

Clough Deuteronomy Session 6

Deuteronomy 1:19-46 - Kadesh and the Wasted Years-Choice and Consequences
Fellowship Chapel; 17 Nov 09

You all have the handouts and on that I always have the introduction and review, just a basic quick summary of where we've been to get the continuity, and in Deuteronomy 1:6-4:40 it's that first chunk of material, and this is the first exposition of the Torah, meaning that this is a chunk of material, narrative material in the book of Deuteronomy that appears to be one integrated address by Moses. So we break that down, we see in Deuteronomy 1:9-18 a recollection of the population growth. Now why is that there? We have to keep going back to this first chunk of material, and the whole point of this is motivation, and it's useful to see why and how Moses motivates. His argument throughout these chapters, these first four chapters, is basically historical facts properly interpreted. So he's pushing to have obedience motivated.

Well, how does he motivate this obedience? He's going to present them with the facts of God's revelation, hoping, of course, that that generates the feelings, the emotions, and then from there we have the obedience. But the point to think about is that at no point in any of these four chapters does he attempt to motivate by an appeal to some sort of mysticism. The motivation is objective history and this is why he narrates and he goes into details, referring back to the book of Numbers, is that he wants people to remember. And that's something about our Christian faith that we want to understand is that revelation is not continuous in history; revelation is sporadic and then it stops, and then God is silent for long time periods. And that revelation is preserved in the text, and that's our only context; we can't hope for revelation all the time. So that's the point in this large section.

Then from verses 9-18 he went through and talked about the need for leadership. That was last time. And how does that fulfill his argument? Well, he's going back and he's building a case that the Abrahamic Covenant is coming to pass, that those promises given centuries before to Abraham are coming to pass, the land, the sea promises. So already, remember in verses 6, 7 and 8 of chapter 1 he's talked about the land, and he says we're going to go into the land. So there's the land promise. Then verses 9-18 deals with the population explosion that they've had and that obviously is the people problem and that's why in verse 10 he actually cites and alludes to the Abrahamic Covenant because in verse 10 you see where he says, "The LORD your God has multiplied you, here you are today as the stars of heaven in multitude." That's the very same language that God spoke to Abraham so it's no accident. So he's tying this together. Then he says in verse 13 choose leadership, and he gives us a model of qualifications, wise, discerning, and known by the people.

Then in verses 16 and 17 he deals with the shoterim or the deputy judges, and he says... there's a whole dialogue there and we went into that last time, but it's very important because we're going to hit this again and again and again, over and over because we need to come to grips with this in our thinking, as we dialogue with folks. Everybody wants to make a political judgment or a social judgment today, but that's fruit; what we need to deal with is the root; what is the criteria on which you're making political and social judgments; that's the more deep argument and it's

often not made. And so we said, therefore, in 16, and in the outline it says, "large populations tend primarily to look at social justice." So this is just a preliminary look at social justice. And we made basically two points, that equality before the Law is grounded on the transcendental justice of God, that social justice has to have a foundation, and the foundation that the Bible insists must be there is transcendental justice.

Now what do we mean by "transcendental?" We mean that it's above all different societies, that it's a universal, that it's an absolute, that it's anchored in something over all of us, because the point is if someone tells me that I ought to do X, Y and Z, my question is, why should I, who are you to tell me? In other words, where is the standard coming from. You see, the point is that on a non-biblical basis, let's about this just for a moment, again we'll go over this and over this, it'll become ingrained after a while, but if I'm an unbeliever and you challenge me and you ask me, what's my basis for making judgment calls, how do I use o-u-g-h-t, ought? Where do I get my "oughts?" Well, I could go and say the universe, but the universe, I've already said as an atheist, as an unbeliever, is unintelligent. So are we saying that we are getting our transcendental standards from a mindless, purposeless, meaningless universe? Is that where we're grounding it. Well, people don't want to say that, but that's one of the other options.

Another one is that direct and absolute or social judgment comes out of us, but on a non-Christian basis who are the "us?" Well, they're evolving biochemical globs of protoplasm. So on that basis, where do you have moral judgment from. This is a legitimate question, I'm not trying to be funny here. The point is that if that's the worldview, then if I were an unbeliever then I would have to be obligated to justify my standards of right and wrong on the basis internal to my worldview. And what is my worldview saying? That the universe is unintelligent and mindless, that I am an evolving concatenation of protoplasm. Now given those things that are part and parcel of my worldview, how do I justify moral judgment. So this is the issue that has to be pressed before we get into all the little details and particulars; we haven't justified the big picture yet. It's like trying to go into a stadium and saying one side is playing football and the other is playing soccer; before we start the game we've got to agree on what the game is. And until we have this discussion we can't argue the issues because we're following two different things here.

