. If you think in terms of our relationship to God and then think in terms of your relationship to other people; our relationship to God versus our relationship to man, if, and this is what Joshua and Caleb did, if in our relationship to God we are worshipping Him because we grasp His essence, we know that He is sovereign, we know that He is omnipotent, we know that He is omniscience, we are going through the attributes like Paul is going through in his class, we know the attributes and characteristics of God. So we worship Him for who He really is. If we worship Him for who He is, then that automatically puts us in our place as creatures. We know we're not the Creator but we also know that because He loves us, because He has a sovereign plan for history, because is holy and righteous, there's our source of values, there's our source of integrity. So we can have integrity, we can have a source of values, but as a result of worship of God and who He is.

Another thing; if we trust the Lord, we trust the finished atonement of Christ, we become Christians, we're born again, and if we stay in fellowship, so we confess our sins, "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness," if then we have confidence before God we will have courage before men. But you cannot have courage and overcome fear of men without first having a confidence that you're acceptable with God. It's that confidence that you and I are acceptable with God that gives us the courage to face men. Otherwise the courage is just kind of a me too bullying type thing. That's not what we're talking about; we're talking about a quiet, stable courage that comes because we first have the confidence in our Creator and our relationship with Him.

We know too that God is a God of gracious love, and therefore that enables us, as He loves the unlovely we too can love the unlovely and have an attitude that we respect people made in God's image and they may be stinkers but that's okay, God is gracious and we don't have to be upset by that, we're always going to meet stinkers, they're all over the place, it's a fallen human race. But we shouldn't allow that to dominate us because when we respond to that kind of thing we're allowing their agenda to dominate our lives. Why bother with that, they're inconsequential from that point of view. So let's watch what happens now.

In verse 5 you've got Moses and Aaron, they're praying, they're the supreme leaders of the whole thing. So they're going to before the assembly of the congregation, they're right there where the Shekinah glory is and they're right there by the tent, so they've got to take this one to

prayer. There's "no way, Jose" they're going to be able to handle this kind of a problem with mass mob panic. Then Joshua and Caleb, they're going up around the people, whether they had spokesmen that helped them do this we don't know, but this is a large congregation. So somehow they're putting out the Word, look, "think this way," they're challenging the people.

But in verse 10 you get sort of an analysis of what the real situation is. "All the congregation said to stone them with stones." We're talking about capital punishment here, you know, this is the same kind of mentality, I don't like something so I'm going to blow up the market place, you see that in Afghanistan and Iraq, same kind of thing. We just don't vote, we blow them up, we're going to kill them; we take two mentally retarded women and put suicide vests on and let them blow up school children, this shows you we're real men, we only have courage to do that. So, "All the congregation said to stone them with stones. Now," at this point the sentence in the Hebrew just stops, right here, and you go into this statement, they're getting ready to stone them; this is a mob that is absolutely out of control, it's a picture of internally what we are sometimes when we're in unbelief, that our emotions are like a big mob inside our head, and we're sitting there, how do we get out of this thing? It's only that faith-rest drill that does it.

So now God is going to come to the aid because in verse 5 Moses and Aaron begin to turn to the Lord. And in verse 10, just as the congregation gets into this point of stoning the glory of God appeared in the temple. So He's going to settle the issue, right now. And this is a historic moment in Israel's history that Moses is relying on in Deuteronomy, he explains this, he'll explain it in more detail later in Deuteronomy and we won't have to go through all that extra detail because tonight we will finish through it.

Verse 11, we have a conversation, one of the most famous conversations in the Old Testament between Yahweh and a human being. "Then the LORD said to Moses: 'How long will these people reject Me? How long will they not believe Me, with all the signs which I have performed among them? [12] I will strike them with pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they.'" Let's just stop right there. If God carried out his threat what would happen to the Abrahamic Covenant? What tribe is Moses? Levi, he's not Judah. So if God actually carried out that threat it would violate His own Abrahamic Covenant, so people say well wait a minute, why is God threatening that?

And on your outline I have three italicized words down at the bottom and these are words from "speech acts" theory which is now taking the world by storm in academia and you don't have to worry about them, I just use them to illustrate a point here of interpretation. There's three kinds of speech acts you can to, you can utter a sentence, that's simple, you just say a sentence. Verses 11 and 12, God utters a sentence, so that's what the big boys now call a locutionary act. Then there's a second thing that happens; this is sort of nice to think about, and that is, what is the agenda behind speaking that way. It's like a coach on a football, I'm not sure, Mike probably has done this, you say something but you have an agenda that you want to accomplish by saying it, how you're saying it, the tone of voice you're using to say it. So that's called the illocutionary

act and that's the challenge to Moses because God is offering Moses, in verse 11 and 12, look, I'll start with you. So what does Moses do. [13] "Moses said to the LORD: 'Then the Egyptians will hear it," see, Moses was very perceptive in this thing, he took up the challenge of God and so we have the third word there, the perlocutionary act means the effect, the outcome of that little conversation. And this gives you a kind of emotional dialogue that goes into biblical speeches, it's not just the word said, it's the agenda behind the words so we understand this conversation.