So the Bible is unambiguous and we'll see this over and over again and it's a very important lesson, that social justice in the Scripture is anchored in the transcendental nature of God Himself.

Now if the non-Christian can't, in practice, justify moral absolutes, like I said, here's the expedient way to do it, and this is where it winds up in the final analysis, and that's why I said there's such a thing... you go to law school and read in legal literature, they talk about "positive law," that's an expression, "positive law." And what they mean by that is that the law doesn't come from man's value, it doesn't come from social good, it comes because it has been positively enacted by some social authority. And the argument for positive justice or positive law is that until you have it enacted, you don't have an objective standard to refer to. In other words, if it isn't in the law it doesn't count. So this is why we have in our society a tremendous generation of thousands and

thousands of regulations, because everyone is operating like positive law in that we've got have a regulation because until we do get a regulation we don't know what to do.

Now isn't it remarkable, when God speaks to social justice He says it in ten words; now isn't there something, a disconnect going on, don't you sense a disconnect. Here we have in a society with thousands... in fact you can go to a government agency sometime and ask to see the Federal Acquisition Regulations, FAR's, the F.A.R. I was amused when the young new President we have was going to say that he could dispense federal dollars very quickly and all of his little think tank people that apparently had no experience in government regulations thought it could happen very fast. You can't go through the Federal Acquisition Regulations fast; they won't let you. You can put an order in and by the time it clears through all eighteen different layers of bureaucracy it's not going to get purchased. And that's why the dollars haven't come out, they can't come out because the regulations prevent them that Congress enacted.

So the problem here is that when we come to the Mosaic Law what we want to look for... I'm throwing all of this out because I hope it generates questions in your mind that you want to ask the text. You want to be on the lookout because we want to go through the text of this law code as people living in the beginning of the 21st century, who have these very serious questions about social justice. We want to ask God, through the Word, what's the answer to these questions? Everybody is asking them what are the answers? So positive law basically is the expedient way of solving the problem, pass a law, make a regulation, and that solves the problem.

You'll see this in other places, for example, increasingly in some of our institutions we have the term "zero tolerance." Now zero tolerance is a mindless thing, there's no zero tolerance in the Scriptures. People pass zero tolerance because they don't want to make a decision. It's easier to have a zero tolerance policy than having common sense policies because it absolves the leader from getting involved in the details of things. But if you look at the Scripture there never is a zero tolerance policy in the Word of God. How come? A zero tolerance to sin, yes, but then it's the matter of the situation and so forth and so on, it goes on, it's absolute standards, but there's a common sense in application. That's why we have 610 amplifications, case law, of the Ten Words.

Okay, so much for that. The second thing on the shoterim, the first one was equality before the Law is grounded on the transcendental justice of God, and the second thing we said under the shoterim is that the statutes that Moses taught, that he's talking about, were in Exodus 18, which was before Mount Sinai, and since the statutes existed pre-Sinai, it means they had a source other than the Sinai revelation. So that raises the question, where did the statues come from, and we answered that, it comes from two things, it comes from universal moral consciousness given by God at creation. This is Paul in Romans 1, everybody has an innate conscience. It doesn't mean that it's perfect, it doesn't mean that it can't be defiled, it doesn't mean it can't be twisted and deceived, but everybody has a compass, a moral compass. And the second source is a residual memory of the Noahic Covenant. Every people group on the planet

comes from one family, from one boat after the flood. That means that in the heritage of every people group, somewhere back there, they had exposure to the Noahic Covenant.

All right, tonight we come to the next section and you'll see on the outline, we're now down to here; we've gone from Sinai to Kadesh, we've got them to Kadesh. And now the question is what happens next. And so we're going to finish chapter 1 tonight, Kadesh and the wasted years. And this section deals, basically if you can think of it this way, as showing a choice that was made and showing the consequences that flowed out of that choice. So this is choice and consequences. And this is important because we are going to, out of this, learn some very vital things that are amplified in the New Testament when it comes to living the Christian life, but this choice and consequences theme is part and parcel of the whole legal literature of the Bible.

So let me address the issue first of choice and then we'll get into the text and see what the choice was. Choice in the Scriptures basically is another way of saying human responsibility. We are held responsible. Now this is a fundamental lesson. When we come to grips with the legal literature we're coming to grips with fundamental truths of society. These are basic stuff, and we have to engage and we have to think about these things. But responsibility starts with the Genesis creation. God gave responsibility to every man, woman and so forth. So it's an institution, I call it a divine institution, it's a social structure that it didn't evolve, it's there by design. Now think about what's going on in our contemporary environment. What happens when something goes wrong in the schools? It's the teacher's fault. What happens if something goes wrong in a corporation? It's the worker's fault. What happens if you ask teenagers the problem? It's the parent's fault. If you ask the criminals in incarceration, it's society's fault. If you ask the government bureaucrat it's no one's fault. In the first generation of Moses it was Jehovah's fault, and Moses' fault. We'll see that very graphically tonight.

So what's the deal? It's blame shifting. That's the opposite of acceptance of biblical responsibility. That is a fundamental social lesson that has to be taught. And children have to understand this and parents have an obligation to teach personal responsibility; it's a revolutionary act in our society, nobody wants to accept responsibility. If you think about the response we have politically going on, it's to solve this problem, solve that problem. Wait a minute, before you try to solve the problem, let's find out where the responsibility was for the mess to start with so then we can understand how to solve the problem. But we don't want to talk about personal responsibility, we want to blame somebody else, nobody wants to accept responsibility. It would be so refreshing to have someone say yeah, I was responsible for that, I screwed up. You know what, I'd trust that person to fix it because that person has told me that they accept personal responsibility and that makes me trust them. It doesn't make me go away from them, it would be healthy to acknowledge a little bit of responsibility. So that's the key behind this whole passage, responsibility, choice.

So let's see what the choice was all about. Next slide just basically is the map; they've come to Kadesh and the issue is whether they're going to

go north whether they're going to accept God's challenge or they're going to turn, and we've already gone through this preliminarily the first night we were here, but if you look at Deuteronomy 1:19, here begins the drama. And from verse 19 through 33 we have the choice. Now let's look at it.

"So we departed from Horeb, and went through all that great and terrible wilderness." So the map situation gives you the location of what's going on, they are right there, they've come up here, and from this point, this Kadesh-barnea location to the land that they've been given is eleven days journey, and it took them forty years before they got there. So this is why it's called the wasted years. And I wanted to also show you, just so we go through this again, another review, the Sinai terrain, impress this upon the mind's eye in your imagination so when you read these texts, because the Bible is full of references to this, the wilderness wanderings, that in your mind's eye you can imagine you and your family having to go out here. Now just think of the logistics problem; where is the water? Where's the food? Where's the clothing? And your family has to survive out there; we're talking survival here. And that wilderness was designed by God to give them this test where He is going to be their solution.

And then we come to one the first springs, this is Kadesh, and that's why they came there to that spring area. Well, it's from there that they want to launch their invasion. So verse 19 begins the story of that incident, the Numbers incident that we said earlier, except the difference tonight from what we did the first night when we were dealing with a quick summary of this incident, tonight we're going to learn about a way God tests us and how we respond to testing, and we'll see that as we go on here.

Verse 19, "So we departed from Horeb and went through all that great and terrible wilderness which you saw on the way to the mountains of the Amorites," the mountains of the Amorites is the southern section of the Promised Land, "as the LORD our God had commanded us. Then we came to Kadesh-Barnea. [20] And I said to you, You have come to the mountains of the Amorites, which the LORD our God is giving us." And verse 20 has an interesting construction. If you look in the notes, again I've mentioned that, sort of translating it literally, "which Yahweh our God is giving us," it's a participle; the emphasis is on the fact that the giving is in motion now. Yahweh is in the act of giving this to us. So the Lord is giving. [21] "Look, the LORD your God has set the land before you; go and possess it, as the LORD God of your fathers has spoken to you; do not fear or be discouraged."