So "Moses said to Him, then the Egyptians are going to hear it, for by Y our might You brought these people out from among them, [14] and they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land. They have heard that You, LORD, are among these people, that You LORD, are seen face to face and Your cloud stands with them, and You go before them in a pillar of cloud... [15] Now if You kill these people as one man, then the nations which have heard of Your fame will say, [16] Because the LORD was not able to bring this people to the land which He swore to give them, therefore He killed them in the wilderness. [17] Now I pray Thee, let the power of my Lord be great, just as You have spoken, saying, [18] The LORD is longsuffering and abundant in mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression: But He by no means clears the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation. [19] Pardon the iniquity of this people, I pray, according to the greatness of Your mercy, just as You have forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now."

Now there's the picture of Moses as a priest; we've already seen him as a prophet speaking for God, now he's a priest who's bringing the sin of the people and confessing that sin before the Holy Spirit righteous God, and what motivated him to do it? That little conversation in verses 11 and 12. See Moses, that's the heart of Moses, that's why he's called a humble man. He could have, he could say well gee God, that's a great idea, why don't we knock them all off and we'll start all over. But Moses didn't do that because he had a sense of responsibility, he had a sense of priesthood-ness, and this is a great challenge... this of course is a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ to us, but it's also a picture for each of us in how we respond to these kinds of things. And he asks for God's forgiveness.

And then, in verse 20 and following we have the conclusion of the matter, which then explains Deuteronomy. This explains why, what should have taken eleven days took forty years. [20] "Then the LORD said: I have pardoned, according to your word. [21] But truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD-," in other words, God is not going to compromise His glory. This is the absolute integrity of God. Even the plan of salvation, God the Father did not compromise His integrity. He had to have His own Son die on the cross, in order that His glory never be compromised. So the glory of God is uncompromisable in Christian theology. You cannot compromise the holiness and righteousness of God, that's an absolute. So whatever grace happens, grace has to work in such a way that that righteousness is never compromised.

[22] "because all these men have seen My glory and the signs which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have put Me to the test now these ten times," see, God keeps records, ten times I've watched this, in other

words, this nation, this whole generation is defective, "they have not heeded My voice, [23] they certainly shall not see the land of which I swore to their fathers, nor shall any of those who rejected Me see it. [24] But My servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit in him and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land where he went, and his descendants shall inherit it. [25] The Amalekites and the Canaanites dwell in the valley; tomorrow turn and move into the wilderness by the Way of the Red Sea." And God said that's it, an entire generation is wiped out.

So we're going to conclude tonight, turn back to Deuteronomy 1, all that history is in back of those two verses. And so we come to: [3] "...in the fortieth, in the eleventh month," now Moses is about to die, they are about to enter the land, and verse 4 reports the death of two men, and we'll get into that later in the series, but the idea is that the first phase of the conquest has already begun.

Looking at the map again, they've come up the east side of the Dead Sea and they have conquered the land up and down here; so this is called Transjordan, meaning it's on the other side of the Jordan River, this is Transjordan, so already, while Moses is still living, they have broken a military border. So they've ruptured the entire eastern side of that land by destroying these kings. The battle has begun. So they've got a foothold, they've got a beachhead now.

Then we conclude tonight with verse 5, because in the last phase of this prelude, this preamble, we have an interesting word; it's the Hebrew word [says Hebrew word] and in verse 5 it says, "On this side of Jordan in the land of Moab, Moses began to explain this law, saying," and that word "to explain" is the same word used in Habakkuk 2:2, put this in big font so that running you can read it and it became an idiom for making it plain. So now that's why this book of Deuteronomy is so powerful, because it is how Moses explained the Law. That's why we call Deuteronomy the layman's version of Leviticus, it's the layman's version of the book of the covenant in Exodus.

So we have Moses explaining the details, and that means that in his dying day, just before he's going to be taken from this life, Moses gives us the highest priority, and the highest priority is to understand the theology of the Word of God. That alone is what is going to keep the second generation from failing like the first generation did. It's not going to be some gimmick, he's not going to result to "Big Brother" government, they've already seen that in Pharaoh, "Big Brother" governments don't solve problems. It is only a group of people who understand the Word of God and it takes some explanation. Moses is going to spend an awful long time going through the details of the Law but to his dying day this is what he says the nation needs, more than anything else. They need leaders, they need an educational system, but even those things will not work if people do not understand the content of Scripture. Everything starts there.

So we conclude with Roman numeral IV tonight on the outline, that Deuteronomy 1:1-5 shows us a divine viewpoint interpretation of their failure. And this is given so that they will not make the same problems, the same mess, they won't react the same way as the first generation did.

The second point, Deuteronomy draws attention to the delay caused by the sin of unbelief-up on the top of page 3 I point out if you take forty years and multiply it by 365 you have 14,600 days, so sin, their pathway, was thirteen hundred times longer than it had to be. That is a warning that delaying blessings come from lack of faith. Look at the ratio there, 1 to 1300; it's quite profound; that's the delay caused by unbelief.

Point 3, Deuteronomy shows the principle that God will never compromise His glory.

And point 4, it shows the supreme importance of understanding the Lord through His Word, and Moses is going to give us a model of that as he expounds Scripture.