Israel at this point is a nation and the Sinaitic Covenant is with Israel as a nation; not just as a people but as a nation. And as we said, in certain circles today theologically we say we have Supersessionism, or Replacement Theology in which the Church replaces Israel in the plan of God. But the Church is not a nation. People can't seem to understand there's a distinction here. The Sinaitic treaty is made with the people of God as a national entity; the Church is not a nation, the Church is a transnational group of people from many nations; it can't replace. That's why the New Testament doesn't have laws on how to dig latrines; the Mosaic treaty does. Why is that? Is it that we don't need latrines? No, it's because they were to dig them in a special way and their public health was to be structured and designed in such a way that it was a testimony to God

and His purity. And so there are all kinds of issues with the Mosaic Law because it is dealing with a nation. That's why this book is so important for us as Christian citizens today in a nation, because it addresses God's designs for national structure. We're not a theocracy like Israel so we're not arguing one to one correspondence here, we're arguing wisdom. There are wisdom principles in the Deuteronomic code that we can look at to see how we might apply them.

So we go through this horrible place, this land, and we come to the oasis and then God is now giving it to us. Now in verse 21 there's an instruction, and this is the setup for the choice. He says look, "the LORD God has set the land before you," verse 22, "And every one of you came near to me and said, 'Let us send men before us, and let them search out the land, let them bring back word,'" and so on. [23] "The plan pleased me; so I took twelve of your men, one from every tribe. [24] They departed and went up into the mountains, and came to the valley ... spied it out," and so on. And then in verse 25, they "brought back word to us, saying, It is a good land which the LORD our God is giving us."

Now that little section deals with mechanics and I want to outline it in sort of a procedure way because the neat thing about the Old Testament is if you live these events in your mind's eye, and project yourself back in, almost like you could take a time machine in your imagination, and place yourself back and live in your mind's eye these events, it becomes easier to grab onto some things that might be abstract theology in the New Testament. But if we think about this, Moses, don't fear, don't be dismayed, and then he tells them to go in and get the facts. See, everything in verse 22, 23, 24, 25, ask yourself, what is the point of all that? Why would you send spies into a land? To obtain facts; they're basically after two things, they want to find out the lines of invasion, one of the things they need to reconnoiter, the best attack route and they want to know about the enemy defenses. Those are the facts of the situation. So right away, God doesn't give them the facts, notice. They have to go search out the facts. God has told them to do something but it's up to responsible individuals to find out the facts.

Now after you get the facts, now we have to have the interpretation of the facts. So that's why it's proceeded with, don't fear, don't be dismayed, don't interpret the facts you are going to find subjectively and separated from God's revelation. Encompass the facts with the revelation of the Word of God. That's a basic thing. I often talk about the faith-rest drill, basically three parts, one is that you grab onto some promise, some fragment, some memory verses, some truths from Scripture. Number two, you go and you digest that, you work with it until that Scripture encompasses the facts at hand. And then the third thing, of course, you can enter into a peaceful, stable environment. And these people are going to get the facts but they are not going to do step two. They've got step one, they know what happened in Egypt, they know what God spoke to them on Mount Sinai, so they know all that, that's Scripture they know. But when they get the facts they can't put the facts together with the revelation; they can't interpret the facts correctly.

So in verse 26 we have the response, and from verse 26 down all the way to verse 33 we are going to have their choice. "Nevertheless you would not go up, but rebelled against the command of the LORD your God," it's very

picturesque here in the Hebrew. In your outline you'll see where I have 1:26, where I translated "not willing ... you rebelled against the mouth of Yahweh your God," that's just the way the Hebrew pictures it, "you rebelled against the mouth," now that's just a Hebraic expression of the words that came out of the mouth, but I think it's kind of a very picturesque way of saying it; it's picturing God with a mouth with lips and He's spoken these things and you've rebelled against His mouth. These words aren't Moses' words, they're not Aaron's words, they came from the mouth of God and you, by your rebellion are setting yourselves up against His mouth; it's God's mouth, and you're not willing to do it.

And then it says, "Nevertheless you would not" do this, [28] "And you complained in your tents, and said, 'Because the LORD hates us, He has brought us out of the land of Egypt to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us.'" Now notice the little phrase that you did it "in your tents." Now can't you just see how this spreads through the camp. You see, first of all it's a discussion around the family gatherings, so now it's in the family, so this cancer of an unbelieving interpretation is spreading through families, and then it's the tent that's next door, then it's the neighbors, then it's the whole neighborhood, then it's the whole tribe and finally it's the whole nation, and now you've got the whole nation, one frantic mob of people that are just going on an emotional revolt over the facts because they can't subdue the facts with the Word of God. They can't interpret them correctly. And verse 27 says, "you complained ... the LORD hates us," now look at this. And this illustrates an interesting point about theology.

I want to diagram what's going on in their heads so that we can understand how we can think, or should think when we face these kind of things. When it says "the LORD hates us, He has brought us out of the land," you see, it's an affront to God's character. And the battles in our mind have a lot to do and hinge the spiritual conflicts that go on in our heads basically are conflicts over the glory of God and what kind of a person He is. And when they come out with this statement, "the LORD hates us," it's the idea that He could care less for us. Now does that fit with the revelation of Sinai? Does that fit with the revelation of the Red Sea? Does that fit with the plagues? No, it doesn't fit, so since it doesn't fit we know what they aren't doing; they're not taking these facts and interpreting them in the light of the known revelation. It doesn't require extra revelation, they don't need more revelation, they just need to remember the revelation they already have, that's all, and use it.

In this diagram, I have a diagram for you here trying to illustrate the way of thinking that goes on because you know, if you're like me this goes on all the time and I want to give you four verses as tools. Four verses from the New Testament that take you step by step through this process of thanksgiving and why it's so important. The theology of complaining; both the theology of thanksgiving and the theology of complaining start with the same thing, God is in charge. Isn't it amazing that a hard-nosed atheist who spends all his time denying that God exists, what does he do the first time he gets in a jam? Who does he curse? All of a sudden God's existence has popped up again. Isn't that interesting? Why does that happen? Because underneath all the time he's believed in God, he knows God exists; it's just in the fury of the moment his suppression mechanism stops and it pops up, oh well, gee, you really do believe in

God, why are you cursing Him for the situation that happened. So everybody believes that.

Now, on the left side Theology of Thanksgiving, God is gracious and gives me what I do not merit. That's the heart, the motive that goes on here: God is gracious and gives me what I do not merit. The Theology of Complaining, God claims to be loving and gracious, but I don't really believe that, and this test certainly doesn't show it in my life, He doesn't really care for me. And so it's expressed right here in the Hebrew, "the LORD hates us," a great text to show you the mental process that we all fight, every day of our lives we go through this. Then we come down here, on the "Theology of Thanksgiving" God has my ultimate good in view as He administers providential circumstances in my life. See, that's putting it together, it's saying God is in charge, He's providentially working in my life, but He has my ultimate good in view while He's doing that. You have to believe that. That's the struggle, right there. Over here: "He treats me like He doesn't care or... He treats me like He delights in my misery. Now that's the choice.

Now the problem is that the Bible in the New Testament tells us, great emphasis on thanksgiving, so here are the four verses and we're going to take a few minutes here because I want to take you to these verses so you see the sequence. The first verse is found in 1 Corinthians 10:13, I think when the Navigators, or they used to, when someone first becomes a Christian and they take them to basic verses 1 Corinthians 10:13 was one of them I believe. But this is what's happening to the people right there in Kadesh-Barnea. 1 Corinthians 10:13, it's a promise and if you don't know this promise you need to put a reference on it, write it on a 3 x 5 card or use it, this should be memorized. "No temptation has overtaken you, but such as is common to man, God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tested above what you are able, but will with the testing make a way of escape that you may be able to bear it." And that's a good anchor verse to start correcting bad thinking. Right there, that's a powerful statement, He WILL NOT allow you to be tested above what you are able.

Many years ago I knew this fellow out in Texas, and he was having all kinds of problems, a believer, had all kinds of problems and it was like he was sinking, and getting into depression, a pity party and all the rest of it, and it all ended one night on a Texas lonely road when he went out there with his pickup and racing down with the police after him, and stopped the truck, he had a gun and the policeman, of course, obviously knew he had the gun and they were closing in on him, and he pulled the gun out and shot himself. And I remember his niece told me as a Christian, she had a great word, she used 1 Corinthians 10:13, he didn't understand that God is able, he couldn't believe that the testing that he was undergoing was something that he could and would, if he had trusted the Lord, he would have gotten through that. But in his depression he thought the trial was bigger than God's sovereignty. And so it led to suicide, and she was absolutely right. So that's number one verse.

So what I'm going to do, I'm going to take these four verses in sequence and basically show you that this is a mental map that these folks should have used. 1 Corinthians 10:13, now Romans 8:28, all of us know that, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to His purpose." So Romans 8:28, 1 Corinthians 10:13

reinforce each other. Verses #3 and 4 are in that little box on your notes, where it says: PRINCIPLE: The mental attitude of "thanksgiving"[is a barometer of our spiritual state!] 1 Thessalonians 5:18, where it says, "in everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Jesus Christ for you." Then that clause is haunting there, "in everything give thanks," it doesn't mean everything is great, it just means in the circumstances we give thanks. Giving thanks is a barometer of our spiritual life. And finally, Philippians 4:6-7 takes the last step; so you've got four verses, 1 Corinthians 10:13, that limits the test; Romans 8:28 tells you the purpose of the test, the providence; 1 Thessalonians 5:18 tells us we are to do a check, can we give thanks in this situation. And sometimes it takes hours and days to work through to where you can honestly give thanks. It doesn't just happen, you can't just burp this out; this takes a struggle, oftentimes, before you can really get in a position of giving thanks. And then Philippians 4:6-7, "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." And then it says, "the peace of God which passes all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." So those are four powerful packed verses.

Now let's to back and see what happened in this historic disaster. Well, we already see they're not giving thanks so immediately we know their theology is off base. Now we're talking about the theology of complaining instead of the theology of thanksgiving, so mentally these people are out of it. They are believers, we know they're believers because previous references in Exodus 14:31 where it came out it says they believed. So it's not that these people weren't believers; they were believers. But they weren't believing in this situation. So in verse 30 it says, "The LORD your God, who goes before you," this is Moses now saying, "...goes before you," and it's interesting, if you look in your notes on Deuteronomy 1:30, if you translate literally in the Hebrew it says: Yahweh, your God, is walking before you. The word "go" is just... it's a word usually translated for walking, going somewhere, and it's in the process, God is in the process of walking with you.

And by the way, I mentioned that earlier on the thing, vocally I didn't but on the notes, and that is do you notice what pronoun he's using before he uses the word for God? In English grammar there's the first person plural, and there's the second person plural; which one is he using? Remember English literature? Second person plural. Now what does that tell you? Why do you suppose Moses is deliberately using the second person plural and not the first. I think it's to make the intensity of the rebellion, He's your God, not mine. He is his, He's ours, but in this situation Moses wanted to make the choice so clear, you are rebelling against the mouth of your God, deliberate, second person plural pronoun.

All right, he does the same thing here, in verse 30, "The LORD your God, is walking before; He will fight for you, according to all He did for you in Egypt," and by the way, now when he mentions Egypt, which nation do you suppose was stronger, militarily, Egypt or some Canaanite two-bit city? Egypt. So it's the argument from the lesser to the greater. If God did that, then why can't He do this for us? See, that's why in that other box on your notes I mentioned Romans 8:32, there's an example of Paul using the same logic, arguing from the greater to the lesser. What does Romans 8:32 say? "He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us

all, how shall He not with Him freely give us all things." He did the biggest thing for us, all the rest of the stuff is clean-up stuff. The big thing's already been done, see. And that's how biblical authorities argue from the greater to the lesser.

Then it says in Deuteronomy 1:30-31, "...He did it before Egypt, before all your eyes," and then it says, "the LORD your God," and look at the delicate way of phrasing this; this is a verse that shows you something about the Old Testament that people that yak-yak about the Old Testament, God is a meany God or something, never have read the Old Testament seriously. Now come on, look at verse 31; now come on, that's not the verse describing some meany god. What does it say? "...the LORD your God carried you as a man carries his son," it's a picture of a dad with his little kid holding him in his arms. Now is that descriptive of what you often picture of the caricature of God of the Old Testament? No, this is the God of the Old Testament, "he carried you as a man... ." [32] "Yet for all that, you did not believe the LORD your God, [33] who went in the way before you, He searched out a place for you to pitch your tents," every night on the journey God scouted ahead and picked the perfect campsite, "to show you the way you should go, in the fire by night and in the cloud by day."

See, those are describing specifics of God's logistical grace. God pushed them into a trial; you saw the landscape, I showed you those slides the last couple of times. Now visualize that, I said keep it in your mind's eye because if you picture you and your family out there in that wilderness, that's a challenge, that's a test, that's a logistics test; can I or cannot I not trust the Lord to supply my logistics, my food, my water, my clothing, my safety, my shelter; those are all logistical things. And by putting them out in the wilderness and then deliberately, in a supernatural way supplying their logistics. What was God teaching them? That I am the God of grace and I can provide for you logistically. But then when it comes down to the battle here, the test for spiritual combat, they're going to fail the test. And so it says here He went in, He did all these things, and yet you did not believe. So verse 33 kind of ends Moses' sermon pericope here where he's talking about their choice.

Now something is going to happen and what's going to happen from verse 34 down to the end of the chapter is an amazing thing about consequences. And we want to look at this carefully because it happens, it happens to Christians, it may have happened to you, it happens often time to believers, and it's hard to take. We're going to look at a discipline test. Now up to now it's been a logistical test and they have failed. On the basic logistical test God said okay, you passed the logistical test, now I want to give you a spiritual combat test. And they flunked this one. So now God is going to give them a discipline test. A discipline test is a little different because in a discipline test what happens is that we're suffering the consequences of a previous bad decision. We're on plan B now, not plan A. So now we know we're on plan B, we know we're suffering consequences of a foolish thing we did in the past. Now the question is, not that I'm involved in suffering the consequences of a bad decision can I trust the Lord in that situation to carry me through to live with the consequences in a victorious spiritual way? That's the discipline test. Now watch what happens because they're going to fail the discipline test. They're going to fail two tests.

Watch it now, look at the Lord in verse 34. Now the Lord here... in the Hebrew it's very picturesque, the Lord is angry and when you see passages like this in the Old Testament this is God coming down and interacting with people. In other words, if He were to appear and carry on a conversation with you these are some of the emotional characteristics of a conversation with God. Now it seems a little strange to think of God doing this because we normally don't think of God banging on the table, like that [hits table] but this is what he's doing; watch. "The LORD heard the sound of your words, and He was angry, and He took an oath, saying, [35] Surely not one of these men of this evil generation shall see the good land which I swore to give your fathers, [36] Except Caleb..." and so forth.

Now in your notes I have translated this, Deuteronomy 1:35, on page 3, this is a curse; it says God "took an oath," it's an incomplete oath, it's an incomplete curse, and this is the way it reads: "if any one of these men, this evil generation, sees the good land which I swore to your fathers," and it is incomplete, you fill in the blank. Probably the best way of translating it, and there's no translator would have the courage to say this, but basically we could translate it in our vernacular: I'll be damned if any one of these men is going to hit that land. Now can you imagine God saying something like that? If you can't it's a challenge from the Scripture to think about that. Why can't you think of God getting that mad, as a man would get mad, and saying, you know, I'll be damned if any of you are ever going to get into that land. Wouldn't that be kind of horrifying to have the God of the universe talk to you like that. And yet this is what He did here. And it shows you God's anger when we don't trust Him; it really ticks Him off because it's an impugning of His character. So He heard this, He took an oath, that's just the translators way of telling you this sentence doesn't end in the Hebrew, so the only way you can do it is say if He took an oath.

[36] "[Except Caleb ... he] shall see it,," and say to his children "I am giving the land on which he walked, because he wholly followed the LORD," and that's another problematical sentence in the Hebrew; it's used of David and it's in contrast to Solomon in 1 Kings and literally it says "because he filled up after Yahweh," the verb there is "he filled up," and the translators are trying to make sense of that and so they translated it as "he walked fully after the Lord." Now I'm making this point because the way it's translated in the English, where it says "he wholly followed the LORD," it sounds like the claim to perfection, and yet we know historically and theology that that's not the claim that's being made here. He's not arguing that Caleb and Joshua were perfect, and yet it's the word "full." I interpret that to mean that these guys passed the test; in other words, the last test in the sequence of tests, they completed that one and they passed it because the other place it's used, in 1 Kings 11, it's talking about David after he sinned. So it can't be talking about his perfection; it's talking about his recovery. He was able to make... he blew it, he was able to recover, and he was able to move on, and the Lord was pleased with that. And then you have somebody like Solomon that never recovers, he just goes down. And that's the contrast.

So here Caleb and Joshua, they pass the test. [37] "And the LORD was also angry," now look at this injection, in verse 37-38, Moses humbly... you know Moses, they say is a meek person, he's a strong leader but he's very

humble and he admits something, and he throws this in. Not only has he said in verse 34 that God created and oath about these people that had sinned, but now he says He was even angry at me, even you won't go in there. So it shows you God was angry with the leadership as well as with the people.

Now in verse 39 Moses is directing them, he's narrating what happened, and here begins a test of discipline. Verse 34 has told us there's an irrevocable disciplinary sentence passed. By the oath in verse 34 there's nothing these people can do to go into the land; they're doomed. They are not going to go into the land. That is the consequence of their choice. It's not God's fault but that's the consequence and God isn't going to change that. So what Moses is arguing for in verse 39 is this is the fallout of a bad decision you guys made, these are the consequences and you're stuck with them. So, conclusion, verse 39, oh, this is God speaking, it's still the Lord speaking, and here's where He turns the complaint. Remember what their complaint was: oh well, gee, what about our kids? So not only were they complaining about God, they were trying to dress it up in a nice religious vocabulary to make it sound like it was socially unjust for God to do such a thing. And so they use the kids as a bargaining chip. So basically God said okay, you used your kids as a bargaining chip, try this one on for size. "Your little ones and your children, who you say will be victims, who today have no knowledge of good and evil," in other words, they're not responsible, they're not sharing the consequences, notice, consequences go with choice and responsibility, "they shall go in there: I will give it, and they shall possess it." But for you, get out of here.

So the question then becomes are they going to get out of there, do what the Lord says, deal with the circumstances, deal with the consequences and move on, trusting the Lord in the middle. God is not a bad God now. If you'll go to the next slide, this is the last slide and we have a series of test. So I've tried to depict it on this slide. They passed test 1, passed test 2, they come to test 3 and they blow it. So now we've failed test 3 so now the question is test 4 comes along. And test 4 is am I going to trust the Lord with the consequences of a bad choice? That's test number 4.

Now let's watch what happens; Deuteronomy 1:41, "Then you answered and said to me, 'We have sinned against the LORD;" now that sounds very religious, "we will go up and fight," they still don't have a clue about what's going on here: "We have sinned against the LORD, we're going to up and we're going to fight, just as the LORD commanded us. And when everyone of you had girded on his weapons of war you were ready to go up the mountain. [42] And the LORD said to me, Tell them, Do not go up, do not fight, I am not with you, lest you be defeated before your enemies." Now God is being gracious again, I told you you're not going to have the land; don't try to solve the problem yourself, these are My consequences. Don't try to deal with the consequences by some human gimmick, some cover-up, some human solution.

[43] "So I spoke to you; and yet you would not listen, but you rebelled against the commandment of the LORD, and you presumptuously went up the mountain. [44] And the Amorites who dwelt in the mountain came out against you and chased you as bees, and drove you from Seir to Hormah.

[45] Then you returned and you wept before the LORD, but the LORD would not listen to your voice and He would not give ear to you." Now what that is talking about, God didn't respond to their prayer request. Their prayer request was I want the land, I don't want to go walking around here in this God forsaken wilderness for the next forty years, so get me in the Lord. The Lord will not hear that because He told them I'm not going to hear that. The curse was in verse 34, that's when he announced NO, you are NOT going in there. Now you see, this doesn't work, oftentimes you see this with young parents, and they say no and the little kid knows that I'll keep pushing mom and dad, let's just see if the third time... no, well, try the fourth time. And you keep pushing and sometimes the parents cave in, and of course what they've just done is train their kid, let's see, number... I have to push mom for number 12, about twelve times I can get my way. See, this doesn't work, and here it didn't work with the Lord because they tried to do it and the Lord just wouldn't listen to them.

[46] "So you remained in Kadesh many days...." That's the end of the story, those are the consequences, and it's an interesting test because unlike these people, when David got in his situation, he flunked the test to, he got test number four. See, David committed adultery and he also murdered a man, and so the consequences on his family was his sons were going to be murdered; his family will be torn to pieces; there would be a national and civil revolt. And those are the horrible consequences of David's sin here, but David met those consequences and the story of his meeting those consequences are enscripturated in the Psalms. So David went down on test 3 but he recovered on test 4 because he endured the consequences by trusting the Lord, trusting the Word, because God doesn't change. That's why on this chart I have up here, God changes not, He still sovereignly, omnipotently loves. He's still Dad and He still loves us and we're still in the family, even when we fail. But he's a strict dad and we're not going to manipulate, we're not going to twist His arm, we're not going to push, push, push momma around to turn no into a yeas. It doesn't work that way.

So anyway, this is an interesting depiction of different kind of tests and next week we'll go into chapter 2 and we'll move on a little bit faster, but I wanted to take you through the mental struggles here because we go through these struggles all the time. As we say in the conclusion, Deuteronomy 1:19-46 narrates for us the failure of an entire generation. It's a failure to pass a spiritual conflict test after passing some of the previous logistical tests. It shows the law of responsibility: God gives us choices and He-not us-determines the consequences. After bad choices, we have discipline tests: are we going to look to Him to help us live with the consequences, or are we going to try human gimmicks to "relieve" them?